The Christian Heritage of KOSOVO and METOHIJA

The Historical and Spiritual Heartland of the Serbian People

Sebastian Press

The Christian Heritage of
KOSOVO and METOHIJA

Christ Pantocrator,
main dome of the Gračanica, 1318–1321

Gračanica's uniqueness lies in the fact that the icon known as Pantocrator, which inspires liturgical awe, is depicted not just as the God-Man—i.e., God who assumed human nature—but as Co-Man, identifying Himself with man in his suffering and helplessness, with human pain through His suffering on the Cross and His humiliating death. Through His philanthropic gaze, the majestic Pantocrator lowers Himself and meets His creation. The eternal and infinite meets the finite in a particular place and time, within history, where they reconcile within the same fate. This composition, with its wrinkles in the forehead, was not repeated in other Byzantine churches, perhaps because its boldness brought it to the threshold of the psychologization of the divine drama. Gračanica's Pantocrator is truly unique, since it was not copied from anyone. It is original and loving, and for this reason it constitutes a portrait of God, as Christ's wonderfully loving eyes have revealed it to human beings. The riddle of human destiny finds its solution in the Pantocrator's theandric gaze.

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Holy Trinity – Abraham's hospitality, altar, east wall, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Wisdom has built her house **(Proverbs 9:1)**, altar, east wall, Gračanica, 1318–1321

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Concerning Orthography

Note on the spelling and pronunciation of Serbian words and names

ć not to be found precisely in English: a sound between the English *t* in tune, and *ch* in chalk
c as English *ts* in lots
č as English *ch* in church
dž as English *j* in George
j as English *y* in yell
lj as English *li* in million
nj as English *n* in new
š as English *s* in ship
ž as English *s* in pleasure, or French *j* in jour

Ascension of Christ, detail: the Mother of God, Church of the Holy Apostles, tambour of the dome, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1260

Serbia in Europe, Kosovo-Metohija in Serbia

Foreword

Bishop † Paul (Pavle) of Raška and Prizren (1957–1990)

Archbishop of Peć, Metropolitan of Belgrade and Karlovci, and Serbian Patriarch (1990–2009)

For centuries the territory of the Ras-Prizren Diocese has been the center of our national and ecclesial life. It has remained so even after all the destruction by conquerors, for on it are found the remnants of the most important accomplishments of Serbian Church architecture, art, and literature. These Kosovo remnants are scattered among of the remaining faithful, who are also scattered throughout the Kosovo region.

The Christian ethos of the faith of Saint Sava, the faith which the people accepted and lived, testifies even today that these buildings were constructed with full knowledge of the eternal measure of man's worth and his labors, as well as the value of the labors of an entire nation based upon the Lord's words concerning the exalted good of service for the love of God and for one's fellow man.

This same ideal, service to God and fellow man, moved not only the powerful and rich, kings and noblemen, to erect churches and monasteries, but the common people as well, to build them—and, when necessary, to again rebuild them from the ruins and ashes—as in the case of the artists, scribes, printers, and those nameless donors, like those of the hand-written *Menaia* (liturgical books) in the Dečani Monastery, a gift to the church by Slava the Blind, and the "poor people of Prizren," great and small, who donated the silver cross to the church of Saint George, in Prizren, exemplifies this unselfish generosity.

In this way, long before the Battle of Kosovo, our people learned and strove for a heavenly understanding of life and death. This means that love of God is predicated upon love for our fellow man; that allegiance to the eternal Kingdom of Heaven does not mean the denial of our transitory life on earth, and that despite our faith in the immortal soul we do not deny our stewardship of our historical being.

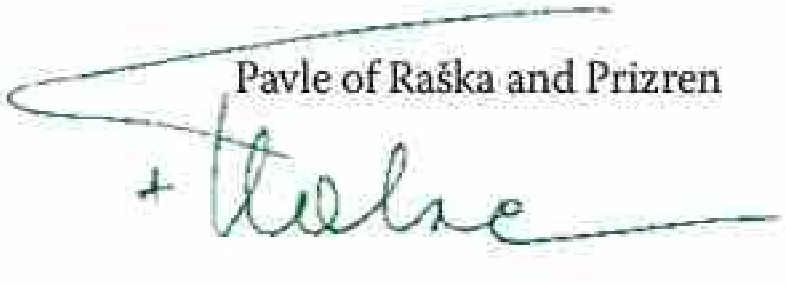
Belonging to a people with such an understanding, the Holy Prince Lazar merely confirmed the importance of this allegiance: *more willing to disappear as men than to live as inhumans*. For us there is no other choice: *better a dead man than a living inhuman*. For a man, though dead, is not dead before the living God. In His sight, the inhuman is dead even while walking the earth.

Today, when dark clouds have again enveloped Kosovo and Metohija, we need to remind ourselves and others of the truth that no one ever asked us whether we wished to be born in this or that people, in this or that land. For this we cannot be commended nor blamed. But, whether we will remain as people or inhumans, that depends on us—just as it depends upon us whether we shall live or disappear before God and mankind.

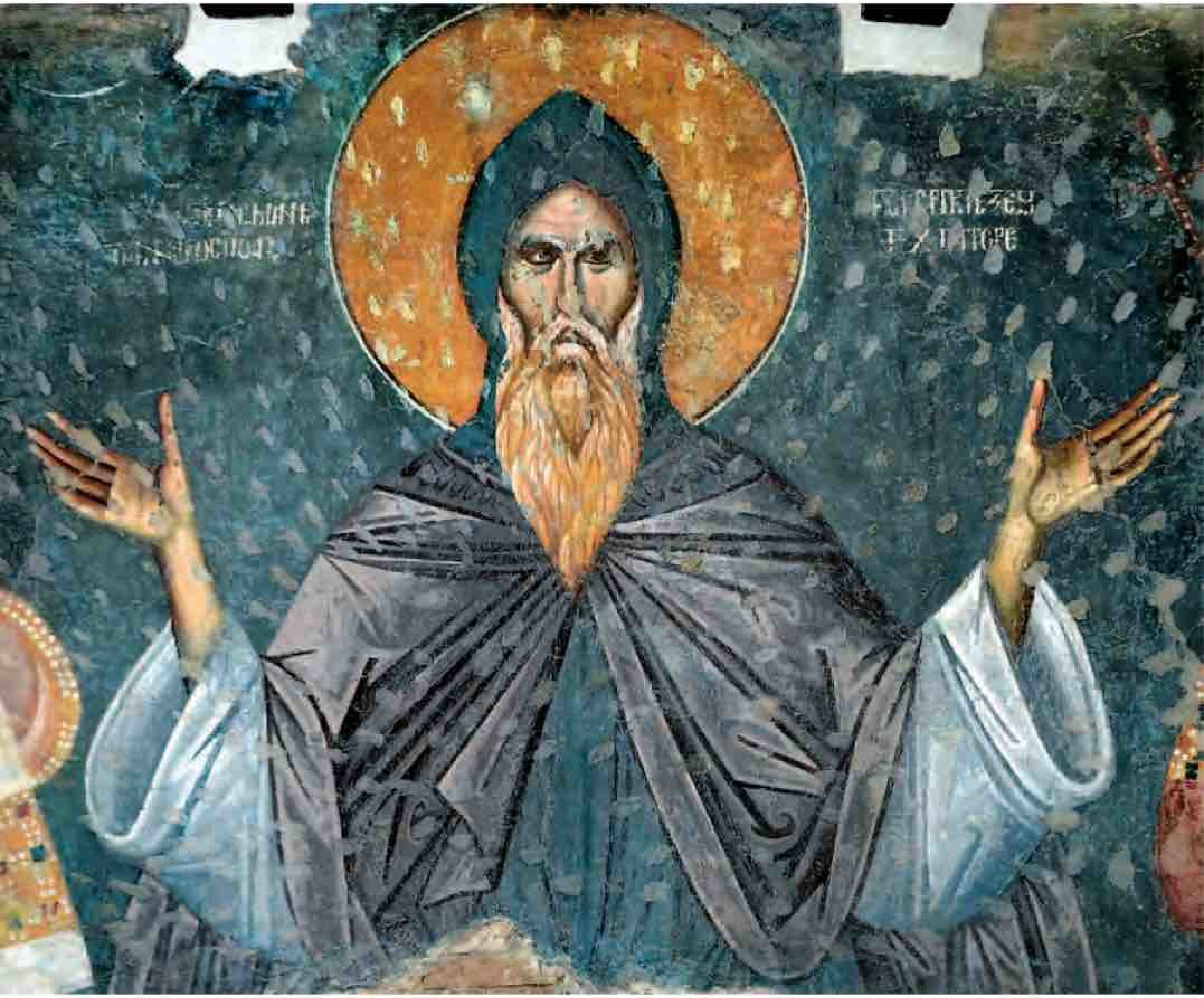
I believe that all those who participated in the publishing of this book did their best to present that which we accomplished through the centuries of our existence in this region, as well as our contribution to the struggle for freedom and justice in the world. It is good to ponder: what would the Serbian people be without their churches and monasteries in freedom or in bondage? What would we be without them, even today, before ourselves and before the world?

I owe a deep debt to these individuals who gave of their labor, as well as to those who donated their means, that this truly encompassing book could be produced. In the legacy of our Serbian land, Kosovo is our debt before God and before these suffering people who—living in their scattered homes—protect these holy places that belong not only to Serbs but to all of enlightened humanity.

Pavle of Raška and Prizren



Forward to the first edition of *Zadužbine Kosova* (*The Endowments of Kosovo—Monuments and Testimonies of the Serbian people*, Prizren-Belgrade, 1987). The late Patriarch Pavle (1914–2009) spent 33 years in Kosovo as a bishop and he often expressed his concern for the people and cultural heritage in the area.



Saint Simeon-Stefan Nemanja, Grand Župan of Serbia (1166–1196), narthex, west wall, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

Introduction

Maxim Vasiljević, Bishop of the Serbian Western American Diocese

Consider a Kosovo forever empty of the Orthodox Christian presence and spiritual radiance? "Of course not," a monk of old might have said, perhaps adding, "It isn't possible to talk about the Christian heritage of Kosovo unless there is *somebody* there to talk about it." Indeed, no understanding of this tremendous heritage would be possible without a real presence and meeting, without some measure of "congeniality" and spiritual sympathy. Beyond peripheral differences and worldly interactions and views, beyond the logic of West and East—the *Christian heritage of Kosovo and Metohija* testifies to a sign of the love of God. This heritage, like an outburst in the stillness, dissipates the deceitfulness of delusion. Eventually, it grants the truth of life as a cherishing of freedom and harmony for everybody on this *terra sacra*.

The area known as Kosovo and Metohija has had a dramatic and often violent history. During the early Middle Ages Kosovo was a part of the Serbian empire. It was Christian, and many churches and monasteries were built in the area; their walls were richly decorated with precious frescos. From the 15th century until World War I Kosovo was controlled by the Muslim Ottoman Empire, and later (after 1912–1918) it became a part of Serbia and Yugoslavia. Kosovo is not only the cradle of Serbian statehood and culture, it also comprises 15 percent of the territory of Serbia, a democratic state with as much a right to territorial integrity as any other member state of the United Nations. Historically speaking, the enduring monuments in the lands known as *Serbia sacra* are the result of the farsighted need of the autonomous Christian Church and Serbian state to master human destiny's ephemerality with a sense of perpetuity. They attempted to erect and establish a lasting identity amid the flux of time—mostly through art and culture and sometimes through wars and struggles—in an attempt to defend their national identity.

Certain books resist obsolescence because of their continuing relevance for ongoing dialogue and witness. *The Endowments of Kosovo—Monuments and Testimonies of the Serbian people*, appearing in 1987 in Serbian (eds. Atanasije Jevtić and Živorad Stojković) on which the book you hold in your hands is based, has played such a role. By advocating the priority of spiritual culture over politics this book has helped its readers transcend some of the ideological divisions in the politically charged atmosphere of yesterday's and today's Kosovo and Metohija. It also shows that the challenge of reconciling legitimate Serbian sovereignty with the desire of Kosovo's Albanians for self-government is not insurmountable.

This completely revised and updated edition of the book, *The Heritage of Kosovo and Metohija: The Spiritual, Historical, and Aesthetic Heartland of the Serbian People*, is in fact a new book, with more than 50 percent added documentation, testimonies, pictorial materials, and fresh historical analysis, and as a collection of testimonies has a very humble ambition. It maintains that the existence of successors and descendants determines the fundamental destiny of the sacred land of Kosovo. It bears witness to the biblical, eschatological truth that the future gives substance and meaning to the past. In that sense, "culture, when it is the most precious possession, is never the past," as André Malraux pointed out. So the same truth applies to these enduring spiritual, cultural, and theological treasures of Christianity, transcending national and political concerns. Only the "historical memory" can create self-awareness and become an incentive for survival and for securing national and human rights, as well as feelings of justice and dignity.

It is unrealistic to expect one book on Kosovo and Metohija to encompass all the crucial evidences about their art, history, and thought. This book is a living testimony to the exceptional efforts of the Serbian Orthodox Church to create a rich spiritual and material culture, preserving its centuries-old monuments and the Christian heritage of Kosovo and Metohija. The book conveys a wealth of information and provides valuable new insights into the telling testimony of richness of Serbian culture in its southernmost province. Facts presented here in superabundance are accumulated from over the course of more than eight centuries on this much-ploughed Balkan soil. It should be noted that the new English edition draws a large amount of material from the 1987 Serbian publication, including the Foreword from Patriarch Pavle of blessed memory. It contains texts from our noted historians, theologians, artists, and journalists. Most important of all, translated historical documents and charters, various historical chronicles, and recent communiqués and reports testify to our tragic fate in Kosovo. What gives life to the past and scope for future creative endeavor is precisely both the facts themselves and the interpretation of those facts. All of the contributors fully embrace the given opportunity to share in the presentation and affirmation of the Serbian people's cultural values by publishing this book. Their work aims to nourish the reader's personal reflection and seeks to stand as a verbal and pictorial monument to the martyrs of the great Kosovo Covenant, bringing the wealth of this covenant before the public worldwide.

The editor and publisher have the fervent hope that today's peoples in Kosovo and Metohija will be able to begin their discussions not from what divides them but from what unites them, emphasizing in positive and constructive ways the areas in which a Serbo-Albanian ethnic symbiosis has existed. This book invites all to consider their differences in the light of history and of the future.

There are already grounds for claiming that *The Christian Heritage of Kosovo and Metohija* will serve as a symbol to us and to all future generations indicating that, in spite of

all the temptations of history, it is they who will ensure that our Kosovo testament will be lasting. It does not invite anyone to a misanthropic and armed rebellion, but aims to resurrect, awaken, develop, and nurture in the Serbian people and all people of good will the ethos of true spirituality characteristic of the original *Kosovo Covenant*.

This book on Serbia's Christian Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija, its heartland in medieval times and through Ottoman domination, is intended to introduce to a wide reading public the oldest and richest treasury of Serbian medieval history and culture. Its authors are leading specialists in the fields in which they write, so readers may place complete reliance on the factual accuracy of the material.

Many of the monumental churches, monasteries, and treasures in Kosovo and Metohija have been plundered or destroyed by Albanians, but the best-preserved and the most beautiful among them—Ljeviška, Dečani, Gračanica, Peć, these foundations of the Serbian medieval kings, witnesses and testaments of our forefathers, and UNESCO World Heritage Sites—have been bequeathed to later generations as a testimony of a community of men founded on justice, law, and tolerance in all areas of social life. This reality can be seen from many chronicles, charters, legends and, most explicitly, from *Dušan's Code*, that great product of Nemanjić statesmanship. The Serbs justifiably feel pride at being the descendants of holy men and women, pious kings and princesses, and of those living in solitude far from the paths of power and glory, all of whom believed it was their duty to leave to posterity traces and records of the events of their time. Those events happened in a certain context, which we call "sacred history."

As a result of a number of historical, political, economic, demographic, and other factors, the situation in Kosovo has become a dangerous generator of the most recent crisis in the Balkans. In the culmination of the wars that followed the breakup of Yugoslavia, the "Christian" nations in NATO chose Easter 1999 to bomb Christian Serbia into submission and end Serbian control of Kosovo. In 2008 Kosovo declared itself independent from Serbia. The rich cultural and Christian heritage that survived Ottoman and communist rule is now at risk and targeted for destruction in spite of UN protection.

To put it simply, as Serbian *terra sacra*, Kosovo is sacred ground to Serbs, like Jerusalem is to Jews; that is why "the cradle of Serbian nation" is there. The full title of the Serbian Patriarch is: "Archibishop of Peć, Metropolitan of Karlovci-Belgrade Mitropoly, and Patriarch of Serbia." This title as well is a reminder that (also in the heart of Kosovo and Metohija) Peć was the center of Serbian spirituality for centuries, while the seat of the Serbian Patriarch and archbishops was the monastery situated at the River of Bistrica's outlet from Rugovska Gorge.

Therefore, Kosovo is the cultural, spiritual, historical, and aesthetic heart of the Serbian people. As such, the monuments and objects of material and spiritual culture in Kosovo and Metohija constitute an indisputable 700-year-old proof of the Serbs' rightful ownership of the sacred land. As a contemporary Serbian poet penned: "If Kosovo is not ours, then why do they want us to give it to them? If Kosovo is theirs, then why are they stealing it? And since they are able to steal it, I don't know why they are hesitating so much."

The chapters contained in this volume aim at tackling the subject of the Christian heritage in Kosovo and Metohija in different ways.

Chapter I displays the aesthetic endowments and insignia of Kosovo and Metohija. Here we encounter a visualization of an extraordinary story of life as well as a comprehensive analysis of an expanded Serbian cultural framework that represents one of the summits of Byzantine-inspired Serbian architecture. The leading monasteries founded by the Nemanjić dynasty (Gračanica, The Mother of God of Ljeviška, St. Stephen's Church in Banjska, Dečani, and The Holy Archangels)—with their unparalleled frescos—contain icon paintings showing the sovereignty of the state and continuity of Serbian rule, along with relics of canonized rulers. Its Great Church (the Peć Patriarchate) holds relics of canonized leaders of the national church. These sites, together with many other monasteries and a dense network of small parish churches all over Kosovo and neighboring regions, represent the basis on which the Serbs formed and consolidated their national consciousness and built up a national and cultural identity.

These monuments, then, concentrated and deployed over one territory, are national boundary-stones. The only intact survivors of the Turkish-Albanian Muslim devastation of these parts, they are still active centers of Serbian spiritual and national consciousness.

Original texts, written by experts in their individual fields, accompany the photographic plates and clearly demonstrate that Serbia's architectural and art monuments in Kosovo rank among the finest achievements of medieval Europe, while the literary creations from this region represent the very foundations of the Serbian written word, which helped form a national consciousness during this period. It was rightly said (in the Serbian Memorandum to the ambassadors of the European Powers in London in 1913) that this territory is a kind of "Holy Land" for the Serbian people; for it was here in the Middle Ages that they attained a high degree of civilization, and it is on the achievements of this period that their European identity rests. The paintings, form, spatial composition, structure, and architectural decoration of these monuments clearly reveal the creative synthesis achieved by Serbian artists from the Late-Byzantine period. The iconography of the paintings at Gračanica (1321) and Dečani (1335), as D. Talbot Rice noticed, "is in the main Byzantine, though the style is Serbian, as indicated by the love of vividness and precise detail." A new humanism characterizes these works, and it was this style that served as a basis for what Gabriel Millet termed "the Byzantine Renaissance."

In Chapter II, a large, rich, and varied selection of studies and papers, both theological and historical, inform us about the co-called *Kosovo Covenant* and its relation to Serbia's historic destiny. As one contributor in this monograph emphasizes, the original *Kosovo Covenant* is the New Testa-

ment expressed in the Serbian style and through the Serbian experience. Still, it is Christ's New Testament and not something else. The *Kosovo Covenant* does not exist outside of the New Testament. Therefore, the *Kosovo Covenant* is an embodiment of the New Testament in the fabric of our nation, in its history, in its being, and in its destiny on this Earth. The translated old Serbian literature and art inspired by the *Kosovo Covenant* are the most eloquent testimony of a level of enlightenment that never ceases to surprise us. Everything was knit and welded into a unity by the driving force of Christian faith, so that literature, art, liturgical life, and customs soon took on not only a new complexion, in conformity with the faith they served, but also a new soul. This chapter is intended to demonstrate that the inseparable unity of history with eschatology is of crucial importance for the understanding of the Christian character of the Serbian *terra sacra*.

The living and lively remembrance of its own medieval state was a dynamic cause in the Serbian struggle for liberty and unity centuries later, and an inextricable part of that remembrance is the cognizance that Kosovo is the homeland of the Serbian nation. However, the Serbs' approach to Kosovo is not simply based on memories of the past, nor is the mythical factor the most important element in their attitude. Every aspect of the memory of Kosovo contains the essence of the Serbian identity—past, present, and future. It is a remembrance of and appreciation for what we were in our past, an identification with and concern for what we are in the present, and a hope for what we are and will continue to be in the future. The same can be said of our historiographic or political reflections on the problem. Kosovo is not some imaginary legend of the past, but a real historical destiny that continues today.

Chapter III deals with the famous Battle of Kosovo. According to its ethos and historical consequences, the Battle of Kosovo left a deep imprint on the collective memory of the Serbs. That which is called the Kosovo Covenant and was epically sublimated in the form of a Gospel parallel—the Prince's supper as the Last Supper, Vuk Branković's betrayal as Judas' betrayal, the Prince's sacrifice as Christ's sacrifice—is a unique example of a conceiving of life and collective memory characteristic of poetry of supreme quality—the poetry of a patriarchal people, imbued with the Christian and epic ethos, which is also its greatest value and originality and which exceeds local and ethnic bounds.

Chapter IV contains the "Memorandum on Kosovo and Metohija" published by the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church. In this document we can follow the complex development of Serbia's history in Kosovo and Metohija during the long ages from the 12th century to the end of the 20th. The region of Kosovo and Metohija had been settled since the early Middle Ages by a predominantly Serb population. The first Serbian states of the 10th and 11th centuries leaned toward Kosovo. Under Byzantine rule, right up to its final incorporation into the Serbian Nemanjić state in the late 12th and early 13th centuries, Kosovo was, in demographic terms, a Serb-inhabited land a Serbian land when political integration began. This is borne out by historical documents (the charters of Serbian rulers), particularly by a study of the anthroponyms (first names) they contain and the original toponyms (place names)—for in Kosovo and Metohija these are all mainly of Slavic origin.

This is connected with Chapter IV, which is a testament of the various Serbian holy shrines in Kosovo—even if they have been overlooked, erased, insulted, or demolished. Looking at enlisted Christian cities and holy shrines we can see why Kosovo and Metohija were two of the most developed parts of medieval Serbia, the cradle of its civilization with the most important spiritual and cultural centers, and its central part, in which many Serbian rulers were born. Of all the Serbian lands, Kosovo and Metohija have the highest density of Orthodox church institutions, churches, and monasteries (Dečani, Gračanica, Banjska, Holy Archangels, the Mother of God Ljeviška, Devič, and many others). The most important and most valuable monuments of Serbian culture and spirituality are in these lands; some of them have been included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Through the centuries Kosovo and Metohija, with their 1,400 churches and monasteries, holy places, and grave-sites, have become for the Serbian people what Jerusalem is for the Jewish people.

Chapter V, entitled "History, Identity, Legacy," explains why it is extremely important that the Kosovo question be viewed in a historical light. If it is not, the present political situation is incomprehensible, nor can the real meaning and range of Albanian intentions be grasped. Moreover, the position of the Serbs in the Balkans is much too intricate and involved for it to be examined merely in the light of present events. For the Serbian people Kosovo put the seal on their identity, and it became the key to their history and the banner of national freedom. The Serbian province known as Kosovo actually consists of two regions: Kosovo and Metohija. One is a Serbian toponym and the other one is Greek. The name Kosovo is derived form the word "kos," meaning blackbird. Metohija comes from "metoh," indicating property of a monastery. Both regions are studded with old Serbian churches and monasteries dating from the medieval

period of the Serbian state that was centered there. Metohija received its name due to the fact that most of the land had been granted to numerous monasteries established by Serbian rulers. We are not dealing here with a myth, but a historical idea, which helps a nation forge a link with its real historical past. Cognizing the past is richer than "the past itself" because it is a renewed reliving of the past as a viable tradition, along with its appropriation and clarifying interpretation. Evaluations and interpretations offered here are objectively presented, but they are always open to scholarly dispute, new views, and fresh approaches.

Chapter VII presents Kosovo after the Battle of Kosovo. To stress the present demographic picture in Kosovo and maintain that these regions are Albanian simply because a large number of Albanians live there today is to overlook the fact that this land was inhabited primarily by the Serbian people as their heartland and, historically speaking, their motherland. There has never been any break in Serbia's attitude toward Kosovo as a Serbian national territory, no interruption in the struggle to liberate Kosovo's Serbs and make them part of the Serbian community in the whole country. Failure to observe real historical facts could result in the legalization of the consequences of genocide. And this, of course, would mean attacking an ethical principle at its very roots. So, this chapter offers a convincing picture of the time, place, manner, and causes of invasion by the Albanians and their colonization and oppression of the Serbs. After centuries of Ottoman domination, from the end of the 14th through to the beginning of the 20th century, the desire for the independence of the Serbian people became intertwined with the idea of the liberation of Kosovo.

A contemporary account of the renewed martyrdom is to be found in Chapter VIII. Instead of a real picture of Albanian-Serb relations, which for the past three centuries have been characterized by violent treatment of the Serbs by Albanian Muslim converts, we are handed the idea of "reciprocal responsibility," whereby the alleged 20-year period of "Greater-Serbian discrimination" against the Albanian population is equally balanced with the 200-year period of abuse by the Muslim Albanians against Christian Orthodox Serbs within theocratic structure of the Ottoman Empire.

The future of a multiethnic Kosovo is ambiguous and dubious. The UN has not prevented "ethnic cleansing in reverse" and the further destruction of medieval religious and cultural monuments. Over a thousand churches, monasteries and other religious sites witness to Serbian Orthodox immersion of the province over centuries. The U.S. House Foreign Relations Committee should urgently hold hearings on the status of the Serbian Orthodox Christian population and church in Kosovo—the only place in Europe where Christians live under apartheid-like conditions in the 21st century. The Serbian Orthodox Church has always advocated a peaceful multiethnic cohabitation, within mutually acceptable status solution between Belgrade and Priština.

The policy of "ethnic purity," if we take a look at history, is always racist in character. Nothing can justify it, no matter who pursues it. Least of all can it be justified by pseudo-historical mystification. On the other hand, it cannot be hushed up by a simplistic tale of peaceful, harmonious, and idyllic relations between nations and nationalities in the region. There again, the logic that says the status of a region depends on the current situation and demographic ratio — regardless of how, when, and in what circumstances that situation arose and those relations were established — is absolutely untenable in human, moral, and historical terms.

It should be noted that the illustrations in this book have been chosen from a great mass of fine materials. Their object is to illustrate primarily the quality of the artistry of Serbian Kosovo and Metohija throughout the centuries, but also the historical continuity of the Christian heritage in those lands. In this sense, this monograph is a humble offering to the international scholarly and cultural audience providing a closer insight into the spiritual and cultural values of the Serbian people through an account of the multiple (artistic, architectural, literary, etc.) achievements embodied in the unique monuments of Serbian medieval culture. Certain parts of this book have already appeared elsewhere. Many of them, however, are published for the first time here. In both cases, the text has undergone special revision in view of the present edition, which is unique in its synthesis.

Special and warmest gratitude is due to Prof. Dušan T. Bataković, director of The Institute of Balkan Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade. It has been a pleasure and a rewarding experience to have had many discussions about the contents of this book with him during the process of putting it together. The book benefited from his historical expertise and critical insights and was vastly improved by his extensive knowledge of history and art. We are indebted to Prof. Bogoljub Šijaković, professor of Philosophy at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Belgrade, for the great amount of time and work he contributed toward the publication of this book.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the authors of the texts, acknowledged as the leading specialists in their respective fields of endeavor, as well as to Denis Vikić, the designer of this book's layout. We would particularly like to thank the translators and revisers, as well as all individuals and institutions who have assisted in bringing this monograph before the public worldwide.

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Let this volume serve as proof of our gratitude to those unknown creators for the immeasurably rich heritage they have left us and to those who still remain on this *terra sacra*, in spite of all the difficulties.

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Next page:
Saint John the Baptist,
Chapel of Saint Nicholas, apse, Gračanica, 1318–1321

I

SPIRITUAL ENDOWMENTS AND AESTHETIC INSIGNIA OF KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

Gračanica Monastery, Church of the Mother of God, southwest view

Gračanica

Desanka Maksimović

If only you were not made of stone, Gračanica,
if only you could ascend to the sky
like the Virgins of Mileševa and Sopoćani,
the crows might not walk about your narthex
and alien hands weed the grass nearby.

Or if your bells, Gračanica, did not beat
like our forfather's hearts,
if only the saints on your iconostasis
did not have our builders arms and feet
or your angels Simonida's face.

If only you were not sunk so deep
in that soil and in our very selves
if you were not to us a name to swear by
if only you were not made of stone, Gračanica,
if only you could be lifted up high.

If only you were an apple, Gračanica,
that we might put you in our bosom
and warm you, cold with age as you are,
if only our long-gone forefather's bones
where not scattered about you near and far.

If only we could lift you onto Mount Tara
or move you to the churchyard of Kalenić, or try
to forget the faces painted on your altar,
if only you were not made of stone, Gračanica,
if only you could ascend to the sky.

Serbian Medieval Art in Kosovo and Metohija

Gojko Subotić

The large province of Kosovo in the south of Serbia, rich in fertile plains and silver ore mingled with gold, is no less rich in cultural monuments, churches built in the Middle Ages by rulers and church dignitaries, noblemen, clergy and monks, and—as an old notice has it—by "the impoverished and the middling poor."

Over time, Kosovo has encompassed several regions which were historically and geographically, though not administratively, distinct.[1] At the end of the war (1945), in a new subdivision of the country, an autonomous province within Serbia which covered the same surface area was given the official name *Kosovo and Metohija*,[2] which applied to two naturally distinct units, stretches of plains and the slopes of nearby mountains separated by low hillocks and saddles. A watershed divides the rivers which flow into the Black, Aegean and Adriatic seas. Its position has determined the significance of Kosovo in the center of the Balkan peninsula: at the intersection of major roads running from several directions, heading seaward. This was the "Zeta route"—the valley of the Drim River toward Scutari—the shortest connection, via Prizren, along which ran most of the traffic between the interior of the Balkans and the Adriatic Coast.

From a historical perspective, the heart of the Province's territory is Kosovo Field. Because of the fateful events which occurred there this place became deeply embedded in the Serbian consciousness and was invested early with special significance. Notes taken by Bishop Martin Segonus in the second half of the 15th century have recently come to light. Travelling toward Skoplje, he wrote that the field was roughly 70 miles long and "renowned for battles between different nations." He certainly must have had in mind the famous clash of the Serbian forces gathered around Prince Lazar and the Ottoman army under the command of Sultan Murad I himself—a battle in which both rulers lost their lives on 15 June 1389. The battle had far-reaching consequences for the future of the Balkan states, despite the fact that the first news to reach the West reported a great success for the Christian warriors. At a later date the field of Kosovo—as prelate Segonus coming from Novo Brdo knew only too well—was again a theatre of war. In the autumn of 1448, the Ottomans crushed Hungarian military leader John Hunyadi in command of an anti-Ottoman alliance, and several years later, in 1455, the Ottomans took possession of these lands for many years to come.

Kosovo had become integrated within the borders of the Serbian state as early as the end of the 12th century, during the reign of its founder Grand *župan* Stefan Nemanja. However, no monuments of art dating from the first decades of new rule have survived. Neither do remains of Byzantine structures reveal much about ecclesiastical centers from the previous age. A somewhat fuller picture is offered by archeological excavations of older fortresses that long defended these eastern frontiers of the Empire.

A considerable impetus to the spiritual and artistic life was provided by the foundation of the independent Serbian Archbishopric with its seat in the monastery of Žiča (1219). Its first head, St. Sava, Nemanja's youngest son, established bishoprics whose network relied on the tradition of the Byzantine ecclesiastical administration with the centers in ancient Ulpiana and Prizren. In connection with this, artistic activity can be simultaneously followed from the twenties of the 13th century in the cathedrals which were built or restored, but also in the modest dwellings of monks.

In broad terms, the development of art in Kosovo depended on the position that this rich region held in the life of the country. It therefore saw its greatest rise in the period when rulers lived in its towns, and Serbian spiritual leaders held court in Peć, hitherto a remote estate of the Archbishopric. The very transfer of the spiritual throne from Žiča, after its demolition in an enemy attack, is with good reason brought into connection with the proximity of the king's court, in which the head of the church was invested with a major role and duties.

In the entire art history of medieval Serbia, the sacred buildings of Kosovo, with their number and character represent the most significant part of the heritage from its age of prosperity in the second half of the 14th century. Broad prospects were opened to art at that time, with new ideas and styles arriving from Byzantium. They did not,

[1] "Not a single administrative district is known from the period of the medieval Serbian state and early Ottoman rule having 'Kosovo' in its name" (S. Ćirković, "Srednjovekovna prošlost današnjeg Kosova," *Zbornik radova Filozofskog fakulteta* XV 1, Belgrade 1985, p. 152).

[2] Until the significant changes of the Constitution in 1968.

however, exclude the traditional presence of western artistic forms that reached the interior of the country from the other side of the coast via the towns on the Adriatic Coast.

Both the social position and financial resources of those who commissioned the building were directly manifested in its appearance. In size and ornamentation, opulence of material and aesthetic conceptions, rulers' endowments differed from the more modest churches built by archbishops using less opulent materials in their seat in Peć, the interior of which was adorned by frescos interpreting in a sublime manner the specific ideas and culture of monastic life. Even greater was the difference between edifices of the highest representatives of secular and spiritual authority and the endowments of lower feudal lords, in particular modest village churches or simple caves arranged for the prayers of anchorites.

Because the church held a special position within the Serbian state, the influences exerted by the cultures of the East and the West, with the Greek and the Latin and their respective religious and literary traditions, were felt more acutely in the life of the Kosovo region than they were elsewhere. Nevertheless, the spread of Byzantine literacy played a decisive role, and with it various genres of domestic theological literature, which evolved until the 10th century.

On the other hand, there were stylistically heterogenous forms existing in parallel, intertwined in architecture and sculpture, occasionally producing startling symbioses. Coexisting for years in a mutual tolerance which might surprise the uninformed, artists, regardless of their own religious affiliation and artistic training, respected the character of the other existing denominations and fulfilled in a solicitous manner their cultural requirements to the last. A telling instance of religious breadth is the fact that King Stefan Dečanski (1322–1331), recollecting years spent in asylum in the monastery of Christ the Pantocrator in Constantinople, decided to devote a large mausoleum church in the monastery of Dečani to the same patron, but entrusted its construction to Franciscan Vitto, a member of the Friars Minor of Cattaro.

These coordinates can be comprehended fully only with a broader insight into the economic and social life of medieval Serbia. Its economy was considerably boosted by the exploitation of mineral resources on the territory of Kopaonik and Novo Brdo in particular, dating to the early 14th century. Mining was introduced to Serbia by a group of Silesians who were assimilated over time, but retained technical terms for their work and kept the Catholic faith. This religion was also shared by numerous merchants and lessees from Dubrovnik, Cattaro and elsewhere, who had their colonies in mining settlements and marketplaces, and raised churches there. Rich coastal archives offer a wealth of data on the travels through Kosovo or permanent sojourns there by people from the coastal area, dubbed *Latins* by the people of Kosovo because of their religion. High office and assignments of significance at the Serbian royal court were entrusted to members of patrician families from the coastal region, primarily from Cattaro. Versed in all manner of jobs, these men were most frequently in charge of the royal purse. Their names are encountered in the West, whither, as they were acquainted with circumstances there, they travelled to

Ascension of Christ, Church of the Holy Apostles, dome, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1260

conduct negotiations, often delicate and long, especially when the possibility of union was being discussed at the papal court.[3] Initiatives of this kind came from both sides and, most of them, interestingly, in the first half of the 14th century. The permanent association of the country with the tradition of Orthodoxy, however, at whose great

[3] The bond between the Serbian royal court and the people of Cattaro is perhaps best expressed by a famous episode from the time of King Uroš I, 1247, when a conflict broke out between the Archbishoprics of Bar and Dubrovnik. Refusing to recognize the jurisdiction of the Dubrovnik prelate over their territory, the citizens of Bar and their clergy drove away envoys from Dubrovnik (who, in their defense, had made mention of the Pope) with abuses and cries: "Quid est papa? Dominus rex Urosius est noster papa" (S. Stanojević, *Borba za samostalnost katoličke crkve u nemanjićkoj državi*, Belgrade 1912, 105–106; *Istorija Crne Gore*, II, 1, Titograd 1980, 22–23 (S. Ćirković).

Resurrectional Appearances of Christ,
altar vault, Dečani, ca. 1339

center, Mt. Athos, Stefan Nemanja built the monastery of Hilandar for the monks of his "blood,"[4] was never seriously called into question by such ideas.

When Milutin conquered lands to the south and married Princess Simonis, daughter of Andronikos II in 1298, Serbia's connections with the political and social life of Byzantium, its institutions and customs grew closer yet. At the same time spiritual ties were strengthened, particularly with Mount Athos, where ideas and the monastic life provided a special school to eminent prelates, men of letters and translators. Artists, summoned to work for rulers and ecclesiastical dignitaries, came to Mt. Athos from conquered Byzantine provinces and the larger cities, primarily Thessalonica.

Although by the close of the 13th century the territories to the south of Skoplje were within the Serbian state, the courts of King Milutin were located in Kosovo, in a lowland region. These rather small towns whose names

[4] The monastery was founded eight centuries ago, in 1198, with the consent of the Emperor Alexios III Angelos (1195–1203), who, in connection with this, issued a chrysobul to St. Sava.

were noted at the end of the ruler's charters, have disappeared nearly without a trace, while to the north of them remained Priština, an unfortified town in which Stefan Dušan (1331–1355) subsequently sojourned on several occasions. His successful military campaigns emboldened Dušan to proclaim himself Emperor of the Serbs and Greeks (1346). He expanded the state to the shores of the Aegean and Ionean seas, so that by the middle of the century its borders encompassed, apart from Macedonia, all of Epirus, Thessaly and Albania (except for Dyrrachium).

Dušan stayed in Prizren quite often. Prizren was a town whose character revealed, more than others, the economic advantages of its position at the crossroads of important caravan routes. Fairs were held there four times a year; merchants from coastal towns, Cattaro and Dubrovnik in particular, but also Venice, Genoa, etc., arrived from various directions, some settling permanently. Crafts and trades, particularly the production of textiles, especially silk (the silkworm was cultivated locally), were organized into guilds headed by protomasters. King, and future Emperor, Dušan, also resided in this thriving town because he was having the monastery of the Holy Archangels raised in its vicinity, in the Bistrica Valley. Within the monastery confines was a large church in which he wished to be buried. This, however, was not the first edifice of its kind in Kosovo. Before it, kings Uroš II Milutin and Stefan Dečanski had built mausolea—the churches of St. Stephen in Banjska and Christ the Pantocrator in Dečani. These churches and the complex of the Patriarchate of Peć with the Holy Apostles in its core—the resting place of the highest church dignitaries as early as the second half of the 13th century—left a distinctive mark on the architecture of the region as a whole. It was as if the example set by heads of church had inspired the Serbian kings to build monumental buildings of outstanding character where they were to rest in peace, in their new administrative center. Dušan did the same. This region signified, in a special way, his parent country, though he pushed the borders far southward in the first years of his reign, thereby stripping the territory of present-day Kosovo of its key geographical position.

Kosovo was homeland to a number of distinguished feudal families (the Musić, the Branković, the Lazarević) who continued to hold their estates, as the legacy of their ancestors, for many years. Nevertheless, the fertile soil and the ore-rich lands were largely in the possession of the rulers themselves. The endowment charters of the monasteries of Banjska, Dečani, and the Holy Archangels that have survived, attest to the fact that the sovereigns granted them enormous estates in the plains surrounded by wooded mountains, along with villages and summer pastures, thus permanently providing for the subsistence of their monastic communities. The lands of other monasteries, especially those of the Patriarchate of Peć, being added to this, it can be claimed that most of the territory of present-day Kosovo was taken by church estates. It is therefore not unusual that vast regions to the west were called Metohija, after a term of Greek origin used locally to denote monastery estates which were not immediately adjacent to the monastery (*τὰ μετόχια*).

On some of these *metochs*, as can be seen from the example of the estate of the Žiča—a monastery where the Patriarchate of Peć was to expand later on—the number of churches grew due to the monks' obligation to attend religious services. There are hundreds of village churches which are now in ruins, others the only remaining trace of which is in written sources or a surviving name—and these buildings, past and present, testify to the presence of a large population, its infrastructure and religious life for many centuries throughout Kosovo and Metohija. Along with the monasteries, town churches, and those of feudal lords, places of prayer in caves and graveyards, these places of worship comprise a dense network of shrines for which this region is often called the Holy Land. The survey of monuments at the end of the book, presented in a selective, well-documented account, sets forth only the most basic facts assembled in the field or taken from sources.

A survey of the architectural heritage including a broader overview of monuments would certainly offer a more complete picture of artistic activity, but would not provide a fuller understanding of its nature. The analysis has been therefore restricted only to the monuments which most thoroughly represent artistic ideas and realizations, starting from the simplest anachoritic cave-dwellings with places for worship, and going on to buildings raised by kings and archbishops.

Most of the survey is, nevertheless, dedicated to larger structures in which artists could express their ideas in monumental dimensions and in a most complex mode. A view, therefore, of artistic creativity within the boundaries of present-day Kosovo offers a profusion of ideas and forms. We should not, however, lose sight of the fact that early Serbian art, despite its strict compliance with the fundamental principles of the Eastern Christian church, did not adhere closely to a particular tradition or mimic established forms. Rather it was responsive to the vital styles it met with in the workshops of master craftsmen in Byzantine towns and the Adriatic coast, freely seeking for solutions suited to the views and needs of the Serbian environment.

The narrative sources which recount preparations a ruler made to endow a church for himself first draw attention to his consultations with immediate associates, frequently outlining the reasons influencing the selection of a certain patron-saint, and explaining the personal wishes of the founder as to the building's appearance. Especially interesting are the passages regarding the king's attachment to the Christian sacred buildings he wished to emulate. Writers of *Lives* were not always precise in

their descriptions, so sources of other kinds and analogies with sacred buildings in other places have enabled scholars to extrapolate the essential ideas motivating the person who commissioned the project, regarding the character of the building and its decoration. Descriptions confirm that on these issues the rulers relied on spiritual advisers, the most prominent of whom in the first half of the 14th century was Danilo II (1325–1337). The final appearance of each church was decided in consultation with artists who set out their proposals in accordance with their experience and the practice fostered in the region where they came from. These certainly gave each building a particular flavor, especially in the sculptural articulation of the whole and in façade ornamentation. In that sense, the rulers in Kosovo, as was the case earlier in Raška in the Ibar valley, gladly embraced western architectural patterns, adapting them—primarily in the design of the dome and the spatial components in which the services were carried primarily in the design of the dome and the spatial components in which the services were carried out—to the Orthodox ritual.

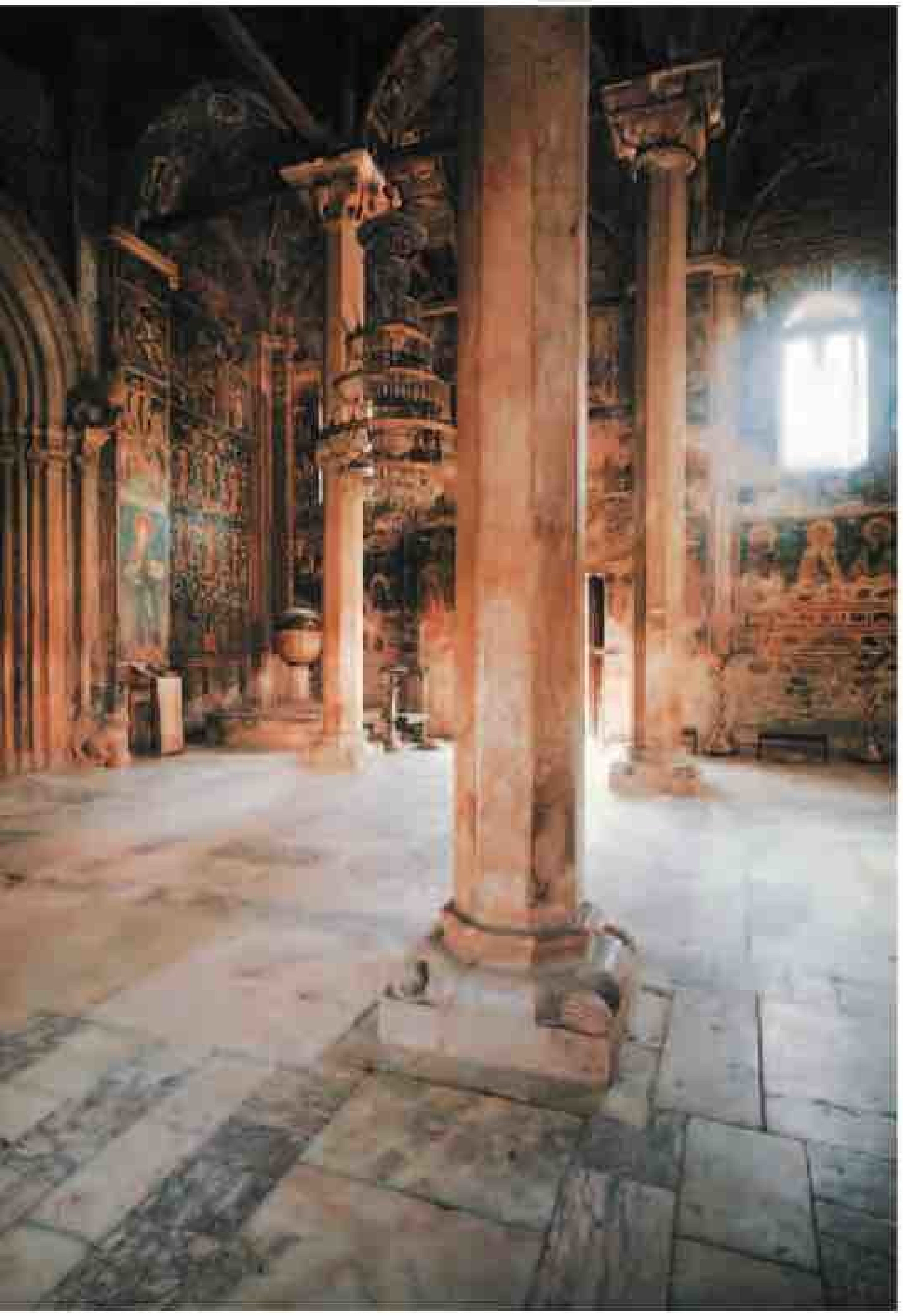
The strict artistic concepts of the Serbian clergy found more consistent expression in wall and icon painting. Western artistic experience and iconography of the western world were far less likely to penetrate their closed system. The character of sacred paintings and their meaning in the tenor of the views of the Eastern Church is discernible in small shrines with abbreviated iconographic content, while in the spacious interiors of larger buildings, where surfaces serve an overlay of meanings and functions, one can find developed, thematically connected sequences of compositions with manifold messages, frequently comprehensible only to those versed in theology. Intricate concepts translated into visual language had a long tradition in the art of the Byzantine sphere, and in medieval Serbia, its significant segment, this was best evidenced in the Kosovo churches. The frescos were the work of both local and foreign masters, and their learned advisers. Their contribution is most tangible in the wealth of historical depiction and the individual portraits of Serbian rulers, noblemen, church dignitaries and monks. Special among them are portraits of the members of the house of Nemanjić in the form of a family tree—an exuberant vine with foliage interwoven with their· images like the Tree of Jesse. These compositions appeared for the first time in Kosovo where three of four such representations have survived.

The fortunate circumstance that a number of large monastic buildings still stand well preserved, can be explained by the fact that advanced building techniques were employed to raise them. They were invariably sturdier structures than other buildings of the period. Furthermore, they were maintained and restored with greater care—the Patriarchate of Peć being a most telling instance—both in the decades when the spiritual life was declining after the fall of Serbia (1459), and after the restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć (1557) which prolonged the existence of the Serbian church and creative activity in its fold until the time of the Great Migration of Christians into northern regions across the Sava and the Danube (1690).

The Incredulity of Thomas, Church of the Holy Apostles, south wall of the naos, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1260

This tangible distinction between the well-preserved churches on the one hand, carefully built in stone, and the ruins of fortified towns on the other, once housing the royal court which were constructed using rather more modest materials, moved an anonymous poet to praise the devotion of rulers who spent their riches on endowed churches[5] rather than on palaces in the poem "Where did the treasure of King Nemanja vanish?" Milutin, as we have said, resided in smaller fortresses and adjacent towns; no

[5] The specific term *zadužbina*, or endowed church, denotes in Serbian a building erected *za dušu* (for one's soul).



Dečani, view of the narthex

The spacious interior of the Dečani narthex is separated by four slender columns into sections. The narthex is tripartite, somewhat lower and narrower than the nave. The church was built on marble slabs in three colors. Its sophisticated architecture harmoniously blends the western, Romanesque, and Gothic movements with the eastern, Byzantine style, keeping the tradition of the Serbian arts.

ruins have, to date, been discovered which would suggest that he led a lavish lifestyle.

The descriptions provided here are not consistent in proportion to each building's size and the opulence of its icons and frescos. Whole chapters could be devoted to single extensive cycles, as in the case of churches like Dečani, but such a focus would go beyond the scope of this volume. Here we intend to depict, by means of a specific selection, the nature of creative activity in Kosovo, primarily its monumental aspects—architecture, sculpture and fresco. In time, the appearance of church interiors altered: they were lavishly embellished with candelabra and choroses, icons on the altar screens and proskynetaria, gold and silver vessels, vestements of priests, curtains, epitaphioi and other fabrics, most frequently embroidered with gold and silver, and then analogia in wood-carving and intarsia, thrones and other church furnishings. A part of these objects is now held in collections whose existence is only noted here. Preservation of a building, in most cases its frescos, over centuries of Ottoman rule, is sketched in broad outline. An occasional illustration or incidental reference will nevertheless conjure for the reader the former opulence of the interior, best evoked in the ambience of the church of Christ the Pantocrator in Dečani.

Countless Kosovo shrines are in ruins or they have vanished serving as sacrificial offerings toward the preservation of the larger buildings which have survived all subsequent turmoils. These enduring monuments in the lands known as Serbia sacra are the result of the far-seeing need of the autonomous Christian state and church to master the transience of human destiny with a sense of permanence. Referring in specific to the artistic and spiritual heritage of Kosovo, Andre Malraux, author of *The Metamorphosis of Gods* said: "Culture, when it is the most precious possession, is never the past" (*Revue des études slaves* LVI [Paris 1984] 466).

The Sacred Land: Art of Kosovo,
The Monacelli Press 1997, pp. 7–14.

Countless Kosovo shrines are in ruins or they have vanished, serving as sacrificial offerings toward the preservation of the larger buildings which have survived all subsequent turmoils.

The Glory of Byzantium and the grandeur of Serbia

"Roman statecraft, Greek culture, and Christian belief are the three wellheads of Byzantine development. If any of these three had been missing, Byzantium as we know it could not have existed. It was only the synthesis of Hellenistic culture and the Christian religion with Roman governmental forms which could have caused that historical phenomenon, known as the Byzantine state, to arise" (G. Ostrogorsky).

It is said that Emperor Justinian (482–565) was born in present-day Kosovo in Ulpiana (today Lipljan, close to beautiful Gračanica). During his reign the Serbs had started moving down to Byzantium—certainly to be baptized, in God's wise and saving providence. They then learned and acquired much of what Justinian bequeathed to them from the Illyricum, that is, today's troubled region but still the cradle of Europe: the Balkans. During the Great Migration of Indo-European peoples, the Serbs finally settled in the area of present-day Kosovo and Metohija in the seventh century and soon thereafter became Christianized joining the Christian civilization of Orthodox Byzantium. Attesting to this is the existence of over 1,300 churches and monasteries, especially near Prizren, Peć, Istok, Klina, Mt. Čičavica, Novo Brdo, and the region of Pomoravlje. Among the pious endowments in Kosovo and Metohija are several important religious, cultural, and historical monuments, such as the Patriarchate of Peć, Visoki Dečani, Gračanica, and Bogorodica Ljeviška, unique in the world's spiritual and cultural heritage.

The best churches in Orthodox Serbia constitute a eulogy of Hagia Sophia, the Church of Churches—of the Holy Wisdom of God in Constantinople, which is beyond all philosophies and philosophers, all architectures and architects, as an image and type of the Church—Ship of Christ. Blessed are they who have selected this Church-Ship, "the boat of Christ which will never sink," as St. John Chrysostom (4th century) would preach from the ambo which still stands in front of Hagia Sophia today. Beauty will be dead, untrue, if the mystery of the Body, the sacrifice of Christ, the House of Bread, Bethlehem, outside of which there is neither salvation nor eternal life, is not incarnated in it. And the Hagia Sophia has remained a model for all the churches of God, throughout the world and throughout the centuries.

In Byzantium, Sava Nemanjić managed to secure autocephaly for the Serbian Church and became the first Serbian archbishop in 1219. In the same year Sava published the first constitution in Serbia—St. Sava's *Nomocanon*. This legal act was the compilation of Civil law, based on Roman Law, Canon law, and the Ecumenical Councils. Its basic purpose was to organize functioning of the young Serbian

Church of Saint Sophia in Constantinople (Istanbul)

kingdom and the Serbian church. The Medieval Serbian Empire rose from Byzantine patronage. There is a tendency which wishes to showcase the Serbian conceptual system as indigenous, even though it is not, for Serbs have been nurtured by the Iliad and the Odyssey and the classics—otherwise one cannot explain why Plato, Plutarch, the Ethiopian prophetess Sibylla and others, are portrayed on the northern arch of the Cathedral of Ljeviša—as well as Byzantine philosophers, the Fathers of the Church.

The Nemanjić dynasty left to Serbia masterpieces of religious art combining Byzantine, Western, and local styles. Serbia's sophisticated architecture harmoniously blends the eastern, Byzantine style, with the western, Romanesque and Gothic movements, keeping the tradition of the Serbian arts. Serbia dominated the Balkans under Stefan Dušan (1331–55). He proclaimed himself emperor, and wrote a new legal code combining Byzantine law with Serbian customs.

Remaining to testify about Kosovo and Metohija as the center of the ecclesial, governmental, and social authority of "all Serbian countries" are not only the magnificent temples of monasteries Dečani, Gračanica, The Mother of God of Ljeviša, and of the Peć Patriarchate, preserved until our day, but also the imposing ruins of the churches such as Asceterion of Peter of Koriša, The Mother of God of Hvosno, the Holy Archangels, Banjska, Novo Brdo, Zvečan, Ubožac, Ajnovac, and tens of our other rulers' and feudal lords' pious endowments (foundations) from the 13th and 14th centuries. Some of these monuments rank among the highest artistic creations of the Christian civilization. Yet, these landmarks and historical sights were never the only ones; they were followed by hundreds of rural churches, monasteries and temples which represented (and partly some others as well) a firm foundation in the evolution of our culture and arts.

Even when Serbia had fallen under the Ottoman yoke, good artistic work was still produced, although it lacked the brilliance of that done before about 1320. It is the paintings of the earlier period that constitutes the true glory of the Serbian contribution to the story of art.

Constantinople—a composite view of the 6th to the 11th centuries,
painting by Jean-Léon Huens (1921–1982), from *National Geographic*, December 1983

Serbia's Monuments in Kosovo and Rascia (Raška)

Alex Dragnich and Slavko Todorovich

VISITING the territories of former Rascia (Raška) and Kosovo, one encounters many visible landmarks that are witnesses to Serbia's medieval grandeur. An extensive discussion of these art monuments is beyond the scope of this study. Rather, in this brief chapter some of the surviving monuments will be examined as documents of Serbia's cultural legacy in Kosovo and adjoining areas.

Serbia's (Raška's) opportunity to firmly establish its cultural presence in the Byzantine-dominated Balkans came with Serbia's methodical consolidation of her rise as a political power under a single and powerful leader. This evolution in Serbia's medieval history was particularly active in the latter half of the 12th century, when the Latin West, led by the Venetians, struck against Byzantium during the Fourth Crusade and finally sacked Constantinople in 1204. Serbia was thus presented with circumstances favorable to the advance of its own political and religious cause, due in no small part to the divisions within the Byzantine Empire, divisions that lasted until the restoration of the empire in 1261 under the Palaeologan dynasty.

Nemanja, the founder of Serbian medieval statehood, deserves the credit for not missing the chance to advance the Serbian cause politically, and his son Sava was equally responsible for expanding Serbia in the realm of culture and art. Nemanja was certainly aware of the need for a strong Serbian political unit that required cultural manifestations that could easily be identified with the Serbian people. The choice of Sava to implement these political and cultural plans was not accidental. As a politically astute leader, Nemanja knew that the great centers of Constantinople and Thessalonika in the east, and his own Zeta littoral in the west, were culturally rich but stylistically diverse regions. Byzantium abounded in artists of every kind, while the coast of Zeta provided stone masons of unparalleled skills. But it was only under the generous patronage of the members of the Nemanjić dynasty, and above all under the sage and brilliant guidance of Sava, that these two different artistic outlooks could be united to produce from old tradition-bound forms new and creative combinations that could easily be identified as the art style of Raška.

Sava, a Mount Athos monk, scholar, and theologian trained in Hilandar Monastery, was eminently prepared to build the foundations upon which a national culture would grow within the religious environment of Eastern Orthodoxy. As a man of his time, a diplomat above all, serving his newly-born state, he had the opportunity to know most of the leading figures of the era—from emperors sitting on the various thrones of segmented Byzantium to the heads of Churches and spiritual leaders of monastic communities from Nicaea and Jerusalem to the shores of the Adriatic and beyond. In his travels he became acquainted with architecture and religious art in the churches and monasteries throughout Byzantium and all the way to the Holy Land.

Sava learned from the treasured stores of knowledge safeguarded in monastic libraries. He must have known personally many of his contemporary learned authors and theologians, either as friends or adversaries. He was able to commission from Constantinople works by some of the most outstanding painters of that period. Never again in its history would Serbia have a son of his stature and impact. He was the youngest member of the family, whose father was to follow in his footsteps as a monk, and whose ruling brothers would listen to and heed his advice.

Abroad, the Byzantines were distrustful of him (the Greek archbishop of neighboring Ohrid anathematized him when he succeeded in gaining autocephaly for the Serbian Church), but still needed him. The Bulgarians revered him, while the papal alliance avoided dealing with him.

When the Byzantines and the Latins were dividing the Balkans, Sava made sure that the dividing line did not go through Rascia. He was determined to withstand Roman Catholic religious pressures, and to establish Orthodoxy as a national faith, and through translated liturgical services to give it a Serbian character.

These unique geo-political circumstances had a lasting impact upon the evolving Serbian cultural manifestations, the surviving remains of which can readily be seen not only in the former lands of Raška and Kosovo, but even and beyond Nemanja, who did not want to be remembered by castles or fortresses but by churches, and Sava proved to be a magnificent combination: a pragmatic father to construct a viable frame and a sophisticated and artistically sensitive son to fill it with relevant content. Above all, Nemanja and Sava set a precedent to be followed by the other members

of the Nemanjić dynasty, their noblemen, and high clergy—the end result being untold artistic and cultural riches, the pride of the Serbian nation to this very day.

One of the early structures sponsored by Nemanja was dedicated to a military saint, Saint George, and placed as a proud symbol on a tall promontory overlooking Nemanja's capital city of Ras. It was a single nave, domed structure and its twin-towered entrance gave it the popular name *Djurdjevi Stupovi* (1170–1171). This church was sumptuously decorated (1175) by an outstanding but anonymous artist. Due to military and other calamities, the frescos survived only in small fragments (recently the structure was restored and roofed). In spite of the losses of painted surfaces, the entire iconographic schema is clear—a lower zone of standing saints; two zones of compositions from the life of Christ; and in the dome the image of the Lord in bust.

An addition to the painted program of Djurdjevi Stupovi was provided by Nemanja's great grandson, King Dragutin in 1282–1283. Most interesting for Serbian history is the painted program of the ground floor chapel, under the entrance tower, created as a burial place for Dragutin himself. Here one sees the members of the Nemanjić dynasty, from founder onward (with their wives) in ceremonial procession approaching the Enthroned Christ. In the groin vault covering this chapel there can be seen, as a permanent document for posterity, four illustrated events: Nemanja as Monk Simeon relinquishing his throne in favor of his son Stefan; the enthronement of Uroš I as king of Serbia; Dragutin's assumption of the throne; and finally, his relinquishing the throne in favor of his brother Milutin.

Nemanja's laying of religious foundations was more than an artistic endeavor. It served political and religious purposes, but it was above all aimed at the salvation of his soul. To house his own crypt, Nemanja built a monastery (1183–1191), well-hidden in the canyon of a swift tributary of the Ibar River, to which he gave the name *Studenica*. It is to this site that Nemanja withdrew from ruling duties to become Monk Simeon, living there for over a year and a half before going to Mount Athos.

Djurdjevi Stupovi Monastery, Church of Saint George, 12th century

The Church of the Virgin, the center of this monastic complex, later served as a prototype for several other churches destined to be burial places of Serbian kings. While the frescos in the church are typically Byzantine and the marble portals and their sculptures and reliefs Romanesque, the parts taken together bear the imprint of the Serbian spirit. After the transfer of Nemanja's remains from Mount Athos to Studenica, Byzantine painters were engaged to decorate the walls of the church (1209). Most likely, Sava helped plan the iconographic program, and most certainly gave instructions about historical personages to be included. Although the painter left an inscription in Greek at the base of the dome (now only partially preserved), all other inscriptions throughout the church are in Serbian, written in large and beautifully formalized letters, undoubtedly under the explicit influence of Sava.

To the original church a large outer narthex was added in third or fourth decade of 13th century, certainly before 1234. Here, too, fragments of fresco paintings are preserved. Among the more significant ones are those in the south chapel, where one finds the oldest preserved historical compositions with specifically Serbian subjects, which together with the religious scenes indicate that they were inspired directly by Sava's writing. The historical events deal with the transfer of Simeon's relics from Mount Athos to Studenica. Also present are the dynastic portraits, from the founder to King Radoslav carrying the model, indicating that he was the donor of this addition to the Church of the Virgin.

To the south of the church stands a much smaller structure, the so-called King's Church, built by Nemanja's great grandson, King Stefan Milutin. This powerful and wealthy ruler of Serbia for almost forty years reputedly built or renovated a church for every year of his reign. Some say that this number is exaggerated, but the numerous religious structures still standing throughout Serbian lands, and even reaching to Jerusalem and Constantinople, are historical testimony to King Milutin's generosity.

The King's Church, dedicated to Joachim and Anna, with a small, single nave and domed, was decorated in or around the year 1313/14. The total iconographic program is relatively well-preserved. In the opinion of scholars, the quality of the preserved frescos is the best of this period outside Constantinople. Besides representations of the twelve liturgical feasts, saints and prophets, and cycles from the life of Christ, there are dynastic portraits from Nemanja and Sava to King Milutin (holding a model of the chapel) and his child queen, Byzantine Palaeologan Princess Simonida. Although this tiny monument endured much destruction over the centuries, a part of the king's inscription remains and reads: "...whoever alter this let him be cursed by God and sinful me, amen." The long dead king still seems to be guarding the small foundation.

Following the example of the founder of the dynasty, the sons, grandsons, and other descendants continued building churches throughout Serbian-held lands. All of these structures, with their plans, elevations, and artistic embellishments, are grouped together into a stylistic unit known as the Raška School, being distinctly different from other Serbian schools, such as the Morava School to the east and the Zeta School to the west. Raška and Kosovo were at that time a single political and cultural entity. As all things in medieval society, churches had their hierarchical order. Famous and venerated as it was, the Studenica Monastery was not the first-ranked church among Serbian-built religious structures, since it was not planned as the see of a Serbian archbishop.

Sopoćani Monastery, Holy Trinity Church, 13th century

The Church of the Ascension of Christ in the Žiča Monastery, built by Sava and his brother Stefan (after 1207), was perceived as the "Mother of Serbian Churches," and eventually became the coronation church of Serbian kings, beginning with Stefan the First Crowned. As mentioned by Sava's biographer, Theodosius, Sava brought with him the builders and marble workers "from the Greek land." For the painted decoration of this church, executed about 1220, Sava brought painters directly from Constantinople.

It is surprising that Sava, who took care of the planning and execution of so many of the early Nemanja structures, did not build his own resting place. Nemanja's grandson, King Vladislav, buried Sava in the famous church of the Ascension of Christ in his own Mileševa Monastery. This domed building of the Raška style was erected near Prijepolje probably just before the year 1218/19. At that time it was decorated with frescos, whose artists tried to emulate the noted Byzantine mosaic technique. From this church comes some of the most beautifully painted images that have been preserved in the entire corpus of Serbian medieval paintings. Among them is the elegant and serene figure of the Virgin from the Annunciation.

In 1236, King Vladislav brought the body of his venerated uncle to this church. Sava died in Trnovo (Bulgaria) a year earlier, while on yet another diplomatic mission, this time successfully to negotiate autocephalic status for the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. It was a difficult task for the Serbian king to bring Sava's body to his native land. Sava was so venerated in Bulgaria that Vladislav's father-in-law, the "fearless" Tsar Asen II, lacked the courage to let Sava's earthly remains be taken out of the country, fearing the rage of the local population. Some popular tradition has it that Vladislav literally stole the body of his uncle and brought it to Mileševa. Actually, he had permission from the tsar, but to avoid possible incidents the body was removed secretly. Some years later, Vladislav was also buried there.

The tomb of Sava, the first Serbian archbishop, became one of the venerated places for the Serbs. Even after his death, he had a special role in the life of his nation and its rulers. In the 14th century, Bosnian King Tvrtko I crowned himself king of Serbia on Sava's grave, an act obviously full of significance. Another nobleman, Stjepan Vukčić, assumed on the tomb of Sava the title of "Herceg [heir] of Saint Sava."

The Ottomans burned Mileševa in 1459, but the church building survived. Some 150 years later, the Islamized Albanian from Prizren, Grand Vizier Sinnan Pasha, campaigning in Hungary and dissatisfied with the behavior of Serbian homesteaders, ordered Sava's body disinterred and burned on a pyre in the Vračar area of Belgrade. The Serbian Orthodox Church declared this youngest son of Nemanja a national saint.

In the period between 1544–1557, the Mileševa Monastery became a "publishing house," printing on its own presses numerous liturgical books. The popularity of these productions among the Slavs was considerable, and some reached as far as Russia. In return, some gifts were sent from Russia to the monastery. For example, still preserved in the monastic treasury is a chalice donated by Tsar Ivan the Terrible in 1558. Mileševa had its own school where Serbian children learned to read. Among the pupils was a youngster later taken by the Ottomans into the janissary corps, the renowned Mehmed Pasha Sokolović, who subsequently rose to the rank of grand vizier in Constantinople.

Twice more, in 1689 and 1782, the Ottomans set fire to the monastery. Its turbulent history has left its scars especially strongly on the fresco surfaces. Yet, it has one of the most beautiful and moving frescos of Serbian medieval art, a detail of a larger composition, the "White Angel," still resplendent in its majestic presence.

Another Serbian monastery, *Sopoćani*, was chosen by King Stefan Uroš I as the site of his final resting place. Hidden among the gently rolling hills in the heartland of the Serbia of the Nemanjić dynasty, it lies near the ancient capital of Ras and the source of the river Raška. Its horizon is dominated by the above mentioned Djurdjevi Stupovi. In some ways it matched its founder's nature, a diffident and demure king, rather spartan in life philosophy and thoroughly unglamorous. Dedicated to the Holy Trinity, Sopoćani was built about the year 1265. Soon after its construction, King Uroš brought the body of his father, Stefan the

Mileševa Monastery, Church of the Ascension of Christ, 13th century

First Crowned, to be buried there. Subsequently, when King Uroš died in exile in Hum, his body was brought to Sopoćani. Also interred there is King Uroš' mother, Anna Dandolo, the granddaughter of Enrico Dandolo, the doge of Venice. The death of this Serbian queen is one of the most important historical compositions preserved on the walls of Serbian medieval churches.

Architecturally, Sopoćani follows the tradition of the Raška school, but the chapels used for burials make it appear as a standard three-nave basilica. Sopoćani suffered greatly from natural and war disasters, partially destroying but never diminishing the beauty of its fresco decoration. Scholars are still debating the origin of Sopoćani's master painters. Among them was one great but anonymous artist who painted the central area under the dome, as well as some of the standing figures. His brilliant work was among the most outstanding in all of Europe at that time.

As in Mileševa, the walls are painted in yellow, with coverings in gold leaf (now long lost) in order to emulate the mosaic technique. All of the inscriptions are in Serbian, and some of the faces of the Serbian archbishops (painted in liturgical procession in the apse) convey a feeling of the presence of living persons. Besides the religious compositions, there are numerous representations of scenes related to the Nemanjić dynasty. Many portraits of Serbian kings and their queens and princes, are seen under a benevolent image of the blessing Christ.

Earlier mention was made of King Milutin's generosity in the building of churches and monasteries. If space permitted, a discussion would be included pertaining to a number of other churches built or restored by him. One especially deserves mention, the renovated Cathedral Church of Prizren, the *Virgin Ljeviška* (1307). Its brilliantly painted frescos by a group of artists who worked in Ohrid (Michael Astrapa and Euthychius) still fascinate the observer in spite of the damage inflicted by the Muslims when they converted the church into a mosque. Among the religious compositions and the individual images of various male and female saints, one can also see the members of the Nemanjić dynasty, from the founder in his monastic robes to the princes who went to serve the church and the nation in religious capacities, to the richly garbed King Milutin, in his splendor rivaling the Byzantine emperor himself.

In the vicinity of Kosovska Mitrovica, between 1313 and 1317, King Milutin renovated an older church, *Banjska* and dedicated it to Saint Stefan, the namesake of the founder of the Serbian dynasty and many other Serbian kings. This structure also belongs to the Raška school and was once richly decorated by sculptural carvings. Its frescos, however, are totally lost, and the church was greatly damaged when the Ottomans turned it into a mosque. Nevertheless, the beauty of its polychromatic walls still testifies to the past splendor of the church, which was originally planned as King Milutin's final resting place. His royal ring is still preserved, bearing the inscription: "God help him who wears it..."

The last church built by King Milutin—*Gračanica*—is certainly second to none among the Serbian masterpieces. Built until 1318, it was the see of the bishop of Lipljan, and ultimately it might have been planned as the final resting place of King Milutin. It is architecturally different from the previously discussed Raška school of architecture. Its master builders did not have a Romanesque stylistic orientation; rather they turned to Byzantine architecture as the source of inspiration. The church itself is a cross-in-square plan, preceded by an open narthex, and surmounted not by one, but by five domes: the central being the largest and those at the four corners being much smaller. The exterior walls show the so-called cloisonn—technique, in which stone blocks are enclosed by bricks set into the thick mortar beds. Impressive are the soaring heights of the church, and the mysteriously lit complex interior spaces, still covered in their entirety by an almost intact fresco ensemble.

Among the standing saints and Christological compositions are the scenes of the Last Judgment (covering the entire west wall) and the portraits of King Milutin and his Byzantine-born Queen Simonida, daughter of Emperor Andronikos II. The aged king and his still young queen, splendidly dressed in their bejeweled garments, are given the crown by an angel, the messenger of God. As in the case of many paintings of saints, the eyes of Queen Simonida are dug out. This event was much later immortalized in a poem by Serbian poet and diplomat Milan Rakić, which reads in part:

"Oh, pretty image, an Albanian has dug out your eyes
With a knife when no one would see him...
But I can see, oh woeful Simonida, your long dug-out
Eyes still gleaming at me from the wall."

The names of the Gračanica painters are not known. It is a well-established fact, however, that King Milutin maintained a group of artists, whose works scholars call the Court School of King Milutin. As mentioned above, the names of some of them are known, and they came from Ohrid to work for the Serbian king. Some of these painters

The Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul

Commonly known as Church of St. Peter or simply Peter's Church is a Serbian Orthodox church, the oldest intact church in Serbia and one of the oldest ones in the region, situated on a hill of Ras, the medieval capital of the Serbian Grand Principality (Rascia), near Novi Pazar, Serbia. It is part of the Stari Ras complex, an UNESCO World Heritage Site. It was founded in the 4th century during Roman rule, while additions were made in the 7th and 9th centuries, after which it served as the ecclessiastical seat of the Serbian church, and as the baptismal church and state council site of the Nemanjić dynasty, until the last years of the 12th century. The first Serbian bishopric (Diocese of Ras) was founded at the political center at Ras, near modern Novi Pazar on the Ibar river. Ras itself originates from ancient Arsa, and it is mentioned as a Serbian town in Constantine VII's *De Administrando Imperio* (r. 913–959). The church served as seat of the Serbian eparchy, as the rotunda plan is characteristic of first court chapels. The bishopric was established shortly after 871, during the rule of Prince Mutimir (850–891), and was part of the general plan of establishing bishoprics in the Slav lands of the Empire, confirmed by the Council of Constantinople in 879–880.

Studenica Monastery, Church of the Mother of God, 12th century

Žiča Monastery
(the seat of the Serbian Archbishopric before moving to Peć),
Church of the Ascension of Christ, 13th century

left their signatures on their works, thus immortalizing themselves and their royal sponsor. In the sponsorship of artists, Milutin followed the tradition of his family. His mother, Queen Jelena, supported the school for embroidery arts, and undoubtedly many Serbian woman honed her skills there. Moreover, Milutin's brother, King Dragutin, also sponsored an art school specializing in applied arts and crafts.

Art historians in general, and Byzantinists in particular, have written volumes dealing with the style and iconography of Serbian frescos. In general, they agree that Serbian paintings preserved on the walls of these medieval churches constitute a continuity in Byzantine artistic expression during the period when the artistic production of Constantinople was severely curtailed due to the political situation of the empire in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. Most scholars also agree that Serbian art served as a link between the East and West, transmitting to Western artists, eager to learn and experiment, the venerable old tradition kept alive in the superior Byzantine technique of frescos and mosaics, as well as style. This was the period of the 13th and 14th centuries, when Byzantium was undergoing an artistic revival (after 1261), and just as the West was on the threshold of the classical revival, self-discovery, and renaissance. The center of Serbian Orthodox Christendom was the monastic complex at Peć, most often referred to as *the Patriarchate*. Located in the vicinity of the rugged Rugovo pass, a nightmare to any intruder, the walled monastery conveys a feeling of remoteness in a physical and spiritual sense. The need to hide was understandable in view of the fact that Žiča, exposed in the plains, was sacked on several occasions by the marauding Bulgarians, Mongols, and other passing invaders. Also, as the see, first of Serbian archbishops and later of Serbian patriarchs for three centuries, the monastery required seclusion. Many church dignitaries are buried there.

The complex itself consists of several churches, chapels, and a large outer narthex, all attached and forming an inseparable unit. The oldest is the Church of the Holy Apostles, built by Archbishop Arsenije in the period between 1235–1250. Some of the original frescos are still preserved. Especially noteworthy is the majestic representation in the dome of the Ascension of Christ. To the north, Archbishop Nikodemus added the Church of Saint Demetrius during the years 1316–1324. The fresco ensemble is almost completely preserved. The images are signed in Serbian, while the painter left a signature in Greek in the apse of the church. To the south, the famous Serbian archbishop, writer, and architect, Danilo II, in 1330 added the church dedicated to the Virgin. Among its preserved frescos are portraits of Archbishop Danilo with a model of the church, and his namesake, the Prophet Daniel.

There are other Serbian monasteries and churches (preserved or in ruins) that dot the landscape of Kosovo. Among these are Devič, Gorioč, and Lipljan. Some of these served as sources of inspiration to national bards composing verses of epic poetry, e.g. Samodreža near Priština, one of King Milutin's capitals.

Probably the most important of medieval Serbia's Kosovo cities was Prizren, Emperor Dušan's capital. In its vicinity Dušan provided for his final resting place the only structure that he had an opportunity to build as donor. The church was dedicated to the Holy Archangels. Erected between 1347 and 1352, it was one of the most magnificent of Serbian medieval royal foundations. Its grandeur was meant to match in every way Dušan's ambitions, particularly his planned conquest of Byzantium. The young emperor ordered the annual production of his silver mine at Novo Brdo to be set aside to cover the expenses of building and decorating his ambitious enterprise.

Although chronologically late, the style chosen was the Raška school. The exterior was purple and yellow marble blocks, while red stone was carefully selected for the interior. All of these colors had royal connotations. No expense was spared on the interior, resplendent in marble encrustations, gold leaf in vaults, silver stars, and lavish mosaics. A magnificent mosaic floor was in the process of execution when Dušan's sudden death resulted in bringing his body for burial there.

When the conquering Ottomans came to the region in 1455, this beautiful structure was almost completely destroyed. The conquerors ordered the building razed, and the marble blocks reused for Sinnan Pasha's mosque. The excavations between the two world wars, and after World War II, yielded a few precious fragments which attest to the church's past splendor, and some of the large foundation stones remain. In the post-World War II period, Emperor Dušan's remains were brought to Belgrade to rest in Saint Mark's Church, built in the interwar period as a large replica of Gračanica.

Katholicon of Hilandar Monastery
(Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God),
Mount Athos, Greece, 1300–1316. Photo: Slobodan Ćurčić

Serbian monastery of Hilandar (Chilandar), built in late 12th century by Stefan Nemanja and his son Rastko Nemanjić (future archbishop Sava, later St. Sava) in Mt. Athos in today's Greece was recipient of many generous gifts by the Serbian rulers and noblemen from the 12th to the 14th century. The Monastery of Hilandar obtained 96 villages from Kosovo and Metohija only, with 72 in Metohija and 24 in Kosovo. The other dependencies of Hilandar were three Vlach katuns (shepard's settlements), with circa 150 households, six churches, five monasteries, four big pastures in lower region, eleven pastures in the mountains, as well as eight vineyards and a number of apiaries and other possessions that became dependencies of monastery of Hilandar. The most generous donators were King Stefan I Nemanjić, King Uroš I Nemanjić, Emperor Stefan Dušan Nemanjić and Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović. The most rich dependencies in Kosovo were the *metochia* in Lipljan and Novo Brdo and in Drenica area, the Holy Archangels donated to Hilandar by the sebastocrator Branko Mladenović and his three sons, Roman, Grgur and Vuk Branković. In Metohija there were large dependencies from Velika Hoča, Kruševo and Prizren, up to Dobruša and Koriša area, Kosorić, etc.

Besides the Cathedral Church of the Virgin of Ljeviška, and the ruins of Dušan's church, the Serbian royal city of Prizren still guards several national treasures, such as *the Churches of Saint Nicholas, Saint Mark,* and *Ascension of Christ (the Savior's church),* dating from the 14th century, as well as a 13th century painted cave-hermitage, the Church of Peter of Koriša.

No enumeration of Serbian monasteries in Kosovo and vicinity would be complete without mentioning the majesty and serenity of the largest of all Serbian medieval churches, *the Dečani Monastery*. It was built for King Stefan Uroš III (Dečanski) between 1327 and 1335. This church, too, follows the tradition of the Raška style, although there are some elements of the Gothic. The chief architect was a Franciscan from the Serbian royal city of Cattaro, Fra Vita, who signed his name on one of the stone lintels. The names of the assistants are also known, the brothers Djordje, Doboslav, and Nikola, all trained in the Cattaro school. The naos and the narthex frescos were completed in 1347–1348. Dečani contains more than a thousand compositions, with an estimated 10,000 painted figures. There are more than twenty biblical cycles on the walls, from Genesis to the Last Judgment. This is certainly the largest surviving iconographic complex ever created within the Byzantine sphere of influence. There are royal portraits, and an immense genealogical tree of the Nemanjić dynasty. Perhaps these frescos are too numerous to have attained the highest artistic caliber.

Tradition says that the widow of Kosovo martyr Prince Lazar, Princess Milica, gave the monastery a giant candle to be lit only when the Kosovo defeat of 1389 was avenged. In 1913, at the conclusion of the victories in the Balkan wars, King Peter I Karadjordjević lit that candle, signifying the liberation of Kosovo (Rebecca West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: A Journey Through Yugoslavia,* New York, 1982, p. 985). An eyewitness insists that King Alexander Karadjordjević lit two candles on August 19, 1924. The body of the founder, King Stefan Dečanski, who is considered a martyr among Serbs, is still resting in his church.

All of these churches and monastic establishments, the religious and artistic shrines of the Kosovo region, offer obvious testimony that Kosovo was one of the ethnically strongest Serbian territories in medieval times. The foundation charters of these monasteries are among the most reliable primary sources about the population of that period, comparable to contemporary census documents. The Dečani charter, for example, lists 2,166 agricultural homesteads and 266 stock-raising properties that were deeded to the monastery. Only 44 among them can be identified as ethnically Albanian. Finally, in contrast to all of the Serbian historical monuments in Kosovo, there is not even one that is Albanian.

During the subsequent centuries, however, the ethnic picture changed dramatically. The scenes from Serbian history and the dynastic portraits of Serbian kings painted on the walls of these churches endured the flow of time. Thinned out by wars and other misfortunes, the population which venerated them did not fare so well. With these circumstances in mind, it seems appropriate to ask, could Kosovo live without a strong Serbian presence in the area? Could Kosovo continue to be immortalized through the passage of centuries only by these religious shrines and the works of art? Isolated from the people for whom they were created, are they nothing but vulnerable stones? Who brought the Albanians into Kosovo? At least some partial answers to these questions will be offered in the following pages.

Kosovo, ed. B. W. R. Jenkins,
Serbian Western American Diocese 1992, pp. 70–78.

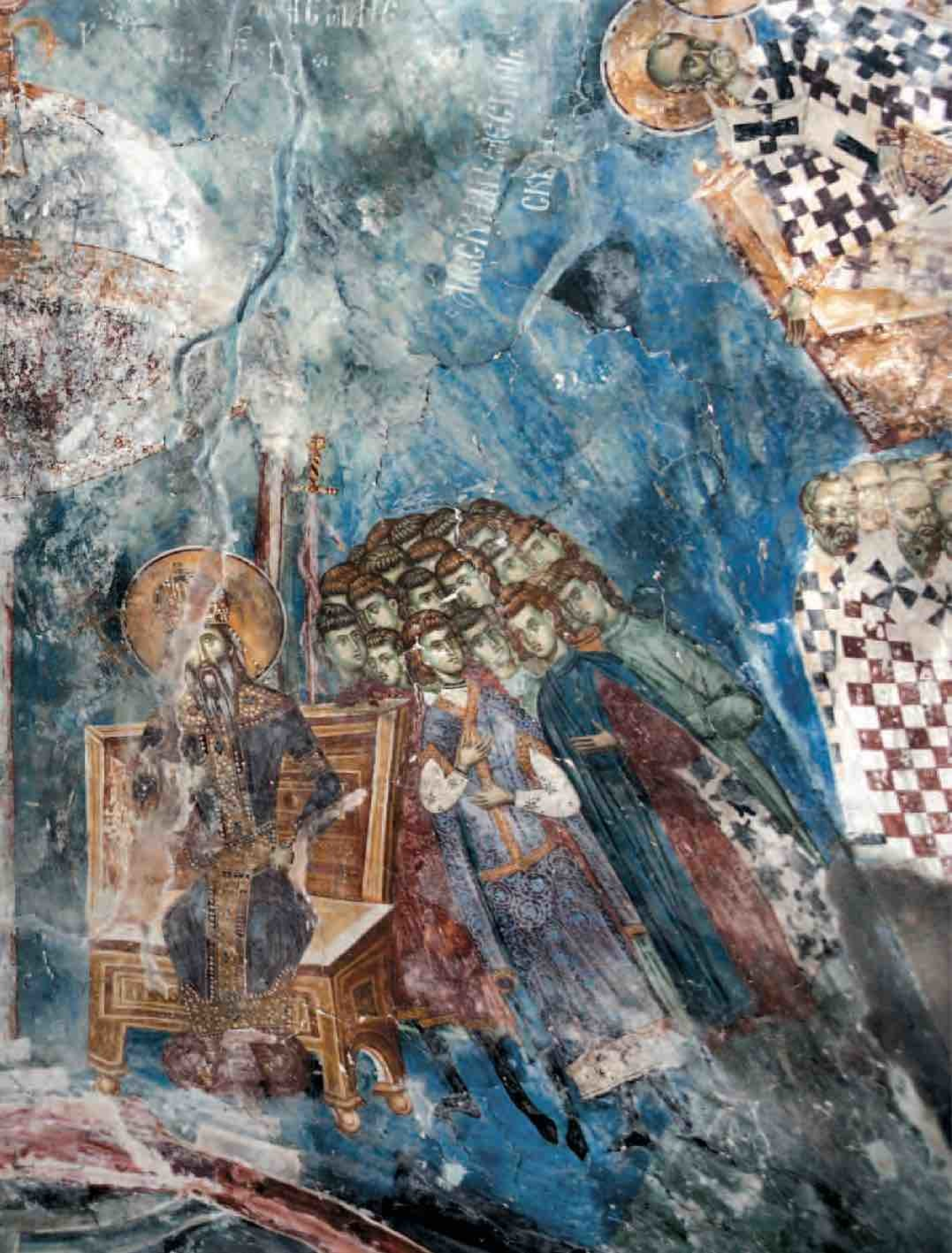
Seal of Serbian Prince Strojimir from the ninth century.
The stamp is evidence of the existence of the Serbian state in the ninth century, which is three centuries earlier than what former existing evidence have shown.

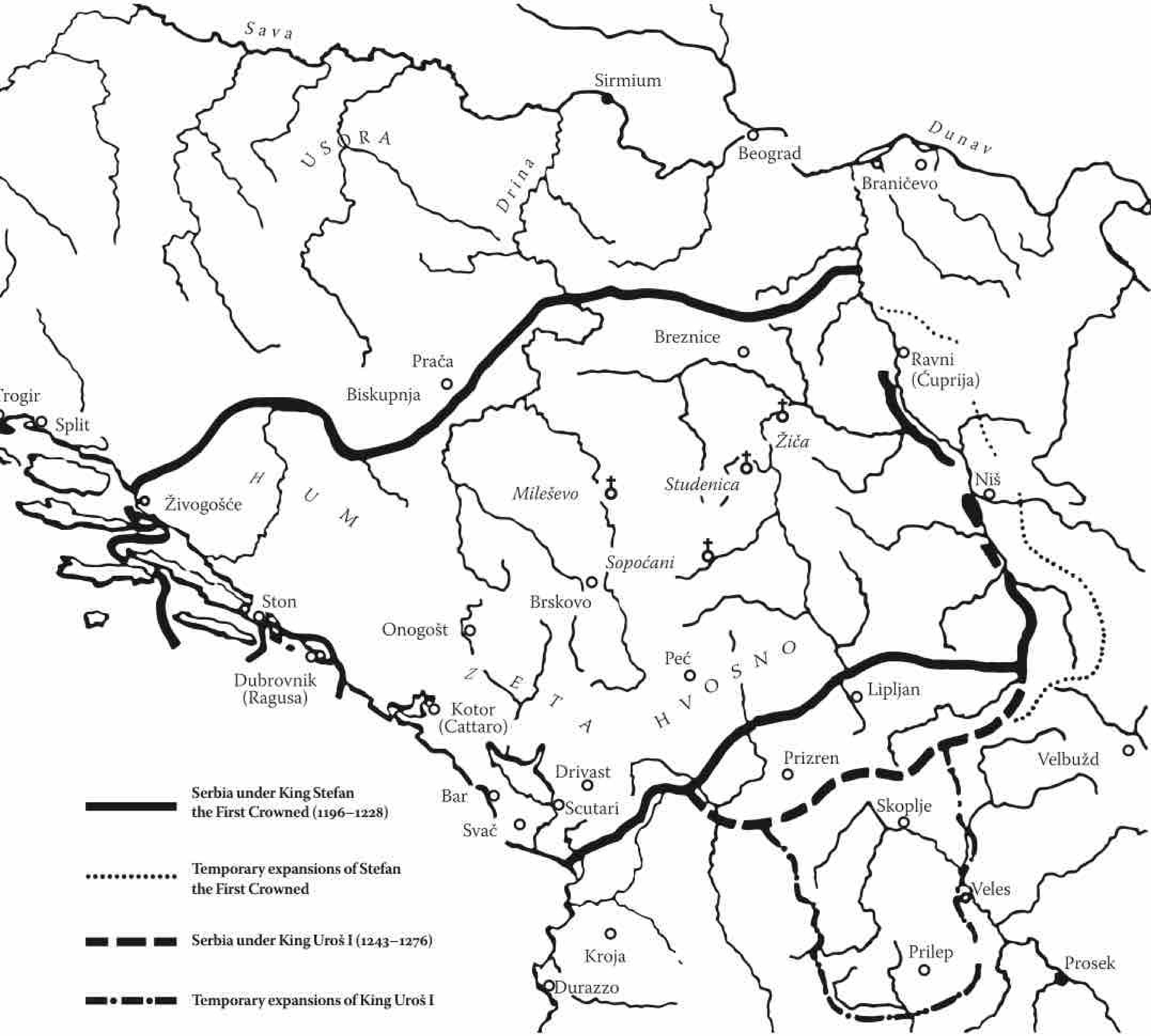
In our times, the Serbian Christian shrines in Kosovo continue to hold the attention of historians, art historians, archaeologists and conservators. A considerable number of them have been protected, and the work undertaken has brought to light new and valuable discoveries. Yet, the future of these culturally significant enterprises will depend on elementary living conditions and a readiness to put into effect international obligations contained in the convention on the protection of world cultural heritage adopted at the United Nations Conference held in Vancouver in 1976. Article no 9 reads as follows: "The right of each country is to be, with full sovereignty, the inheritor of its own cultural values which are the fruit of its history, and it is its duty to treasure them as values representing an inseparable part of the cultural heritage of mankind."

Archangel Michael, Church of Saint Demetrius,
western bay, west wall, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1322-1324

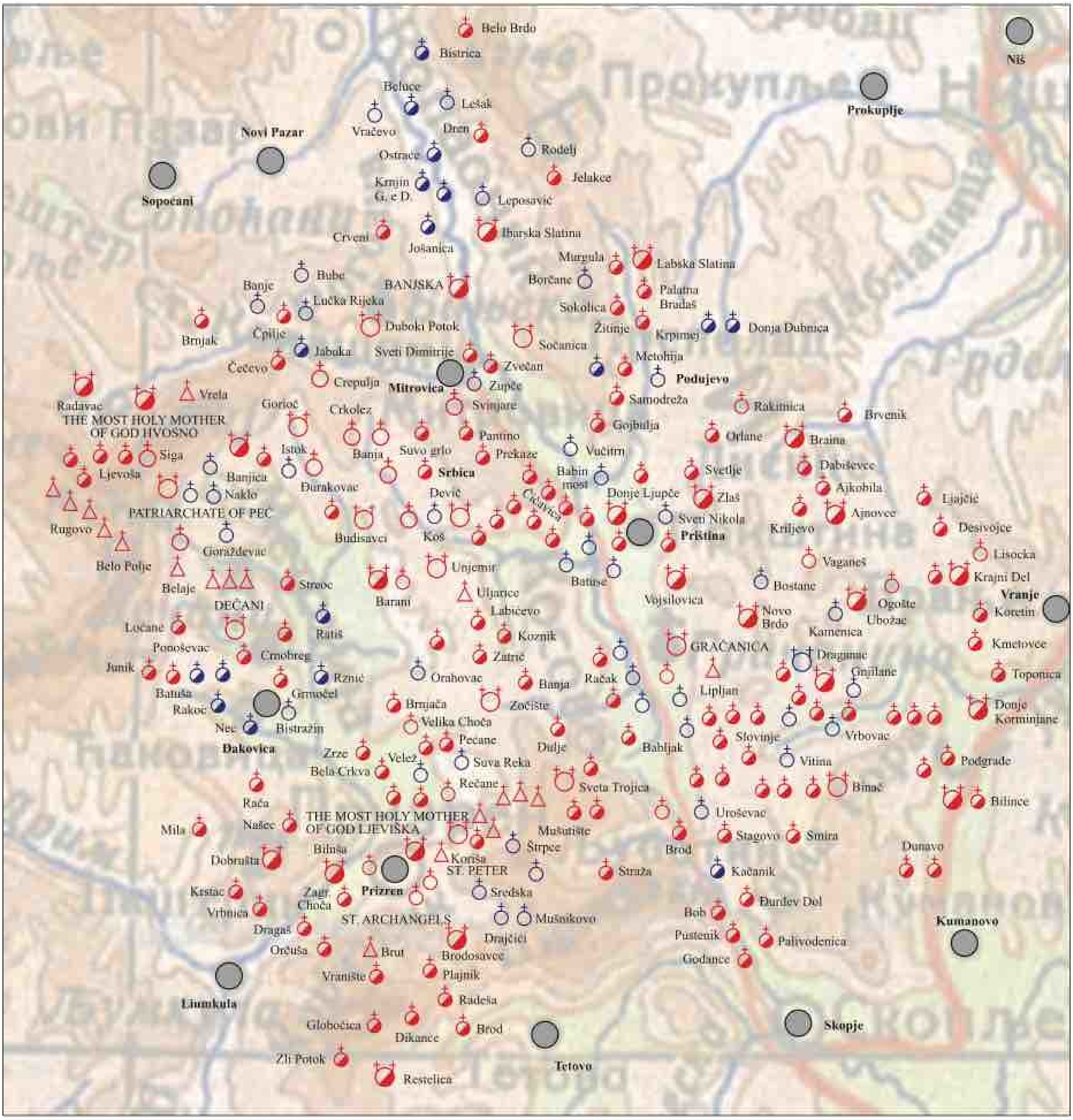
The Dormition of the Mother of God, western bay, west wall, Dečani, 1347–1348

Next page:
The Council of Saint Simeon Nemanja and King Milutin, Church of Saint Demetrius, vault of the western bay, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1322–1324





Serbia under King Stefan Nemanjić the First Crowned (1196–1228)



The significant Churches and Monasteries of Kosovo and Metohija region of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren – situation before 1999

Preserved monuments built up to 1459:

- Monasteries
- Churches

Remnants of the Monasteries and Churches built up to 1459:

- Monasteries
- Churches
- Hermitages

Monuments built after 1459 until the 20th century:

- Preserved Monasteries
- Monasteries remnants
- Preserved Churches
- Church remnants

Chronology of Serbian States Rulers and Serbian Orthodox Church Archbishops and Patriarchs

RULERS OF DIOCLEA (DUKLJA) AND ZETA

Prince Jovan Vladimir (end of 10th century–1016)
Prince Stefan Vojislav (ca. 1040–before 1055)
King Mihailo (ca. 1052–1081, king since 1077)
King Konstantin Bodin (ca. 1061–1101)

SERBIA UNDER NEMANJIĆ DINASTY

Grand Župan Stefan Nemanja,
founder of Nemanjić dynasty 1168–1196
King Stefan Prvovenčani (First-Crowned),
second son of Nemanja 1196–1227
King Radoslav, first son of Stefan 1227–1233
King Vladislav, second son of Stefan 1233–1242
King Uroš I, third son of Stefan 1242–1276
King Dragutin, elder son of Uroš I 1276–1281
King Milutin, younger son of Uroš,
brother of Dragutin 1281–1321
King Stefan Dečanski (Uroš III), son of Milutin 1321–1331
Emperor Dušan (Stefan Uroš IV),
son of Stefan Dečanski 1331–1355
Emperor Uroš V, last Nemanjić 1355–1371
Prince Lazar (Hrebeljanović) 1372–1389

DESPOTATE OF SERBIA

Despot Stefan Lazarević, son of Prince Lazar
(Prince 1389-1402, Despot 1402-1427)
Djuradj Branković, nephew of Despot Stefan 1427–1456
Despot Lazar, son of Djuradj 1456–1458
Serbia under Ottoman rule 1459–1804

RULERS OF MONTENEGRO

(center of Serbdom in 17th and 18th centuries)
Stefan(ica) Crnojević 1451–1465
Ivan (Ivanbeg) Crnojević ban 1465–1490
Djuradj Crnojević 1490–1496
Clan leaders and bishops rule
under Ottomans 1499–1697

ARCHBISHOPS OF SERBIA

Sava I 1219–1234
Arsenije I (Sremac) 1234–1263
Sava II 1263–Feb. 1271
Danilo I 1271–fall 1272
Joanikije I 1272–1276
Jevstatije I 1279–1286
Jakov 1286–1292
Jevstatije II 1292–1309
Sava III 1309–1316
Nikodim 1317–1324
Danilo II 1324-Dec. 1337

PATRIARCHS OF SERBIA

Joanikije II, archbishop
(archbishop 1338–1346, patriarch 1346–1354)
Sava IV 1354–1375
Jefrem 1375–1380/1389–1390
Spiridon 1380–Aug. 1389
Danilo III 1390–1396?
Sava V after 7.4.1396–7.10.1409?
Kiril after 7.10.1409–27.12.1418
Nikon 1419–after 1435
Nikodim II 1445–1455?
Arsenije II 1457?–1463?

SERBIAN PATRIARCHS OF PEĆ 1557–1766

Makarije (Sokolović) 1557–1571
Antonije (Sokolović) 1571–1575
Gerasim (Sokolović) 1575–1580,
1580/81–1581/82, 1586/87
Savatije (Sokolović) 1580/81, 1581/82–1585/56
Nikanor?
Jerotej 1589–1591
Filip 1591–1592
Jovan II (Kantul) 1592–1614
Pajsije (Janjevac) 1614–1647
Gavrilo I (Rajić) 1648–1655/6
Maksim 1655/6–1674
Arsenije III (Crnojević) 1674–1690
Kalinik 1691–1710
Atanasije 1711–1712
Mojsije (Rajović) 1712–1726
Arsenije IV (Jovanović Šakabenta) 1726–1737
Joanikije III Karadža (Greek) 1739–1746
Atanasije II (Gavrilović) 1746–1752
Gavrilo II 1752
Gavrilo III 1752–1758
Kirilo II (Greek) 1758–1763
Vasilije (Jovanović Brkić) 1763–1765
Kalinik II (Greek) 1765–1766

Saint Stephen the Protomartyr, Patron Saint of Serbian Medieval State and Nemanjić Family, southwestern part of the naos, Dečani

Serbia under King Milutin (1282–1321)

Serbian Despotate during the reign of Djuradj Branković (1427–1456)

Serbian Despotate during the reign of Djuradj Branković (1427–1456)

Extension of Serbia in 1433

Southern frontier of Serbia after the death of Despot Djuradj in 1456

The Spiritual and Cultural Heritage of Serbia in Kosovo and Metohija

Chrysobull seal of Prince Lazar, gold, 1379–1380, appended to document granting rights to the hospital of Hilandar

Gojko Subotić

In the long course of its existence, Serbian art, in the Kosovo region, reached its peak in the first half of the 14th century. We focus on a limited selection of buildings here, most of which date to that period, with the aim of representing the chief stylistic currents and outlining the complexity of ideas on which their sophisticated sculptural decoration and painting rely. These shrines especially exemplify the character of artwork in surroundings exposed to simultaneous influences of Byzantium and the West. In political life, this ancient duality was displayed in the existence of two Serbian lands, Raška and Dioclea (Zeta), which from the second half of the 12th century onwards permanently united their destiny into one state. In art, these dual concepts became clearly manifested as early as the era of the state founder, the Grand župan Stefan Nemanja. The churches he raised articulated, on the one hand, characteristic features of Byzantine architectural skill, even of Constantinople masters (in all probability, St. Nicholas in Toplica), while, on the other, of Romanesque style, notable in the articulation of the marble façades and the outstanding sculpted ornamentation on the church of the Mother of God in Studenica, a level of artistic achievement which was never to be attained in later years.

During the 13th century, the Raška school of architecture produced churches of monumental dimensions and harmonious proportions, but, in terms of sculptural decoration, the simple features of their outward appearances were modestly executed in the western spirit. Elements of plastic ornamentation hardly appeared on them; the church of the Holy Apostles in Peć—for a long time the only surviving church in Kosovo invested with some importance, did not have them either. Hence, it certainly is no coincidence that no major sculptural works, typical of the towns in Dalmatia, came into existence along the southern Adriatic coast in this period.

The wife of Uroš I, Queen Helen, of French descent provided a powerful inspiration for architecture in the western spirit. When she supervised the building of the monastery of Gradac on the river Ibar around 1270, she engaged master-masons who were the first to make more extensive use of Gothic elements in construction. In the modulation of portals and windows on the main church they incorporated the appropriate sculptural repertoire. At a later time in the coastal region where she ruled after the death of her husband, Queen Helen had an Orthodox church built in the vicinity of Scutari and dedicated to St. Nicholas. She also aided the construction of a much greater number of Catholic places of worship, giving support to members of the order of St. Francis. Early sources reveal that in 1288 she consecrated Franciscan churches in monasteries in Cattaro (Kotor), Bar, Ulcinj and Scutari which echoed the characteristic appearance of religious buildings of the Umbrian-Tuscan type, with a simple, elongated space that could accommodate a large number of believers.

These ambitious ventures of Queen Helen were also aided by her sons. A well-preserved inscription from 1290 states that with kings Dragutin and Milutin she had the church of Sts Sergius and Bakchos built near Scutari on the bank of the Bojana; this church was subsequently worn away by the river. With her sons dressed in royal robes and herself clad in monastic attire she is depicted praying to St. Nicholas who blesses her in the famous icon of Sts Peter and Paul which she presented to their church in Rome.

Despite the fact that she had assumed the Orthodox monastic habit, the Dowager—Queen lavishly aided monasteries of her earlier religious denomination. Milutin did the same at a later time: an inscription from 1318 relates to his merits, probably in the renewal of the Benedictine church near Scutari. By protecting his Catholic subjects, the king evidently adhered to the practice of religious tolerance cherished in his country.

Of buildings erected by Catholic, not to speak of Orthodox, inhabitants of mining settlements for their religious needs, examples worthy of attention are the fragments still standing of a church dedicated to the Mother of God in Novo Brdo, and of St. Peter's in Stari Trg in Trepča the former, like Dečani and churches along the coastal region, was built of alternate layers of red and white stone,

ΜΡ ΘΥ

while the base of the latter church, three-aisled with semicircular apses on the east side, indicates that its central part was domed as were cathedrals in Cattaro and Dubrovnik (before the great earthquake in 1667). Hence, each in its own way—i.e. in terms of construction method, dome design—was associated with Orthodox architecture in Kosovo.

Revived architectural activity in coastal towns was most certainly connected with their masters' engagement in building projects in Kosovo. Their role was especially conspicuous in the erection of sepulchral churches. It was perceivable, in some details at least, in other structures as well, even those which were typical specimens of the new, Byzantine style. Artists arrived here travelling along the valley of the Drim River, by the road linking Prizren directly with the region of Scutari and further on, by land and by sea, with other towns along the Adriatic coast.

Masters from Byzantine workshops came at invitation from rulers from the northern lands of the Empire, and with local artists they fostered a style which was to become typical for Serbian surroundings, particularly in terms of fresco-painting. Painting belonged to the inviolable sphere of Orthodox art, within which no concessions were made in Serbia. The complete and absolute acceptance of its iconographic expression, connected with growing religious needs, rendered it possible for masters from local workshops, skillful and experienced, to respond to the high requirements posed by the court. Before becoming king, Stefan Dečanski had ruled over Zeta for some time, and there he had become acquainted with the Mediterranean ambience and the spirit of Western art. After that, under the Byzantine Emperor's surveillance, he spent seven years in his capital whose edifices—erected in the course of its thousand-year history—must have impressed him deeply not only by their size and manner of construction, but also by the opulence of their interiors. His intimate knowledge of ancient places of worship and the ruler's court must have also had an impact on Dušan, who, as a boy, sharing the fate of banishment with his father, acquired his education in Constantinople. It is not simple nowadays to assess the contribution of local artists working either alone in the same spirit, or with masters educated in centers where stylistic expression was constantly changing and representations were gradually becoming an increasingly complex manifestation of theological interpretation.

In medieval Serbia within its narrower borders—preceding Stefan Dušan's conquests—the character of painting displayed fewer differences in comparison to the leading stylistic currents in the Byzantine Empire than was the case in some of its other regions with their own local traditions. The reason for this is simple. Serbian rulers and the high clergy, in constant and close touch with larger cities, especially Thessalonica, invariably summoned from their workshops the best artists who represented the latest trends in art and, moreover, directly participated in its transformation. In this connection, it is but sufficient to examine the ascent of wall-painting in the last decade of King Milutin's rule (†1321): frescos adorning the walls of all the ruler's endowments dating from this period are the creation of the renowned painters from Thessalonica, Michael Astrapas and Eutychius, or the masters from a very close artistic circle. The uncertainty of experts as to whether the frescos bearing no surviving signatures should be attributed to these Thessalonian artists, known by names, confirms in the best possible manner the unity of spirit and the recognizable kinship of expression, which from the end of the 13th century could be followed from Mt. Athos, through Ohrid, to Peć, Prizren and Gračanica.

Local artists who worked with famous foreign masters left no information about themselves, nor did the specific features of their creations distinguish them even at a later time when their participation was confirmed by signatures. A telling instance of this is the case of two great painters from the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th centuries, Metropolitan Jovan and his brother Makarije, famous for their works in Pelagonija, and in Serbia, in the Morava basin. Their creations, not only in terms of value, but also in style, closely resembled those produced by the most significant masters of that epoch, whose similar works are encountered even in faraway Cyprus. In the epoch of Stefan Dečanski and Dušan, the painting heritage of the first decades of the 14th century was evolved by domestic artists, engaged in the construction of both large and small sized churches in Serbia. This is best perceived in the painting of the spacious church of Christ Pantocrator in Dečani which took ten years to complete. Several groups of artists gathered there. They readily responded to the challenge posed by the complex and, in terms of volume, the richest subject-matter in the Byzantine world. The value of their work was in no way inferior to that of artists coming from other corners of the Empire. The remains of frescos in the formerly grand Holy Archangels, only several years younger than Dečani, show the hand of the same or related painters; a similar manner of work has been discerned in other churches as well. Furthermore, direct analogies of the large fresco-sequences could not be found in Byzantium at that time; nether s t possible, as it is in the time of King Milutin, to determine their roots in the centers in which they had been previously noted. Financial wealth and increasing requirements obviously brought about the rise of local workshops. These workshops, like others all over the East-Christian world, were, understandably, always in touch with life in the capital and other towns of the Empire.

In large enterprises, apart from the participation of local artists, a significant role belonged to the leading personalities of the Serbian Church, educated and widely cultured. Their involvement in the erection and adornment of monuments is revealed by documents, primarily endowment charters, as well as writings belonging to different literary genres. It was noticeable not only in the making of decisions concerning the appearance of a structure, the

The Visitation—The Virgin Mary and Saint Elizabeth,
Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, diaconicon, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

choice of artists and iconography, but also in the process of finding the most appropriate articulation for eclessiastical and political ideas. The multitude of historical compositions and effigies of members of the ruling house, the nobility, high clergy and monks, most frequently in the role of founders, reflects the life and understanding of medieval Serbian society. The inscriptions accompanying them accurately record the historical moment and disclose the ambitions of the sovereign, sometimes of a short duration in a changing political reality. In that, painters, even those who came from other countries, displayed a developed sense of careful attention to the spirit of the artistic environment and the requests of those who commissioned the work. In that aspect, the shrines in Kosovo have preserved the wealth of their uniqueness. In contrast to representations of saints whose images were entrenched in traditional Orthodox iconography, historical portraits, especially those of men, portrayed the person's original facial features in the majority of cases, meticulously registering the character of their clothes and attributes of their social status. St. Simeon and St. Sava, the founders of the autonomous state and church, were regular features on frescos, as were expressions of complex state and legal ideas, the emphasis always being placed on the divine origin of rule.

The representations of founders took a special place in churches which they raised for their eternal rest. In Kosovo, however, such images have survived only in Dečani, in a number not registered elsewhere: the first founder, Stefan Dečanski, got four, and the second, Dušan, even five portraits, each in a different iconographic version, invested with a special message. The lost depictions of King Milutin in Banjska, and of Dušan in the Holy Archangels, were undoubtedly particular paraphrases of the same ideas. The latter, as it has been shown, had two—in Serbian art unique—ruling portraits carved in stone, above the entrance to the church and over the tomb itself.

Serbian kings of the first half of the 14th century entrusted the design and construction of their large shrines, the carving of stonework and the painting of frescos in spacious interiors, to masters from provincial workshops, as well as to those from the coastal regions and Byzantine towns, depending on the character of the work and available artistic support. In the free selection of artistic forms, open to western concepts for the outer appearance of churches, they satisfied the requirements of the Orthodox rite in the disposition and function of spatial elements, preserving with consistency the appropriate character of wall-paintings and icons. The faithful in the Middle Ages admired such churches, but did not marvel at them: they were the expression of a specific and exciting—only for the present-day observer unexpected—synthesis that was the natural outcome of cultural circumstances and vital artistic practice. This vitality was felt in the works of the masters from other branches of art. Take, for instance, the handiwork of goldsmiths who fashioned "holy vessels" for the needs of the East-Christian cult, while decorating them with ornaments from the repertoire of western art, just as masters in that same period carve Byzantine and Romanesque (or Gothic) embellishments on the portals and windows of the churches before them.

A considerable number of feudal and town churches were erected in a more modest spirit within simpler forms. Only the rudimentary facts about them have been outlined in the appendix. Neither does this list offer a balanced testimony to their number and disposition. Those churches in towns whose remains have been insufficiently investigated, to a large extent have yet to be analyized. One need only to compare their number in towns like Ohrid, Kastoria or Verroia, which preserve their early nuclei throughout Ottoman rule, or, at least, have surviving data about Christian structures in the defters (censuses), to project how many of them may have existed in the prosperous centers in Kosovo, with wealthy mine owners or lessees, master craftsmen, merchants and artisans. It has already been stated that, apart from the local population, these places were also inhabited by "foreigners," whose social and legal status was established by law, and implied, among other things, ownership rights, exemption from certain taxes, etc. There were many citizens from Dubrovnik, Venice and Genoa among them. In addition, the mines attracted Albanians whose arrival was prompted by the expansion of the medieval Serbian state into territory to the south of Scutari.

The growing exploitation of mineral riches in Serbia and Bosnia gathered momentum from the mid-14th century since mines in Europe were being exhausted. Thus, around Novo Brdo and Janjevo where silver mixed with gold was being excavated, as well as Trepča and elsewhere, tales spread about the rich deposits. The wealth was enormous. Archival data disclose that one fifth of the total European production of silver was exported from Serbia and Bosnia only via Dubrovnik.

No churches have survived in medieval fortified towns with suburbs, or in marketplaces where, sometimes several times a year, fairs were held on particular feast-days when merchants from afar assembled offering commodities to the local population. In the last century of independence, however, no further monumental churches followed the completion of the Holy Archangels. With the

Two-light window, Dečani

revenues continually yielded by the mines, churches were built in the north, chiefly in the Morava River basin where the center of the state moved under the rule of Prince Lazar and his heirs. The monasteries on Mt. Athos were also lavishly furnished with gifts of silver. The quantities of this precious metal were expressed in characteristic liters or ounces, not in the currency unit in circulation at the time.

On the other hand, Peć, with "the throne of St. Sava," remained the heart of Kosovo spiritual life. The Church viewed Prince Lazar (1371–1389) as rightful heir to the Nemanjić and bearer of sovereignty over all Serbian lands, as expressed in his title and the manner in which he was addressed by state representatives and ecclesiastical dignitaries from other countries. The reestablishment of canonic relations with Constantinople, interrupted because of the conflict brought about by Stefan Dušan's proclamation as emperor and the elevation of the Serbian Archbishop to the rank of Patriarch, was of utmost importance both for the political position of the country and the peaceful existence of the Serbian Church. These important issues were discussed at councils in Peć summoned at Prince Lazar's initiative. Through the mediation of Athonite monks, an agreement acceptable to both churches was reached, and above the grave of the Emperor Dušan in the Holy Archangels in Prizren, in 1375, the decision of reconciliation was proclaimed in the presence of envoys from the Patriarchate of Constantinople. After that, the Prince commenced the construction of his large monastery of Ravanica, to which his body was transferred, first buried in Priština after his death, a year after the battle of Kosovo (1389). The disturbances and pressures that forced Lazar's widow and son, the young prince, to recognize the Sultan's authority as vassals, left traces on the grand endowments of the Nemanjić. In 1397, Princess Milica paid a visit to Dečani and, as stated in her granting charter, came across "a genuinely pitiful sight": the monastery was burned down and devastated by "the vile Ismailite people." She restored to the monastery the estates that had been taken from it and conferred upon it several of her own; she also renovated the bronze polycandilion dating from the time of church construction, the largest surviving specimen of its kind in the Byzantine world. A wide, circular ring, held by twenty-meter-long "chains," suspended on the base of the dome, illuminated the interior during evening prayers with dozens of candles and hanging lights. Its parts—all together, there were around 600—had perforated ornaments, and in the circles with decoratively linked letters, as was the custom, was the name of its founder: Stefan the King. The Princess, at that time the nun Eugenia, commissioned a similar piece to record the memory of her sons, Stefan and Vukan and herself in the same manner. At a later time, popular tradition concocted the legend that the choros had been forged out of the weapons of the warriors fallen in the battle of Kosovo.

Until the final conquest by the Ottomans in 1455, modest-sized churches whose founders and time of construction are, in the main, unknown, continued to be built in towns, on feudal estates and monastic *metochia*. In the long centuries of Ottoman rule, people gathered in these ecclesiastical buildings collecting contributions in order to restore them, protect them from demolition, and re-paint the frescos, or, at least, replace damaged ones, adorn interiors with icons and furnish them with liturgical vessels. With the passage of time, however, as the religious and ethnic structure of the population has changed, these efforts have decreased.

The overall survey of hundreds of Christian places of worship—although itself incomplete attests to lively religious life and the character of the environment over the course of centuries. Their density and disposition is shown on the map in the appendix. Several large structures that supplement this picture have, fortunately, survived. The most significant of them, as regards its influence and role in the organization of spiritual life and the preservation of national consciousness, was the Patriarchate of Peć—until the fortunes of war turned against the Austrian general Piccolomini whose campaign had won support of the Serbian people in Kosovo. Fearing retribution, they were compelled to move into regions across the Sava and the Danube (1690).

Post scriptum

The first decades of the 18th century mark the beginning of the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire. The authorities moderated the position toward their subjects of other religions and after the first Serbian uprising (1804–1812) they were forced to accept the demands of the Great Powers, especially Russia, to protect the Christian population in the Balkans. Although after the Berlin Congress (1878) Turkey gave preference to Islamized immigrant clans as a protection against Serbia and Montenegro who were preparing to liberate their people, the Sultan's regular army had to safeguard the monasteries in Kosovo against inroads and plunders of highlanders who descended into fertile plains. In Dečani, Devič and the Patriarchate of Peć there were

garrisons of Turkish askers that fraternities provided with board and lodging, just as they were paid by the "hereditary chieftains" from certain Albanian clans to defend them.

In 1912, when Serbia and Montenegro finally liberated Kosovo, Metohija and the entire territory of Old Serbia, *not a single* Islamic shrine was demolished or desecrated—not the Bajrakli Mosque in Prizren, the Imperial (Fetih) Mosque in Priština, the Hadum-Mosque in Djakovica, or Murad's Turbeh on the field of Kosovo in which an icon lamp burns today on the site where Sultan Murad I was killed. Nor have any of the residences, towers or structures of historic import suffered, the best confirmation of this claim being the Sinan Pasha Mosque in Prizren, built exclusively with stones and fragments of architectural decoration brought from the Holy Archangels; the Orthodox population and the authorities of the Kingdom of Serbia did not allow their demolition. "A ruined shrine is still a holy place"—states a notice from that period—"and to demolish a place of worship that has become a shrine of another faith amounts to committing an evil deed. Revenge is contrary to God's justice, always more pressing and attainable than human."

During World War II when the territories of Kosovo and Metohija were an Italian protectorate the local Albanian authorities attempted to demolish the memorial church in Djakovica along with the charnel-house of Serbian soldiers fallen in 1915. This act was prevented by the Italian military command. After the war, in 1950, the church--charnel-house was nevertheless pulled down by the local government on the basis of a petition with signatures extorted from local Serbs, chiefly members of the Communist party. At the same time, none of the 18 mosques and 12 tekias in Djakovica were touched. Such an act encouraged attempts to devastate Devič, damage Dečani and desecrate Gračanica and the Hermitage of St. Peter of Koriša. Finally, under circumstances which were never officially explained, on 16 May 1981, the large dormitory of the Patriarchate of Peć burned to the ground.

In our times, the shrines in Kosovo continue to hold the attention of historians, art historians, archaeologists and conservators. A considerable number of them have been protected, and the work undertaken has brought to light new and valuable discoveries. The future of these culturally significant enterprises will depend on elementary living conditions and a readiness to put into effect international obligations contained in the convention on the protection of world cultural heritage adopted at the United Nations Conference held in Vancouver in 1976. Article no 9 reads as follows: "The right of each country is to be, with full sovereignty, the inheritor of its own cultural values which are the fruit of its history, and it is its duty to treasure them as values representing an inseparable part of the cultural heritage of mankind."

The Sacred Land: Art of Kosovo,
The Monacelli Press 1997, pp. 223–240.

The Wedding at Canna of Galilee,
vault of the narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1565

The Mission of the Apostles,
Church of the Holy Apostles,
west wall, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1260

View of the Hermitage of Saint Peter of Koriša

Emperor Dušan of Serbia (1331–1355), during the building of the Monastery of the Holy Archangels near Prizren, wrote a charter for the building of another monastery atop the mountain where St. Peter fell asleep in the Lord. This charter still exists, dated May 19th, 1343, which charged the then-Abbot Gregory of Hilandar to provide the necessary materials to build a chapel over the wonderworking relics of St. Peter, and to consecrate it in the name of St. Peter of Koriša. From that time on the Monastery of St. Peter of Koriša became a metochion (dependency) of the Hilandar Monastery, meaning that Hilandar would provide not only for its physical maintenance, but for its spiritual needs in terms of allowing monastics from Hilandar to live there. Because of the proximity of his feast-day to that of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and because his monastic name was received in honor of the great Apostle Peter, the pious villagers and monastics of Koriša and beyond came to also celebrate his feast-day, especially at the nearby Monastery of the Holy Apostles in Peć, on June 29, the feast-day of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul.

Saint Petar of Koriša the most distinguished Serbian hermit in the Middle Ages.
The formation of his cult went through several developmental stages and in conformity with the supreme models of Byzantine hagiography. During the process, the original hermitage grew into an anachoretic community which, in turn, grew into a lavra and, eventually, into a monastery of cenobitic type. The cult of St. Petar of Koriša had been fostered in the monastery until the end of the 17th century, when the devastating Ottoman raids urged the translation of the saint's relics to the Monastery of Crna Reka.
Saint Petar of Koriša represents a phenomenon of broader significance. His saintly character, especially the ways in which it was displayed and the stages in the development of his veneration are an invaluable contribution to the integral perception of the ascetic patterns and cult practices of the East Christian world.

The Church of Saint Peter of Koriša

Gojko Subotić

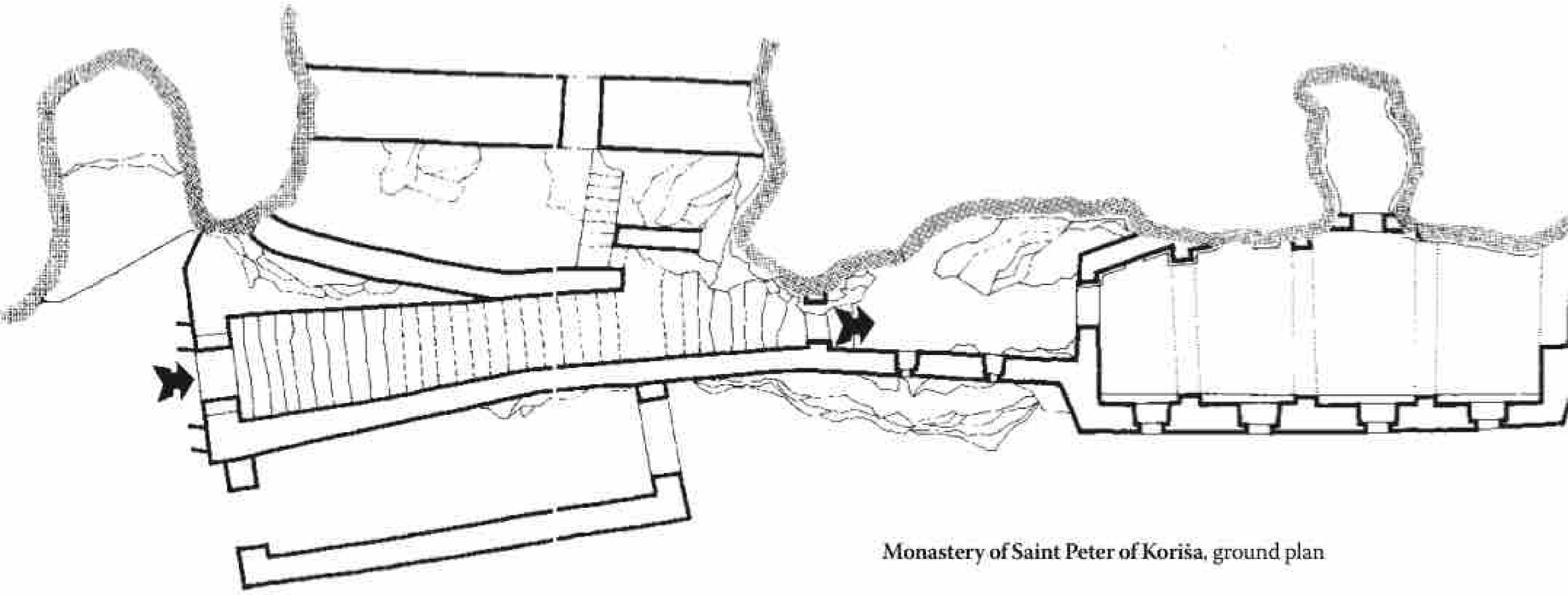
Followers of the anachoretic life, that "wild flower" of Eastern Christian monasticism, made an early appearance among the Serbs. Their modest dwellings on cliffs of sheer rocks allow one only occasionally to recognize that these were the old abodes of hermits who sought peace in craggy, inaccessible localities and isolation from the world in order to spend their lives in strict ascetic devotion. They lived in natural caves, which they roughly fashioned to fit the basic needs of their cult and to protect themselves from inclement weather and attacks of wild beasts. The generally dry wall partitions shutting the entrances to their cells were destroyed by time, obliterating traces of the hermits' former presence. More visible signs of their lives have been preserved in better-protected spots whose occupants were able to reinforce them with better materials and to decorate the prayer areas with wall-paintings. The hermits' survival also depended on longer sojourns in these caves and more careful maintenance of the cells, particularly if one of its founders attained a measure of renown, as well as the disciples who followed in his footsteps.

In the Prizren region, in the rugged surroundings of Koriša, Peter the Hermit won fame in the early decades of the 13th century for his ascetic feats. His simple life of supreme renunciation and prayer was vividly described in the following century by well-known writer Teodosije who had expressly come from Hilandar (on Mt. Athos) to see the site of Peter's dwellings and to hear at first hand the legends about him that had been transmitted by his followers. Being familiar with the lives of ascetics, their spiritual moods and hesychastic conceptions which were experiencing a revival on Mt. Athos at precisely that time, Teodosije described in the *Lives of the Saints* and in his *Service*, the spiritual drama of this hermit and the moral temptations that accompanied his seclusion from the world, as well as the rigors of survival.

According to Teodosije, in searching for a sanctuary which would give him the peace he sought, young Peter found himself in the Koriša River canyon in a deserted spot lodged between steep rocks. He settled in one of the barely accessible caves, "facing the wind and the sun." There he lived "frozen by the cold and scorched by the sun's heat"... as if he were bodiless, all the while gathering wild plants and the bitter beech acorn, if these be called nourishment." There preserved in this cave an interesting and early part of a wall-painting on the lower layer of uneven rock surfaces dating from the days of the Koriša hermit himself. Where the altar was located on the eastern side there is a depiction of the *Procession of the Hieromonks* under ornamented painted arches. Above them is the Deisis—Christ enthroned with the Holy Mother of God and St. John the Baptist drawn in an unusual pose with heads folded in prayer over the chest. In the same row, in the "naos" of the cave, we see the Archangel Michael and the Apostle Peter and, at a lower level, damaged figures of the Warrior-Saints (Demetrius, George, Prokopius, Mercurius, Nicetas and Blasius) who are also under arches.

Although sources do not record this, the hermit dedicated his prayer area—as seen by the disposition of the drawings—to the Archangel Michael. This celestial her-

Hermitage of Saint Peter of Koriša,
the dome with two layers of frescos, 13th and 14th century



Monastery of Saint Peter of Koriša, ground plan

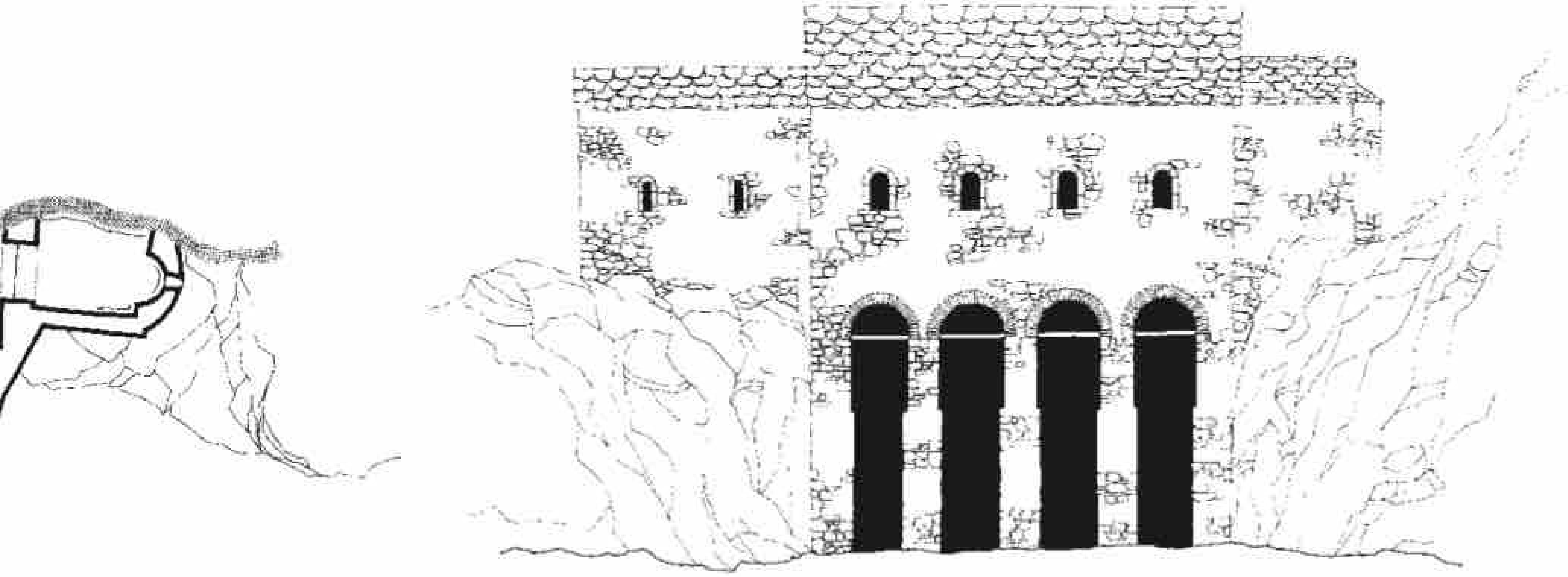
ald and executor of divine will on earth, had shrines dedicated to him throughout the Christian world—ranging from cult sites in the East, across southern Italy (Monte Sant Angelo) to Normandy (Mont Saint-Michel). All these are on heights and frequently above water from where Michael descended to succor men or to punish them by meting out justice. In a vivid depiction of the struggle waged by the lone Peter against evil powers which had populated the surrounding caves and disturbed him in his spiritual devotions, Teodosije recounts that Peter opposed them by praying and making the sign of the cross. Similarly he was saved from Satan, embodied in the "terrible dragon" by the Archangel Michael himself. For this reason, the Archangel was awarded the spot right next to the "altar space." Behind him, also at the behest of the Koriša hermit, is St. Peter because his namesake adopted the saint's name when he become a monk in a church dedicated to the Apostle, near his village.

The archaic iconographic elements and the simplified forms of the depictions, lack plasticity but are nonetheless expressive with powerful dark lineaments and rich ornaments recalling the art of earlier times, expressiveness that lasted longer in the regions of the Empire, particularly in Cappadocia, in the largest hermitage in the Byzantine world.

It also characterized the frescos in the shrines of the Basilian monks in southern Italy and in the rock-hewn churches in Sicily. In a specific way, the wall-paintings of the time of Peter of Koriša, were similar to those in the well-known Prizren Gospel, a rare preserved example of Serbian manuscript illumination originating in this area which itself followed the simple, even rustic language, of linear forms so typical of the older sculptural art developed on the Adriatic coast. However, a number of historical reasons and especially the parallel appearance of Greek and Slavic inscriptions on the frescos, indicate that the hermit's cell was decorated in the second quarter of the 13th century, undoubtedly after the permanent integration of the Prizren region into the borders of the Serbian state.

As testified to by younger anchorites attracted to Peter by his holy life, the hermit prepared his own tomb. It was located, as investigations have shown, in a cavity in the back of the cave and therefore the Deisis across the whole wall in this part of the cell is of special significance. The depiction of the prayer which the Holy Mother of God and John the Baptist address Christ for the salvation of sinners (usually drawn in the central part of the Last Judgment scene) suited its sepulchral character.

The veneration shown to the Koriša hermit during his lifetime was intensified by legends and grew into a cult. A number of caves near the cell were inhabited by ascetics who followed his example, while several decades later a church was built next to the cell on the southern side. In this new space the old hermit's cell acquired the status of a parekklesion. Later documents indicate that Peter's abode was placed under the aegis of the Serbian monastery of Hilandar on Mt. Athos, whose representative in Metohija was Grigorije, an aged hermit. It was his wish



Hermitage of Saint Peter of Koriša, reconstruction

for the writer Teodosije to come from the parent brotherhood to celebrate the Koriša hermit in his *Life of the Saint* and in a special liturgical service. This was an act required to introduce new personages into the order of sainthood.

The new structure in Koriša was of a simple oblong shape but its eastern side along the steep rocky incline had to be given very tall supporting pillars connected by arches. This was an isolated instance in early Serbian architecture. It is possible that this unique structure was inspired by the experiences of the Athonite builders who frequently buttressed their edifices above a rocky coast in a similar manner. It may well be that this was the idea of Grigorije who perhaps brought the skilled craftsmen from Athos to Koriša for this purpose. Further westward, monastic cells were added which expanded the hermitage but their appearance and all the forms of the church and other structures at the eastern end cannot now be envisaged from the ruins.

The chapel near the cell was also painted with frescos. The scenes that have been left of the life of Christ and the Mother of God (Lazarus' Resurrection, the Annunciation of Anne, the Nativity and the Presentation of the Mother of God) reflect the characteristics of the first half of the 14th century.

In spreading the cult of Peter the Hermit, Brother Grigorije built a church dedicated to him in the village of Koriša itself. He had it decorated with wall-paintings and supplied it with all necessities including a library. Somewhat later, in 1343, while making ready to start building the large monastery of the Holy Archangels which he ordained as his tomb—also near Prizren—King Stefan Dušan appointed Jakov as its first *hegoumenos*. Jakov was a highly educated and capable person who later become the Metropolitan of Serres. In order to help him carrying out his considerable duties and supervising the construction work, the King granted him St. Peter's church in the village as his seat and gave the aged Grigorije the old shrine of Peter of Koriša as his personal property.

The later lives of the monks in this hermitage following the lofty example if its founder left no significant traces, though a number of shrines were established prior to the fall of the Prizren region to Ottoman rule in 1455. They are known to us today mainly as ruins, as is the cell itself which survived the next two or three centuries. We know from a document written in 1572 that the monks transferred the bones of St. Peter to the Crna Reka Monastery which was hidden from sight and therefore less likely to suffer Ottoman violence.

The Sacred Land: Art of Kosovo,
The Monacelli Press 1997, pp. 16–90.

The Church of Studenica of Hvosno

Gojko Subotić

One of the first bishoprics of the Serbian Church was established in Hvosno, the birthplace of the hermit Peter, sometime during the years of his spiritual maturation and search for peace in the Koriša cliffs. Directly prior to this, St. Sava with his reputation as a highborn monk who devoted himself wholly to the spiritual life on Mt. Athos received autocephaly for the Serbian Church from the Patriarch of Constantinople (in Nicaea), and was himself ordained as its first archbishop in 1219. Sava chose as the see of the Hvosno bishops an old place of worship above the village of Studenica. This was an excellent site above a fertile valley across which spread the monastery estates. Here, too, an old custom of the Christian Church was repeated. This was to erect a new structure over partially restored ruins where believers gathered on holy days. It is not unlikely that in the early Byzantine period the seat of the bishopric was also located there. After the collapse of Samuilo's state and the revival of Byzantine authority in 1019, these parts, together with some others, were subordinated to the Ohrid Archbishopric. The deed granted by Basil II makes special mention of Hvosno as a part of the Prizren Bishopric.

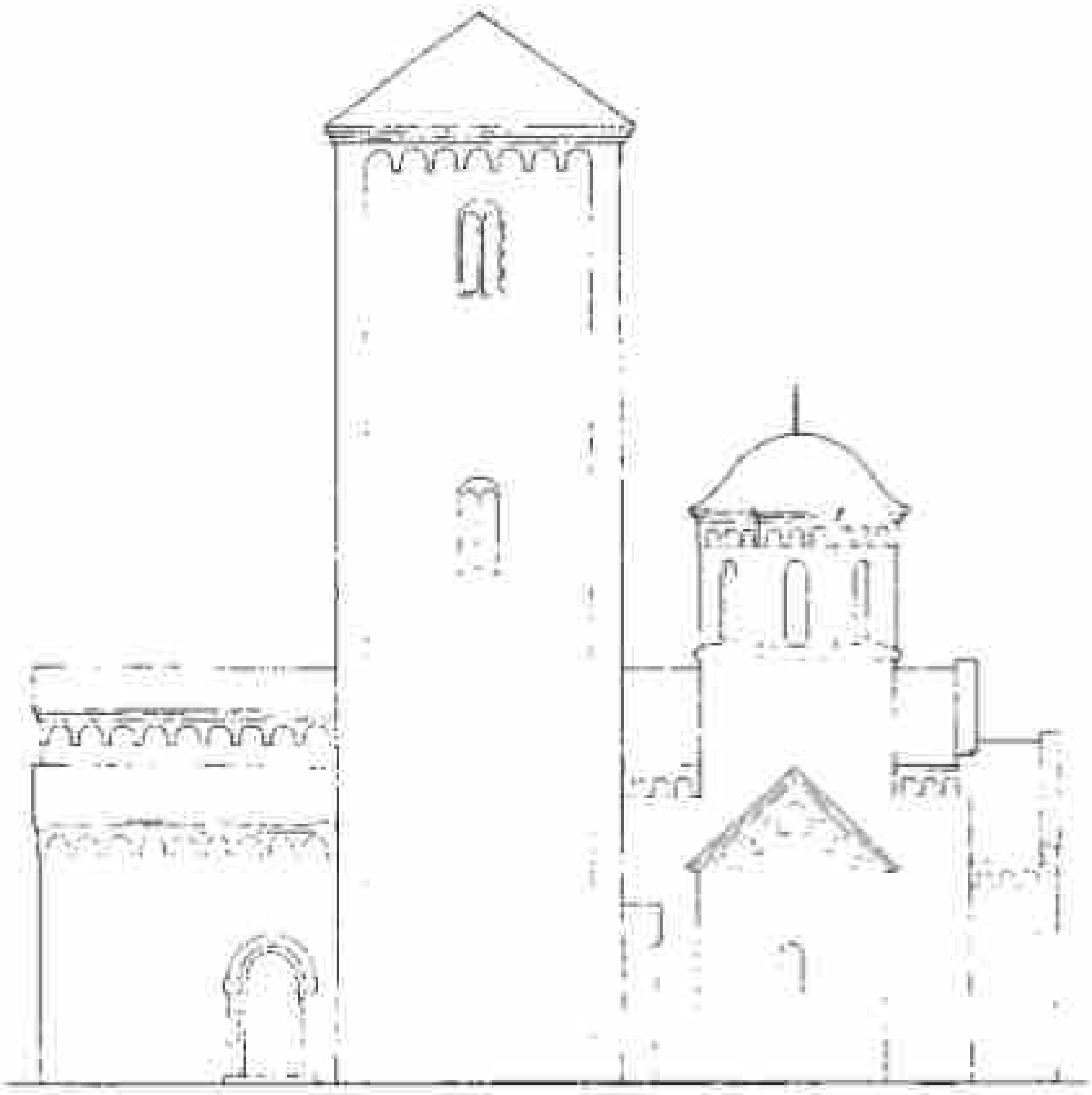
Both the older and younger entities in the Hvosno Studenica were largely protected by late classical multi-angled ramparts and outer walls extending along the margins of the flattened slope, the last one above the plain where the Mokra Mountain hillsides end.

In the second half of the 19th century there still were remains of the old complex and its medieval structures ("huge and terrible cliffs"), but these descriptions are not all reliable. It was archaeological excavations which shed new light on their character and interrelations. In the meantime, the stonework—well-cut blocks, parts of the architectural relief and a slab with incised inscriptions—was used by the local population for their needs. As a result they can still be found on houses in the neighboring villages. Marble pillars and ornamental blocks from the ruins were removed to Peć when a Turkish bath was built. Mainly shallow foundations were discovered in these structures. This indicates that initially there was a three-aisled basilica with a semi-circular apse and narthex. Within the bema, under the consistory table there was also a vaulted premise with steps leading to a reliquary, usually containing a special casket. The western part of the shrine, mostly ruined, has not been clearly delineated. But the eastern part proves that the basilica was built before the middle of the 6th century. The role of the diaconicon was probably taken by the small church of a simple, oblong form on the north side. It seems that it suffered less damage over time and perhaps was restored and served for rituals even before the erection of the episcopal complex within the Serbian Church.

The Monastery of the Mother of God of Hvosno, near Istok, in Metohija, originating from the 6th century, renovated in the 13th and 14th century. During the period of St. Sava this monastery was the seat of the diocese, and it was left desolate, most likely in the period of the great migration from Kosovo in 1690.

Of special interest are the old underground barrel-vaulted tombs on both the internal and external sides of the ramparts. They are a kind of sepulchral structure widely built in the Roman Balkans, in which number of built tombs have been preserved, but earlier frequent diggings, as elsewhere, have emptied the site of findings. The limited excavations prevent a full view of the walls with the stronghold. The stronghold in fact had contributed to the safety of this small but imposing unit with its entrance on the northern, most accessible side.

Descent into Hades, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, north arm of the cross, vault, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335



Church of the Mother of God at Hvosno, ideal reconstruction

Earlier structures were probably conserved when it was decided to make the locality the center of one of the bishoprics of the Serbian Church. Some of the later structures therefore relied upon the previous ones. Broad ramparts with expertly laid rows of bricks on top of the medieval stone provided a sturdy foundation. Basically, by following earlier traces it was possible to retain the entrance on the northern side which was strengthened by other semi-circular towers in place of the ruined ones with their square bases.

The main church dating from the time of St. Sava and dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God replaced an earlier one with its apse stretching across the previous apse. But its forms did not repeat the character of earlier churches. Its ground plan can only be discerned in the shallow foundations of the old broad basilican space. By its spatial conception it represented the finalized form of the type of edifice usually called the Raška school in the history of Serbian architecture, since the time of Gabriel Millet. This refers to a single-nave edifice with a developed altar space, a domed central bay enlarged on the south and north sides with rectangular choirs, and a somewhat elongated space and narthex in the west.

It is likely that Žiča Cathedral was the model for Hvosno. It was precisely the former church that by closing the vestibules at the lateral ends of the subdomical area with separate spaces for the prothesis and the diaconicon completed the formation of the blueprint which was to characterize the Raška school edifices of the 13th century.

In Hvosno as well, east of the choirs, it has been possible to recognize the square parts of the bema of which the northern part had a special ritual function. According to the Orthodox rite, sacrificial offerings were prepared in it and preserved after being consecrated.

As in other major architectural "schools" in the East and West, every structure varied the basic ground plans to a degree, observing not only the function of the individual parts but also their interrelationships. A careful comparison between the Hvosno Church of the Mother of God and shrines dating from the first half of the 13th century points to similar relations and rhythms between parts and forms, as well as to the differences which were not only the consequence of the work of other master-builders but also of slight shifts in specific sequences in the elaboration of stylistic wholes.

A thorough analysis of the ground plans, especially of the details offering information about the statics and structural requirements of the foundation, can enable us to conjure up the former appearance of the ruined edifice and some of its forms. Thus here, too, only drawings of ideal reconstructions can show us what the probable aspects of these edifices were.

Unfortunately, many invaluable elements were removed from the site with building materials which otherwise could have made it possible to form a more accurate picture of the shapes of the upper parts of the church.

The dome, dominating the central part of the naos with four strong pilasters, stood on doubled arches with pendentives that formed a ring-like base for the drum. The apse, whose opening was practically as broad as the entire naos, was externally square, while from the north and south sides it later got the rectangular spaces of the prothesis and diaconicon which were twice as wide as the transept sides.

The elongated feature of the edifice was emphasized but its general appearance was considerably altered by subsequent additions. Despite insufficient data for a fuller reconstruction of the whole complex, it is possible to assume what the basic structure looked like. In the spirit of Raška architecture, north and south of the narthex parekklesia were erected with smaller apses, externally less pronounced but of a rectangular shape. They were not directly attached to the narthex but separated from it with rather large walls, unusual for space of this size and function. This can be explained by the need to reinforce statically the upper, taller sections. It is rightly believed that towers also stood in these places, or on the western façade in the earlier architecture. The fact that an outer narthex was added to the western side also confirms this assumption. Its interior was certainly divided by columns while the bays were probably groin-vaulted. By analogy with other churches in which the bishops had their seat, it can be concluded that above the developed western part there regularly were katechoumena, well-known in the architecture of Mt. Athos. According to this biographer, St. Sava himself tried to introduce to his homeland the finest models; we can therefore assume that the katechoumena and the parekklesia built along the lateral sides of the catholicon of the large

monasteries (the Lavra of St. Athanasius, Iveron and Vatopedi) were built at Sava's initiative in Žiča. They then became a part of the building plans of the Raška builders. In the context of the Hvosno Studenica, it is possible that there were premises above the exonarthex and the parekklesia which would explain the meaning of the narrow "passages" on both side of the porch. Across them it was possible, by means of a staircase, to reach a katechoumena and the towers from which the bells were rung.

The general similarity to the Church of the Ascension in Žiča (the Savior's Church), including the presence of the outer narthex and towers, leads to the conclusion that the Mother of God of Hvosno belongs to the earliest shrines raised following ecclesiastical independence, that in fact it had its origin in the third decade of the 13th century and its exonarthex, parekklesia and towers in the following decade of that century.

The preserved lower parts of the main church, although relatively modest, speak interestingly of the origin of the builders employed to raise it. These sections were made of stone with a façade of *tufa*, a material easily hewn and fashioned into light arched and vaulted structures. The remaining parts exhibit tiers of accurately dressed stone typical of the stone-masonry workshop which produced the Romanesque churches in the Zeta coastal area. The flat pilasters strengthening the façade and the aspect of the altar apse conform to this tradition. On the outside, the square shape characterized a large number of 9th to 12th century shrines in Dioclea and in the Bay of Cattaro. To this, one must add relatively simple Romanesque capitals with leafy designs, perhaps a fragment of the church furnishings belonging to the same style. Everything therefore leads to the conclusion that these experienced stone-masons with their feel for proportion came from the Adriatic coast, perhaps from Cattaro itself, whence builders had previously come to Serbia. The open circulation between the Adriatic coast and inland regions, especially with Kosovo, was intensified even more once these areas found themselves within the borders of the Serbian state.

The interior of the church was covered with frescos whose fragments indicate that the walls were painted on two separate occasions. The few remaining fragments do not however help us to say more about them.

The monastic complex also contained other buildings. To the south, near the ramparts, another smaller elongated church seems to have been built in the 14th century, while in the northern section we can see a large portion of a fairly spacious rectangular refectory whose end with apse is in ruins. The refectory was not, interestingly, located at its usual site, west of the narthex from where monks collectively went to their meals. The choice of the site here is probably due to shortage of space.

Epitaphios of Hvosno, mid-14th century,
the Treasury of the Patriarchate of Peć

This considerably damaged painted epitaphios dating from the mid-14th century was found in the ruins of the episcopal Church of the Mother of God of Hvosno near Peć. The Patriarchate of Peć had one of the richest treasuries in medieval Serbia.

Even if the ruins could provide a hint of the basic forms of the main structures it would be difficult from the scant written sources to reconstruct the rich history of the monastery and the Hvosno bishopric's see during the several ensuing centuries before this shrine met its end, first damaged by a destructive fire and then abandoned during the Great Migration of 1690. We do know, however, of the lives of several distinguished Hvosno hieromonks, bishops and metropolitans whose tombstones have been preserved. We are also acquainted with their writings, transcription and book-binding activities. Some record of their artistic accomplishments has reached us. Before the Second World war by strange coincidence, a large bell was dug up along with precious embroidered and painted cloth that had been hidden by the monks at a time when they had to abandon their dwellings. A large epitaphios, in the Peć Patriarchate today, was the work of an excellent artisan from the early 14th century while the famous writer and painter, Longin, who occasionally stayed in Hvosno prepared a wonderful drawing as a young man to serve as the design for a large aer in 1597. All these are, nonetheless, but pale reflections of the opulent interiors and treasures which were once collected in this episcopal center. Today the past of the monastery can be evoked only by the ambience and treasuries of monasteries which are still standing.

The Sacred Land: Art of Kosovo,
The Monacelli Press 1997, pp. 20–25.

The Patriarchate of Peć, view from the east

Patriarchate of Peć
UNESCO World Heritage Site

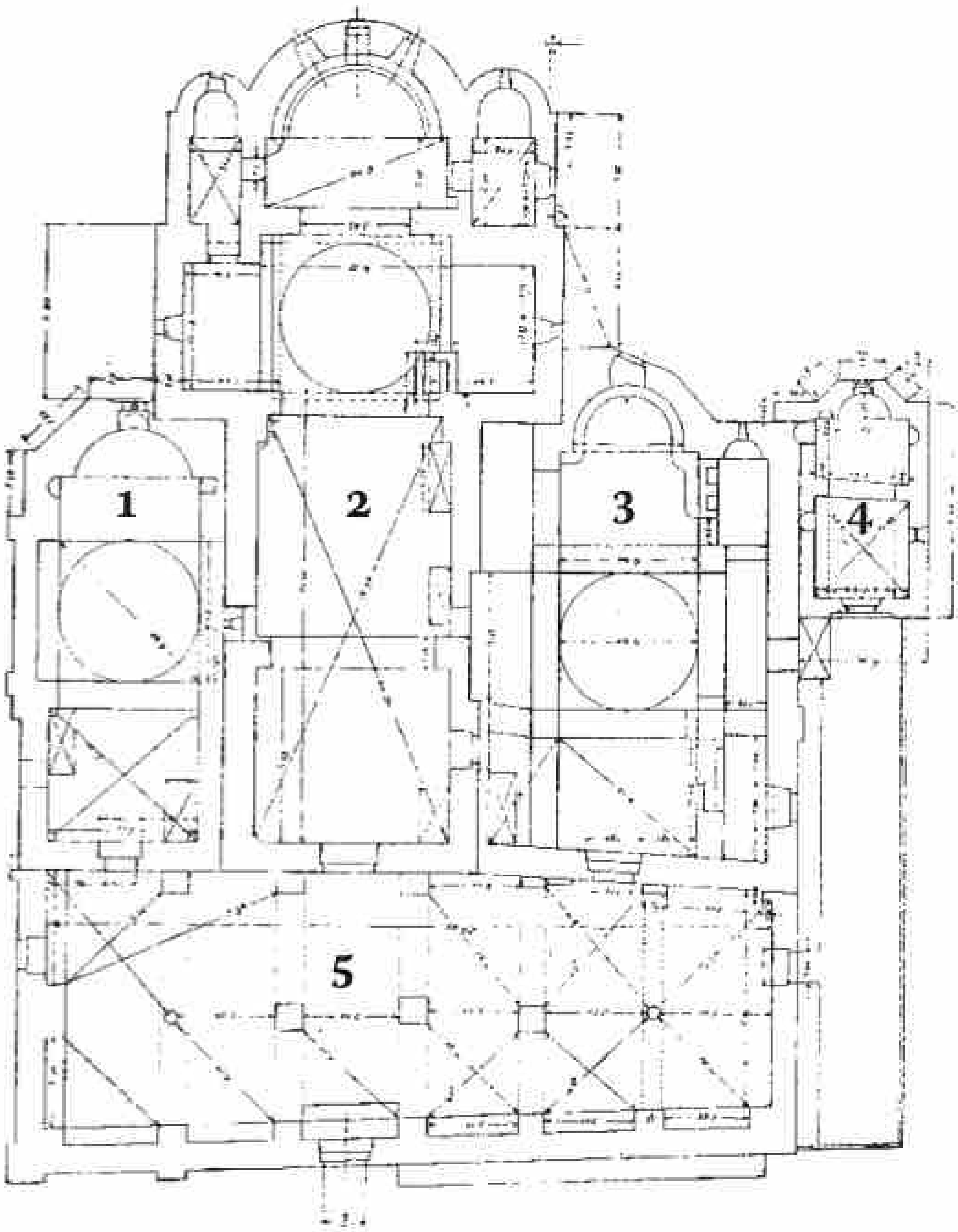
Gojko Subotić

The Church of the Holy Apostles, 13th century

A STRUCTURE added to an earlier place of worship near Hvosno at the point where the Bistrica River emerges from its lengthy and picturesque gorge was of far-reaching significance for the overall subsequent life of the Serbian Church. The site itself with its fortification was called "The Gorge," while the numerous caves scattered about on its rugged cliffs, deep and often hardly visible, gave the neighboring village its name of Peć (cave). Because these grottoes were very early populated by anchorites this locality was placed under the aegis of the Žiča Monastery and together with them, mentioned in the very first deed granted by King Stefan Provovenčani (the "First-Crowned"). Moreover, the entire region was called Metohija (*metochion*, in Greek) by token of these monastery estates.

The extensive lice holdings and the monastic community were governed by the Archbishop; it was therefore logical that the churches on these estates were built at his behest, often under his direct supervision. The renewal of an earlier single-nave church in the Peć area and the structures added to it are ascribed by Archbishop Nikodim in 1319 to St. Sava himself, who is also mentioned as its founder in an inscription under his somewhat younger portrait inside the church. It may well be that this first Serbian Archbishop was engaged in the raising of a church in the remote locality of Žiča, but there is reason to believe that Sava's successor Arsenije (1233–1263) deserves full credit for the undertaking. The long ceremonious inscription under the Deisis in the altar apse ends in a prayer with his name at the close of it. The interior of the church dedicated to the Holy Apostles was painted in the years between 1250 and 1260. The Archbishop himself manifested his ties to this locality by his decision to be buried there. After his death, when it became known that miracles occurred about his tomb, the church was referred to as Arsenije's.

Of the earlier building, dating from the 11th century the elongated naos was retained, while the remaining parts were expanded on in the Raška architectural mode. Here, too, a dome was built over the central space against the gently pointed arches with pendentives whose lower, square area was shaped into a circular base of the drum. The sub-



The Patriarchate of Peć, ground plan

1. Church of Saint Demetrius
2. Church of the Holy Apostles
3. Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria
4. Church of Saint Nicholas
5. Narthex

Ascension of Christ, detail: Angel and Apostle Peter,
Church of the Holy Apostles, dome, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1260

domical area was, by custom, enlarged with rectangular choirs while on the eastern side the altar space was extended with a bay that enabled freer circulation. At the same time, a separate prothesis and diaconicon were erected on the north and south sides, both vaulted and ending in semi--circular apses.

The remains of the walls outside the present foundation have not been sufficiently investigated; it may well be that there were parekklesia originally on the lateral sides which were later removed when larger churches were raised on these sites.

The fairly rough manner of construction here was perhaps a reflection of the modest monastic environment for which the church had been commissioned. However, the forms and construction design of the church demonstrate the builder's skill and assurance. He covered the façade of the building with mortar and, as in Žiča by emulating the Mt. Athos churches, he painted it in a vivid shade of red. The monastic tradition interpreted this color as being the blood of the martyrs who perished for the sake of their faith.

Regarded as a part of the Raška architectural school in which every monument—despite its similarity and kinship with other monuments—had specific traits of its own: the Church of the Holy Apostles had a plan and spatial conception as well as certain forms that corresponded to the ecclesiastical needs of the Eastern Church and belonged to Byzantine tenets. At the same time, however, the specific method of construction revealed elements indicating that the skills and practice of western builders had been mastered and that analogous edifices could be found along the coast and on the opposite shore of the Adriatic Sea.

The interior decorative elements of the Holy Apostles, despite its damaged aspect in its present-day impoverished ambience and the changes that took place in later centuries, still present a fairly rich picture of the spiritual life and sophisticated ideas of the time. The church's iconography and artistic craftsmanship, more than the edifice itself, its size and character, prove that on the estate of the Archbishopric, it had acquired a special place not only within the borders of lice, but also throughout the land. Above all, the wall-paintings show that already by Archbishop Arsenije's time the sepulchral character of the church was emphasized by the presence of a sarcophagus in the western part. Moreover, the idea that the church should become the resting place of other Serbian prelates had certainly been widely adopted when Arsenije's successor, the second member of the Nemanjić dynasty, namely, the youngest son of Stefan the First-Crowned, Sava II (1263–1271) was buried there. The dedication of the church to Christ's disciples was undoubtedly inspired by the grand Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, built at the time of Justinian. The Serbs were well aware that the church, with its appearance, reliquaries and other treasures as described by countless pilgrims, was the mausoleum of a number of Byzantine emperors, and especially of the Ecumenical Patriarchs. The dedication was, of course, linked to the missionary calling of the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries in the Orthodox world, so that the choice of patron for the church that was being built, had the same role in Serbia.

The historiography of art has long endeavoured to discover the specific thematic and iconographic elements that reflect the spiritual atmosphere of the environment to which a church belonged, as well as to ascertain the immediate historical circumstances that could have influenced the choice of depiction to be drawn and the ideas they purported to express. In this sense, much attention was earlier paid to Žiča, the first independent see of the Serbian Church. The bulk of its wall-paintings had been damaged and replaced at a later date (1309–1316), but it is assumed that

they repeated the earlier themes and disposition of St. Sava's times. The conclusions arrived at also refer to the Peć Church, because it was precisely the cathedral church that they took as their model not only for its construction but also for its decorative elements.

The sepulchral nature of the church was primarily expressed by the monumental painting of the Deisis in the spherical part of the broad apse, clearly visible above the low altar screen. The churchgoers knew that the prayer to the enthroned Christ offered by the Mother of God and St. John the Baptist referred mainly to the dignitaries buried there. But the believers were themselves comforted by their faith in salvation and by the knowledge that grace would be granted them on Judgment Day, the depiction of which on the walls showed the same personages in iconographic form as defenders of the human race.

In the lower part of the church, as was customary from the end of the 12th century onward, there is depicted the Service of the Hierarchs together with a series of the most prominent representatives of Christian teachings, holding scrolls with excerpts from liturgical prayers. It is noteworthy that this procession ends with the figures of St. Sava of Serbia, the already deceased and widely venerated founder of the autocephalous Serbian Church. Even earlier custom allowed that eminent prelates of local churches could be portrayed in the altar space, while from the 11th century onward they appeared not only as a part of the autocephalous archbishopric, as in Ohrid and Cyprus, but also in a series of other bishoprics, principally in the Greek ones. It was natural for the image of St. Sava to have first appeared in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Peć as it was most closely linked to the very heart of the Serbian Church. Possibly about the same time an artist of less expressive power repeated Sava's image in the prothesis, representing him as officiating together with his successor Arsenije, but without the other holy fathers to whom this act should have been a priority honour.

The frescos in the cupola and subdomical area express a complex and unique notion: on the broad circular surface painted in ochre tones conjuring up the light enhanced with gleams of the gold leaf in the painting, Christ seems to ascend toward the dark azure of the sky, leaving behind him the disciples with the Mother of God and the Archangels disposed between the windows of the tympanum. As usual, on the pendentives below them the Evangelists are shown as engaged in writing the Savior's life. Between them are the figures of Christ in Mandylion and Keramidion. But on the divided surfaces formed by the substructure of the dome, a number of episodes are illustrated in a special layout which totally differs from that depicted in other cycles. On the western side is the Sending Out of the Apostles; on the southern side is the Resurrection of Lazarus and the Incredulity of Thomas, while on the northern side is the Last Supper and the Descent of the Holy Spirit. In this unusual disposition, the paintings on the eastern surface, probably of the Annunciation, are no longer visible. The reasons for this manner of linking scenes from various thematic entities have been sought in the statements made by Archbishop Nikodim (1317–1325). In the Preface to his translation of the Jerusalem Typikon from Greek, done in 1319, the head of the Serbian Church notes that St. Sava built the church in Peć modelling it on the famous and sacred Jerusalem edifice visited by Sava in his journey through Palestine. This refers to the church in Zion and the monastery of St. Sabbas the Sanctified. This connection should not be interpreted as meaning that the shape of the models was emulated, but that their significance was invoked. Of the episodes to be painted in the central part of the church, three were chosen from the upper part of the Zion church: the Last Supper' the Incredulity of Thomas and the Descent of the Holy Spirit.

The supposition that it was precisely the Zion church that served as a model for the Serbian sees in Peć and Žiča, becomes more convincing if we bear in mind that up to the 12th century, Zion, too, had been dedicated to the Holy Apostles and that Christ, before the Ascension, sent his disciples out to preach the new faith from that very church. The iconography of the Peć church, closely connected with Serbian Church leaders, was directly concordant with the scene recalling their apostolic role. Finally, in view of its significance, the church in Zion was called "The Mother of all Churches" and therefore this appellation was conferred in Serbia on the cathedrals in Žiča and later in Peć.

By being arranged along church's walls whose surfaces were not always suitable for complex compositions, biblical scenes were adapted to the space available, but not always in a harmonious relationship in the architectural framework. Their simple depiction with an orthogonal projection of the ambience and its forms belong mainly to the tradition of earlier artwork. A new period in the development of the so-called monumental 13th century style portrayed mature and powerful plastic forms. The pictures are dominated by figures interpreting events in darkly resonant colors with surfaces lit by sudden rays of light and faces with gleaming eyes and finely modulated brighter tones. The surprising facial expressiveness is barely supported by the ancillary elements as, for instance, in the Ascension episode which is a veritable masterpiece but has only frail tree trunks in the background. The highest achievement of these artists—analyses indicate that a number of hands were at work here—are testified to by the individual portraits and group figures deftly accompanied by seemingly neutral yet tastefully colored surfaces and interiors. The scenes of the Incredulity of Thomas and the Resurrection of Lazarus are examples of such a pictorial language, though an archaic one, due to the exaggerated size of Christ's figure which nonetheless is successfully adapted to the requirements of the available space. The former scene is depicted with firm symmetry under a gently pointed arch, and the latter on an irregular segment of the vaulted field.

Deisis, Church of the Holy Apostles, conch of the apse, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1260

Both evince an exciting rhythm in which the elements of the richly narrated stories are arrayed.

Certain figures of the Apostles, especially the younger ones, evoke reminiscences of the Hellenistic legacy, so discernible in the radiance and gentle sensuality of the figures that could not have been seen in the works of an older, severer spirit. It was as if the artisans glanced back to the earlier works and directly copied their delineations, their plasticity and color harmonies. This was not a new phenomenon: Byzantine art always relied on classical models, sometimes in waves felt powerfully during specific epochs, creating unique paraphrases leading to a distinct style. Broadly speaking, the Peć artwork was not isolated in this sense but it came at the outset of a period in Serbia that reached its fullest expression in the more recent Sopoćani church.

It is not easy to fathom the environment in which the Peć artisans were trained nor the traditions they followed. It must assuredly have been a matter of the involvement of some larger centers where a broad artistic culture could be attained and where there were monuments and collections of old manuscripts that preserved the traditional artistic accomplishments and transmitted them to subsequent generations.

During the ensuing decade, the Archbishopric's Metochion in Peć enjoyed a calmer existence than the Žiča center which was threatened a number of times and which finally suffered from hostile incursions from the north. This was why the remains of Archbishop Joanikije (1279–1286) were transferred to the Holy Apostles. At the same time, valuable objects which were a temptation to attackers were also removed for safe-keeping. It was recorded that the governor of Vidin, Ivan Šišman, descended to "The Gorge" itself (1291–1292) with the intention of seizing the treasures of the Church of the Savior. It was under this name that historical sources referred to the Church of the Savior's Ascension in Žiča. But the same appellation was later also given to the Peć church together with the role it had acquired in the last decade of the 13th century. For after the

Service of the Hierarchs, Church of the Holy Apostles, altar apse, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1260

calamity that had befallen Žiča, the Serbian Archbishops temporarily moved to Peć. In recent times, it has justly been observed that this move did not simply mean transferring the see of the Archbishopric, but also taking over some of its functions. Žiča continued to be regarded as the center of the Serbian Church whose prelates occasionally sojourned there in later centuries as well. Nevertheless, the ecclesiastical administration gradually shifted southwards where, in the following period, the residences of the Serbian kings were frequently located.

Parallel with these developments, the anchorites continued their peaceful lives in their nearby cave abodes. At the time of the Archbishop Jakob (1286–1292), two Greek monks left a Dečani cell for Kotrulica, doubtlessly one of the caves in the Bistrica river Gorge of Peć. Their cave was "enclosed" with walls for their needs. Like other hermits, they spent most of their time in isolation and only on Sundays descended to the Church of the Holy Apostles for prayers and communion.

Today one can still see a number of these hermits' caves on the left side of the river. As in Koriša, the Peć dwellings were enclosed with walls that have been preserved in many places, some of them several metres high. Here, likewise, in places set aside for religious activities, traces of frescos are still visible. These rough-hewn abodes were usually inter-connected by steps carved into the rock or else made of wood which also covered the light roofs and the narrow passages. Incised supports that carried the wooden beams can still be seen on all sides. However, some of the cells could be reached only by rope ladders while heavy loads had to be raised by pulleys.

Thus these modest dwellings whose living conditions were made even more arduous by rain and snow, and their accessibility most hazardous, were nevertheless islands of intensive intellectual activity. The renowned writer and subsequent Patriarch, Jefrem, between 1355 and 1371 wrote most of his canons and 170 stichera in such a cell, where the scribes did not enjoy any better conditions. Thus, there are no grounds for the generally held belief that the scriptoria were housed in spacious, specially built premises. Examples from the Meteora in Thessaly likewise confirm the fact that those cells, clinging to the cliffs like nests, also produced exceptional works in the fields of transcription and illumination.

Entrance of the Church of Saint Demetrius,
14th century, the Patriarchate of Peć

The sudden assaults from the north were a concrete reason why the site of the Church of the Holy Apostles had to be protected by a fortification. Like other monasteries in similar locations, attacks on the monastery and church coming from the heights above them, had to be withstood. Ramparts were therefore built up on a steep incline forming a stronghold of a triangular base. From its highest point, one can still clearly see the lower portions of the formerly stalwart tower.

The frescos in the western part of the Church of the Holy Apostles were painted during the closing years of a century that brought about certain changes. These were probably the work of Archbishop Jevstatije II (1292–1309). We learn from his biography that he had earlier been engaged in restoring the burned church in lice. In Peć, it was necessary to undertake the first indispensable renovative work in the interior of the church where complex divine services had to be held with the participation of a numerous clergy.

At present we do not know what all the wall-paintings were like, since the original frescos in one part of the subdomical area were replaced by later ones. But the faithful entering the church were welcomed here by impressive scenes on walls that had in the past been better illuminated. In two of the highest zones of the church, along the broad, vaulted western wall, the episodes of the Passion of Christ and above the entrance, the figures of Sts Constantine and Helena, are portrayed while on the left and right sides, we can see the large busts of St. Nicholas and the Mother of God. In the lowest zone where, judging by the fragments, there were the portraits of the members of the dynasty, the only remaining figures are those of Kings Stefan the First-Crowned and Uroš I. Both are clothed in monastic vestements and both are named Simeon, a name they assumed after retiring from the throne in order to emulate the venerated founder of their family. These latter portraits no longer belong to the traditional donor composition in the form of a procession headed by Simeon Nemanja and approaching Christ or the Mother of God to receive their Grace. Nor are they characterized by earlier assiduously delineated facial features. These scenes were done by painters who favoured robust shapes while eschewing delicate modelling and creating artwork of totally different configuration. Their spirituality was best expressed in the dynamic scenes of Christ's Sufferings drawn in a continuous sequence with emotional gestures in a setting of intricate architectural tracery. Among the Serbs, this was the first "new wave" monument, usually referred to as the Palaeologan style in Byzantine art. Somewhat prior to the Peć frescos, the distinct new traits were manifested in 1294–95 by masters Michael Astrapas and his assistant Eutychius in their first famous monument, the Mother of God Peribleptos in Ohrid. These accomplished artists, schooled in Thessalonica where other members of the Astrapas family also participated in the city's intellectual and artistic life, worked together long afterwards, predominately in Serbia. It has not been proven that they made additions to the frescos in the Church of the Holy Apostles, but this could have been done by one of their assistants or by artisans with a similar training background. Parallel to them, other painters traversed the same developmental path, altered the church programmes and iconography and, in particular, the artistic expression. Members of the old Constantinople studios whose monuments are less known today, also had a large share in effecting these changes. The Protaton frescos in the large three-aisled church in Karyes on Mt. Athos are essentially similar to those in the church of the Holy Apostles, although they exhibit a greater mea-

sure of refinement and softer modelling. The two monuments, however, display a greater degree of refinement and the softness of modulation. They did not conserve the signatures of the artists nor any other inscriptions relating to the patrons of the church or the dates of their painted creations. It is only the Athonite tradition that has long and insistently been attributing the frescos of its main church to well-known artist Manuel Panselinos. Those frescos could have originated around the year 1300, as did those in the Church of the Holy Apostles. The subsequent development of this style, it will be seen, can be followed in the somewhat later churches in Kosovo itself.

The church of Saint Demetrius, 14th century: architecture

The Home of the Savior in lice was considered the see of the Archbishopric, but in the first decades of the 14th century Serbian Church dignitaries preferred Peć, as it was safer and closer to the royal court. The archbishop's obligations regarding supervision of spiritual life, ecclesiastical judiciary and other matters imposed the need for more capable and broadly educated clerics; conditions for their work should have been but were not provided in the old metochion. Also some of the services which the archbishop needed to conduct were complex and required a more elaborate ritual space. The heads of church, therefore, rebuilt Žiča and added new churches to the Holy Apostles in Peć, enlarging the ritual space and adapting it to various religious rites.

The first archbishop, Nikodim (1317–1324), added a church to the northern side dedicated to St. Demetrius, patron saint of Thessalonica, whose cult, due to close ties with this Greek town, was revered by the Serbs. Nikodim replaced the 13th century lateral parekklesion, its length corresponding to the western part of the Holy Apostles, up to the height of the added transept. Appended to the main church, St. Demetrius was constrained in its design; best suited was the concise form of a single-nave church. It had an octagonal dome, large apse and certain extensions in places where the choirs were located in the older tradition of the Raška school. From the outside, in the roof construction, this is noticeable on the northern, open side.

In accordance with the spirit of earlier architecture, the interior of the church is well-lit and designed of a piece, while the altar space is separated from the nave by a well-preserved stone iconostasis. Parapet panels with door-ways in the middle, where the royal door is situated, are placed between nicely fashioned colonnettes; they, too, stand on the northern side in front of the prothesis, while everything in the upper part is joined a whole by a horizontal beam (epistyle). The low-relief ornaments on the panels belong to the elegant and strict dictates of Byzantine sculptural art and probably are the work of the same master who made the frame of the church portal, also resorting to ornaments from the classical repertoire (astragal, vine with palmettes and billet moulding). Broader analogies attest to sculptural work distinguishing parts or the sculptural decoration in Banjska as well.

Iconostasis, detail: parapet panels,
Church of Saint Demetrius, the Patriarchate of Peć, 14th century

In appearance and construction—the already mentioned "cellular" (i.e. cloissone) style of building with cubic stones, tiers of bricks and mortar links—Saint Demetrius is an articulation of the Byzantine concepts. The procedure itself is closely aligned with the manner of building of the Dečani entrance tower, the work of master-builder Djordje (George) and his brothers. A wider circle of builders and stone-masons from Serbia and the Adriatic coastal area was employed on raising shrines in Serbia, particularly in Kosovo, during the entire first half of the 14th century.

The character and position of the church of St. Demetrius in relation to the Holy Apostles can hardly be understood if taken in isolation, out of the context of the entire complex of the Patriarchate of Peć, which was to be built at a later date. Subsequent construction on the southern and western sides gave full meaning to the endowment of Archbishop Nikodim. One may well wonder whether the first, early deceased, donor had in mind the same design achieved in the following decade by his teacher and successor to the spiritual throne, Danilo II (1325–1337). Similar examples show that both of them may have been inspired by the same idea.

The Mother of God Hodegetria

Archbishop Danilo—as recalls Danilo's anonymous biographer—had the church of the Mother of God "Hodegetria of Constantinople" built to the south of the Holy Apostles. He did so out of gratitude for the support given to him in days of distress by the protectress of Mt. Athos and the

imperial capital, and he provided "Greek books and all church necessities" for the shrine and let monks "of Greek origin to "...perform divine service according to their custom." Broadly educated, Danilo was emotionally tied to Greek-language literature, as was his predecessor Nikodim who had translated from Greek the famous Jerusalem Typikon (rule) of St. Sabbas the Sanctified with its regulations of monastery life and description of divine services. Experts in Greek language and literature were needed in Serbia for many reasons, particularly after 1334 when Stefan Dušan conquered extensive areas of the Byzantine Empire.

The Hodegetria's shrine was symmetrical to the church on the northern side. With its forms and internal structure it repeated the widespread cross-in-square layout typical of Byzantine architecture, clearly manifested not only in the ground plan, but also in the lead-sheathed roofs. The central part is topped by an octagonal dome on a low cubic base supported by four piers; laterally, the arms of the cross are barrel-vaulted, making the upper section cross-like, while lower, longitudinally vaulted bays are in the corners. In accordance with the ideas of Archbishop Danilo himself, the prothesis chapel and the diaconicon as independent ritual areas are dedicated to St. Arsenije of Serbia and St. John the Forerunner. At a later date, when Archbishop Danilo was buried there, the north-western part of the nave was separated by a canopy. The interior, however, retained its original layout which was not disturbed by the installation of a stone altar screen with Romanesque capitals.

The apertures which were executed, either at the wish of the donor or by their own intent, by masters from coastal workshops, render a more complex image of the stonework. Single-light and two-light windows, generally distinct both in profile and in the selection of modest decorative motifs, display, in this case as at Dečani, Romanesque forms and Gothic slightly pointed arches, sometimes with quatrefoil apertures in the lunette. To them belongs the two-light mullioned window on the northern side of the Saint Demetrius, executed at a later date, perhaps because the Archbishop Nikodim died before the building was finished.

The Narthex

To the south of the Mother of God Hodegetria, Danilo added a chapel dedicated to Saint Nicholas, and at the front of all three buildings he built an open narthex. The appearance of the whole viewed from the south is represented on a model which the donor, by the mediation of the prophet Daniel, offers to the patron, the Virgin Mary on a throne. The vividly modulated representation shows only the structures raised by Danilo II, and carefully registers their appearance. For this reason the model represents a precious source for reconstruction of those parts of the complex which disappeared at a later date or were rebuilt in another form. The portico on the southern side which protected the entrances to all three structures built by the Archbishop Danilo—the church of the Mother of God, the narthex and Saint Nicholas's chapel, belongs to them, as well.

Construction of religious buildings close to one another, particularly within the confines of a monastery, was a familiar feature of the architecture of the Byzantine Empire and Constantinople itself. The Peć donors had opportunities to see similar complexes, particularly at Mt. Athos. Both Nikodim and Danilo were priors of the Hilandar Monastery for several years and knew other monasteries well, the oldest of which, the Lavra of Saint Athanasius, had similar spatial coordinates: three parallel churches with a common narthex. It is our belief that the monastery of Vatopedi, very close to the Serbian monks, may have been of special significance for Peć. Before founding their own monastery, St. Sava and Simeon Nemanja had lived there, lavished it with rich gifts and commissioned many buildings there; the fraternity of Vatopedi respected them as donors.

The cluster of catholicon in Vatopedi is laid out in a similar fashion and dedicated to the same saints: the northern church to St. Demetrius, the southern one to St. Nicholas, and the oldest one, situated in the center, to the Mother of God, the protectress of Mt. Athos. In Peć, at the Holy Apostles, all the shrines which by their position and ritual correspond to the Vatopedi complex were added in the course of a single decade. Both donors, who arrived from Mt. Athos to take high positions in the Serbian Church wanted to transfer to Serbia prototypes from this great Orthodox monastic center.

This was reflected on the façades with strong red hues like those on the churches of the most prominent Athonite monasteries. It is likely that the walls of the original Hilandar church, replaced later by King Milutin, had been painted in the same way. The earliest traces of red color were found in Peć on the Holy Apostles which were painted having Žiča as a model, and that practice, within the framework of emulating Athonite customs, continued to be pursued in finishing the other churches in the complex.

Archbishop Danilo's buildings with their dark red façades had rich ornaments covering the entire surface below the roof cornices, archivolts, lunettes and window frames. Earlier, the rows of stones and bricks had been painted to imitate builders' facing, covering the coarse tissue of walls and mortar. Only some of the decorative elements were adopted in Peć, for example: the checker board. However, ornaments typical of wall painting and book illumination were predominantly used in a rich repertoire ranging from antique motifs to geometric patterns, mazes and ornaments characteristic of the Middle Ages. All the decoration was carried out in fresco technique which enabled it to retain its basic forms and freshness of color after six and one half centuries of exposure to sun and precipitation.

Painted decoration of this kind later became the object of interest among experts because of the fact that several decades later bas-reliefs with similar decorative elements

Entrance of the Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria,
east wall of the narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć

Family Tree of the Nemanjić Dynasty, east wall of the narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1331

Family Tree of the Nemanjić Dynasty, detail

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appeared on the façades of the Morava style churches—mainly in the same places. As a matter of fact it was supposed that the painted ornamentation on the outsides of the Peć churches date from a later period, taking its place in a new form of expression. Careful examination, however, has proven that the painted ornamentation preceded the stonework, i.e. that the new style of sculptural art from the last decades of the 14th and the first half of the 15th century had already been developing among local builders in another medium: it did not appear out of the blue, completely formed.

Archbishop Danilo's large, open narthex was of exceptional beauty; a chronicler from the early 15th century included it in his selection of the most valuable works of ancient Serbian art. It has reached us, however, in a significantly altered appearance following damage and the subsequent reconstruction undertaken by Patriarch Makarije around 1560. The original view of the narthex is shown on the painted model in the hands of Archbishop Danilo. Precious data are also supplied by his biographer praising his work. After deciding to build "a bright narthex," he says that first "in his mind he measured everything… what its height should be, what length, what width, so that it leans on" and is "in unision" with the churches of the Holy Apostles, Saint Demetrius and the Mother of God.

The spacious narthex was open and bright indeed. Three piers in the middle and one on the northern and southern ends divide the interior into two aisles, each with six bays. The upper sections were almost completely rebuilt after the restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć, but the standing remnants prove that, like today, the supporting pillars were connected by arches and the fields between them vaulted; on the eastern side they rested on pilasters added to the churches, and on the western side on corresponding piers of the façade. All the bays, of the same size, had groin vaults capable of carrying chambers on the upper floor.

The light construction of the edifice became apparent in the appearance of the façade. Colonnettes with apertures terminating in arch-form openings are approximately of the same width as the supports in the interior. Their rhythm and outer elegance were particularly stressed by slender octagonal pillars with narrower, somewhat recessed, arches. These reduced the span between the piers and contributed to the static value of the whole. Such a structure was too fragile to withstand the test of time. Today only the features of its lower part can be well observed. Fortunately these lower original forms have been preserved, though the upper ones were quite interesting. Both information the *Life of Archbishop Danilo*, and the model he is holding as donor testify to that.

The southern front had two broad arches leaning on the marble pillar in the middle, beyond which was a deep and spacious interior. Above the aperture a gable corresponding to the height of the upper floor was pierced by a two-light window illuminating the space probably stretching across the vestibule. According to the words of Danilo's biographer and disciple there was a katechoumena here, but we know too little about the various forms of chambers—even comparing this one with those in other cathedral churches—to assume its appearance and guess its function.

The statement of Danilo's biographer that he (Danilo) "built a high pyrgos in front of the church" and a chapel in it devoted to his namesake St. Daniel, is particularly interesting. A belfry is depicted in this place on the donor's model; not very tall, with an open upper section in which the bells are visible. The bells were depicted with special attention; it was stressed in Danilo's biography that he had spent much gold in order to have "bells with a pleasant sound" made in the Coastal area, which he brought here and installed with great effort.

The painted decorations of the Peć narthex deeply impressed the medieval observer: there were frescos not only on its vaults and walls visible from the outside, but also on the outer sides of the piers, and the upper, broader surfaces, as there were on the churches behind them, covered with painted ornaments on a red ground.

In this form, with its elaborate spaces dedicated to various rituals, the Peć churches could respond to the requirements of the complex rites of a large spiritual center whose needs Danilo knew best and, experienced as he was in building, was able to meet thoroughly. The memory of his great merits was simply expressed by the addition to his name of the epithet *Pećki* (of Peć), just as the memory of the great donor from the ranks of rulers Stefan (Stephen) Uroš III has been preserved by calling him *Dečanski* (of Dečani).

Simultaneously with his care of the great royal churches, first of all of Dečani which was built under his supervision, and then of other places of worship he erected, the Archbishop Danilo made an effort to furnish the interior of the Peć church with frescos and to provide the objects necessary for divine service. The wall decoration of the church took a course different from the builders' works: although the narthex with the belfry and the parekklesion on the upper floor were put up last, frescos were first painted there around 1330 rather than in the churches added on the south side. That is indicated, first of all, by the appearance of Danilo II above the entrance to the church of the Mother of God, where he is significantly younger than on the donor's composition in its interior. This is a fact to be trusted. The portraits carefully transferred features of represented persons and recorded changes brought about by the passage of time. It is sufficient to consider the twenty-odd surviving portraits of King Milutin from his young days till the closing years of his life among which the last portraits registered his decline of strength and the approaching end. The reason for the aforementioned sequence of decoration in Peć could be explained by the wish of the spiritual dignitary to arrange the access to the main sanctuary first, the Church of the Holy Apostles which,

Christ Pantocrator,
Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, dome, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

Service of the Hierarchs,
detail: Saint Sava – First Archbishop of Serbia,
Saint Gregory the Theologian and Saint Basil (the Great) of Cappadocia,
altar apse, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

together with the church in Žiča, held the highest place in the hierarchy. Inspired by the old see of the Archbishopric, the Church of the Holy Apostles started to observe the feast of Ascension, and sources mention it as the Holy Savior and the Great Church, where the most important archbishop's divine services and rites were held, in addition to the ordination of the highest church dignitaries.

Of the comprehensive thematic sequences from the time of the Archbishop Danilo in the narthex, representations have survived devoted to the Mother of God on the surfaces of the southern bays and the space in front of the church. Most of the themes represented relate to her. Above the entrance there is a large figure of the Mother of God with outstretched arms, expressing, with the child at her breasts, the idea of the Incarnation on a wide, decorated vessel. The mercy of the young Christ blessing with both hands is directed to the Archbishop Danilo and St. Nicholas, whom, as a bishop, the Serbian spiritual leader held in high regard, dedicating a separate church to him on the southern side. On the nearby arches the Old Testament fathers celebrate the Mother of God, thus illustrating the verses of the song "The prophets announced you from the heaven...," and on the southern wall stands a rare figure of the Virgin nursing the Christ child in her guise of Galaktotrophousa on a wide decorated seat, in front of a ciborium, and angels, freely positioned in space, exalt her.

The Tree of the Serbian royal family occupies the whole height of the eastern wall by the entrance. Below a large portrait of Christ are depicted descendants of St. Simeon Nemanja, five in each of four regularly arranged rows. The stylized vine tendrils encircling their whole figures is not as rich here as it is in other versions; only in places are its curves replaced by portraits of the younger members of the dynasty in small cups, without disturbing the strict general order. In the highest zone of figures below the angels—two on each side—lowering crowns for the king and queen, Milutin is depicted in the middle, to the right of him are Stefan Dečanski and his brother Konstantin, and to the left, sons Simeon and Dušan. The noticeable respect paid to King Milutin and the choice of the persons around him indicate that the Tree was painted while Stefan Dečanski was alive, before 1331.

The rest of the painting in the narthex—predominantly dating to 1565—may well repeat the earlier scenes it covers, so that, chances are, in the time of Archbishop Danilo most of the wall surfaces were covered by the Calendar, versions of which are also to be seen in somewhat earlier Gračanica and later Dečani.

The Mother of God Hodegetria: painting

The Church of the Mother of God articulates simple, legible and harmoniously arranged religious themes. The words from the psalm extolling Christ as the Lord of the universe are inscribed around his portrait in the dome, the Divine Liturgy is in the lower parts of the dome, a row of prophets with six-winged seraphims above their heads is between the windows, while the evangelists are on the pendentives on the developed spaces or "interiors" represented with painted architecture, engaged in writing or turned toward the personifications of the wisdom inspiring them.

On the highest parts of the vaults over the arms of the cross are arranged the Great Feasts, while on the lower surfaces of the northern side—Christ's appearances after the Resurrection; on the southern side are scenes from the life of the Mother of God. In the northwestern part of the nave a rare representation of the Virgin as protectress of the humble and poor on the wall above the sarcophagus of Archbishop Danilo belongs to the series of paintings dedicated to the patron.

Archbishop Daniel (Danilo) II (1324–1337) with the Prophet Daniel.
A donor portrait in the Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

The Nativity of Christ, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, south arm of the cross, vault, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

The Infant Mother of God Caressed by her Parents Joachim and Anna,
Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, south arm of the cross, south wall, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

Ascension of Christ, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, altar vault, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

The lowest zone of frescos contains the figures of saints, mainly of the great martyrs in the northern, and the monks in the southern part, while by the entrance the portraits of St. Zosimas and Mary of Egypt remind one of the story of a great sinner who, halted by an invisible force at the door of the Jerusalem church converted into a Christian and finished her life by expiation in the desert.

Contrary to the strict order for arranging saints on the walls of the lowest zone, the donors' composition is freely developed in the southwestern part of the nave. Here the prophet Daniel commends the Archbishop with a sweeping gesture. He has stepped freely into the space toward the Mother of God with her Child on a sumptuous throne, turning his head toward the donor with whom he holds the model of the building. Danilo, bowed a little, wearing the robes of a monk but wrapped in a bishop's gown covered with ornaments and cries-crossed with "the rivers," is following him humbly, addressing himself to the Mother of God in a prayer by the gesture of his left hand. The beard with its occasional gray hairs discloses Danilo II's age, but his solid features still show evidence of vigor and indicate that the portrait was not made in his last years. He does not look like a person whose life was filled with many hardships under the reigns of three kings—Milutin, Stefan Dečanski and Stefan Dušan. Prior to becoming the head of the archbishopric, he demonstrated his capabilities as the hegoumenos of the Serbian monastery on Mount Athos whose monastic community and treasury he successfully protected from Catalonian mercenaries. He was the bishop of Banjska in times of unrest, a versatile diplomat in negotiations abroad and mediator in internal conflicts. In addition, he also was a writer and connoisseur of construction techniques, on whom the rulers themselves relied when commissioning their pious endowments. The portrait of this many-faceted, gifted person holds a dignified place on the wide surface of the western wall, in a composition which, in terms of unrestricted movements and their rhythm, is one of the most beautiful works of old Serbian painting.

In keeping with his predecessors, and nourishing their cult, Danilo expressed special respect for Archbishop Arsenije. It was not by chance that he devoted the prothesis of the Hodegetria's church to this eminent prelate, the heir to St. Sava. The space stood next-door to the Church of the Holy Apostles whose famous frescos were linked with Arsenije's name and where, under a sarcophagus, his body rested, separated from the prothesis only by a wall. This provided a chance to represent the life of this archbishop on the walls of the parekklesion. Like the other sanctified figures from local history, Arsenije has his Service and Life abundant with data about him, but the frescos were restricted only to his ordination as deacon, priest and archbishop, as well as to his death with representation of the last prayer over his body in the presence of the king, the nobility and the clergy.

Mother of God *Nourisher of the Poor*,
Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, northwest bay, vault, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

In the southern part of the church, in the diaconicon, is illustration of the life of St. John the Forerunner. Several years later, after his death (the end of 1337), Danilo was depicted once more, this time by his grave, wearing archbishop's dress decorated with a big cross. As in the narthex above the entrance, St. Nicholas, the bishop who was his model and protector, is next to him.

The Church of Saint Demetrius: Painting

And finally, only the church of St. Demetrius remained undecorated. The care of its painting was entrusted to Danilo's heir to the spiritual throne, Joanikije, the king's former chancellor (from 1338 the Archbishop, and from 1346 to 1354 the Patriarch). In this simpler space, most likely at the wish of the educated donor and religious dignitary who enjoyed the personal confidence of the ruler, the painter displayed some theological and ecclesiastical-political ideas.

In the dome, as in the Holy Apostles, the Ascension is presented with the apostles among the windows. The prophets, thus, are placed on the arches, at the height of the evangelists on the pendentives and the Great Feasts on the vaults.

Like other Peć churches, Saint Demetrius was a mausoleum for ecclesiastical leaders; its donor, the Archbishop Nikodim, was buried here. His sarcophagus with sculpted decoration is in the northwestern corner. This might have been the reason for painting the scenes of Christ's Burial and the Two Marys at the sepulcher in that part of the

Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles – Pentecost,
Church of Saint Demetrius, western bay, north wall, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1322–1324

church, while at the opposite end, on the eastern wall, are the Annunciation, the Nativity of the Mother of God and the Presentation of the Mother of God at the Temple.

The two Ecumenical Councils in which the dogma of the Christian church was founded form a fascinating ecclesiastical and historical subject; there were also two Serbian Councils which are represented here in frescos. The First of the Councils was held in the same spirit by Saint Sava—probably the council in Žiča, when the head of the new autocephalous (autonomous) church delivered his famous speech on the righteous faith. The Descent of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, a fresco in the same section of the Church, describes the apostolic mission facing the Serbian bishops and clergy: tongues of flame convey to them the ability to preach among nations whose language they do not know; that is why the image of the young Christ, painted here above the participants of the synods, bestows a similar divine benefit on account of his blessing.

The other Serbian Council joined two persons whose reigns were an entire century apart St. Simeon Nemanja and King Milutin—in an interesting manner. The gesture by which the holy founder of the dynasty points to his

Archbishop Nikodim, King Stefan Dečanski, young King and future Emperor Dušan and Saint Sava,
Church of Saint Demetrius, western bay, south wall, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1322–1324

The frescos in the Church of Saint Demetrius in Peć should be dated between 1322 and 1324. At that time, King Stefan Dečanski and young King Dušan were certainly still under the influence of their seven-year sojourn in Constantinople. This is why their official portraits on the southern wall, painted against a red, almost purple background, surrounded by the images of Archbishop Nikodim and St. Sava, are imbued with the spirit and tastes of the court in Constantinople consequently they bear little similarity with the earlier images of rulers in Serbia. However, certain insignia and robes, worn here for the first time by King Stefan Dečanski, young King Dušan and Archbishop Nikodim, would occasionally appear on their portraits and those of other people almost until the end of the 14th century.

Prophet Isaiah and the Prophet Solomon, Church of Saint Demetrius, subdomicial area, soffit of the southern arch, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1322–1324

great grandson, imparting majesty to his rule on the throne, represents symbolic investiture to this ruler whose merits in building and restoring churches were immense. The representation of the local council has not only ideological and political significance, but also extols the support given by the ruler to the church and profession of faith.

The large, solemnly arranged cycle of St. Demetrius on well visible zones on the lateral walls formerly comprised eight scenes which flowed, interestingly, from the right to the left. On the northern side is St. Demetrius in front of Emperor Maximian Galerius, St. Demetrius in prison blessing Nestor for his combat against the gladiator Lyaios, the Victory of Nestor over Lyaios and the Execution of St. Demetrius, and on the southern side the Ascension (Burial) of St. Demetrius and St. Demetrius defending Thessalonica from enemies. The last two representations on the northern wall date from the 17th century, when that part of the church had to be rebuilt and the frescos repainted. The representations on the southern side were also partly repainted at that time. Legend vividly describes the destiny of the great martyr who as the protector of the second largest town of the Empire defended its inhabitants from barbarian sieges and helped in fighting against the enemies a history closely connected to the arrival and subsequent life of the South Slavs on the northern borders of the country. At the same time, the great esteem for Saint Demetrius in Thessalonica, his large basilica sumptuously decorated with mosaics and reliefs, and his feast day in autumn with a great fair which attracted people from all walks of life to Thessalonica spread the cult of this saint, particularly through Serbia and Bulgaria. Detailed representations of St. Demetrius' life, however, are very rare in monumental painting. The well-preserved cycles in Dečani and Peć belong to the most comprehensive and the most beautiful in all of Byzantine art.

The southern wall of the western part of the nave displays four historical portraits. The first is of a spiritual leader in a sakkos (tunic-like vestment) with a broad golden hem, decorated with tendrils bearing the images of the saints, wearing on his head headgear of an unusual shape resembling an emperor's crown. The king and his young son are beside him—the visitor can read the names of Dušan and Uroš—they are in ankle-length attire strewn with golden ornaments, unusual for the tradition of rulers' dress in Serbia and the Byzantine Empire. They wear open crowns on their heads and hold crosses. The ruler is wearing a long loros (band of cloth) arranged in an X over his upper body, with peribrachions and epimanikia (cuffs) on his arms. The faces on all three figures have been erased, perhaps because they were painted on a dried surface on which the pigment could not survive as it did on the other surfaces. We surmise that the masters were not familiar with the appearance of the men to be portrayed; while waiting for the men to come and pose in person they delayed finishing the fresco, preferring to portray them as precisely as possible. For this reason only the figure of St. Sava with an inscription on the western side of the wall is in good condition. The artists knew his figure well and were able to paint it immediately in its entirety. There is no doubt that the first in the row was Archbishop Joanikije II. This is proved by the text of the prayer inscribed below the Virgin Mary

Christ the Savior of the World,
Church of the Holy Apostles, south pilaster,
the Patriarchate of Peć, before 1350

The Mother of God *Paraklesis*, detail: Christ Child, Church of the Holy Apostles, north pilaster, the Patriarchate of Peć, before 1350

in a niche of the walled window on the western wall, quoted from his namesake St. Joanikius: *O most holy Mother of God, do receive the prayer of your slave Archbishop Joanikije.* The frescos, apparently, had come into being prior to his elevation to the rank of patriarch. The large figure of young king Uroš, born in 1337, helps to date the fresco: it can be assumed with a high degree of probability that the last building in Peć was painted in 1345. In the smallest in the complex, the church of St. Nicholas, only the fragments of paintings have been preserved which do not allow any judgment of their character and the date of their origin.

Compared with scenes in the Mother of God Hodegetria which were painted, in colorful landscape, by anonymous artists of unequal skill, the frescos of Saint Demetrius stylistically represent a much more homogeneous entity. One of the painters, most likely the leading among them, left in the altar apse—in accordance with the notion that a master is nothing more than a mediator between Providence and a work of art—a humble note of his work: *Theou doron ek heiros Ioannou* (Divine gift from the hand of John). The Apostles' Communion, the painting on which the painter—no doubt a Greek—left his name, makes it possible to identify his "handwriting" and recognize it on other representations. It is therefore obvious that when dividing the surfaces prepared for painting, master Jovan gave the left side of the composition to his associate. He himself executed most of the frescos on the southern wall and some of them on the northern side, and the scenes of the church councils on the groin-vault of the western bay. Differences in the manner of work are noticeable in the specific drawing and composition, in the sculptural qualities and relations of the colors used. Master Jovan, strongly modulating in bright and dark tones, created robust, male figures with elongated heads and bodies which can easily be distinguished from the other, more finely proportioned, even gracious, figures in the lowest zone. Neither of them, however, made an effort to interpret the space in a more complex and vivid way: the scene always has two grounds all participants are in the foreground, and the painted architecture and landscape in the other. Without diagonal elements which would define its depth and create a complex sense of space, the action proceeds steadily under master Jovan's brush with an emphasized tranquillity created by a vertical order of figures, high rocks and painted scenery. Contrary to this, the landscape is covered with various plants the exuberance of which gives serenity to the representations.

The comparison of the representations on the northern wall with contemporary frescos in Dečani leaves little doubt that the painters of this great shrine, near Peć, took part in the decoration of Saint Demetrius. It may well be that Archbishop Joanikije, perhaps anticipating changes in political and church organization, undertook to complete the interior of the churches, by which his throne stood, for new divine services.

Restoration of the Holy Apostles

Of more modest architecture than the great shrines of Banjska and Dečani in which secular rulers were buried, the churches of the heads of church in Peć repeatedly raised buildings, adapted and modified them but did not provide conditions for the lasting survival of their frescos. Each reconstruction, settling of the site or roof damage left traces on the wall paintings; repairs of its individual parts were inevitable.

The presence of many painters in nearby Dečani during the entire decade provided an opportunity to replace or add frescos to the nave of the Holy Apostles, on the pilasters and the arch between them by which the vault was divided into two zones. These works, most likely, were inspired by the elevation of the Serbian Church to the rank of Patriarchate, and carried out in the early spring of 1346. At

View of the west wall of the western bay,
Church of the Holy Apostles, the Patriarchate of Peć

that time, one of the fresco masters of the Dečani narthex painted the prophets on the inner side of the arch, below Christ in the apex who is blessing, and the holy martyrs and hermits on its frontal surfaces. The figures of Christ the Savior on the southern and the Virgin with Child on the northern pilaster are invested with a special meaning: here the Mother of God—in a conversation written down on a scroll—addresses the Son in a prayer for the salvation of mankind. Both representations, hence, remind of the funerary character of the space in which the sarcophagi of archbishops Arsenije and Sava II were resting. Joanikije's direct care of this wall painting, as in Saint Demetrius, is indicated by the figure of his namesake and protector, St. Joanikius, who is painted next to Christ. The Archbishop had a special reason for that: he was also buried here in 1345 in the southwestern corner of the nave, and the funeral service over his body, in the presence of a great number of clergymen and laymen, is represented in the fresco on the arched surface above his sarcophagus.

Somewhat later, probably in connection with the rearrangement of the Great Church, new frescos were painted in the choirs. Judging by all facts, these walls must have been damaged by humidity before the two other churches were built on either side, when the vaults over them were raised to a greater height. Higher up, previous scenes of the Great Feasts, probably dating to the 13th century, were replaced by more recent ones, while below them hermits were portrayed on the northern side, and warriors on the southern. In the right-hand choir there is an elevated spot fenced with red stone where stood the throne of the head of the Serbian Church. Christ the Righteous Judge is portrayed above the throne, and next to him, as in many cathedral churches, is the figure of St. Peter, because he represented the heritage of pastoral duty, a reminder of the apostolic mission of bishops. In front of the throne before the eyes of the archbishops sitting on it and in accordance with local tradition stands the figure of St. Sava, their predecessor. For this reason there is a customary expression in ancient sources: Serbian archbishops "hold St. Sava's throne." In a rich ambience whose wall decoration was then restored, the slender figures, dried in some spots, figures of vivid coloring and deliberate modulation, departed from the earlier, sculpturally richer, painting, announcing the style of the Morava school shrines.

The Narthex

St. Sava's portrait above the stone throne in the narthex by the entrance to the Holy Apostles represents an isolated example of such articulation which has survived in these surroundings. The founder of the Serbian Church is invested here with the title of patriarch, belying historical fact. That title here, however, expresses in an unusual way an event of special importance in the ecclesiastical and political life of the country. The coronation of Stefan Dušan as emperor and the elevation of Archbishop Joanikije to the rank of patriarch (1346) provoked the protest of the Byzantine court and the Constantinople church, and subsequently the pronouncement of an anathema in Saint Sophia's Cathedral. The profound conviction and separation from the Orthodox community placed a burden on the conscience of the Serbian clergy and the entire society and they strove to have the anathema lifted. The first agreement on reconciliation was achieved with the same Constantinople patriarch who uttered the anathema, but it never materialized because a bout of plague killed him, and with him part of his escort in the court of Despot Jovan Uglješa in Serres. About ten years later through the efforts of Prince Lazar an agreement was reached and the anathema lifted, probably with the stipulation that Serbian ecclesiastical leaders could keep the title of patriarch within the borders of their country, while the Ecumenical church continued to address them as archbishops. The portrait of St. Sava with the unusual rank of patriarch above the throne of the head of the Serbian Church was painted after the Councils held in Peć in 1374 and 1375, and, undoubtedly, right in the large narthex

Fresco of the Burial Service,
the Tomb and the Sarcophagus of Patriarch Joanikije,
Church of the Holy Apostles, west bay, south wall,
the Patriarchate of Peć, 1354–1356

Serbian Kings Stephen the First-crowned and Stephen Uroš I as monastics,
west bay, south wall, Church of the Holy Apostles, the Patriarchat of Peć, ca. 1300

Saint Sava I depicted as a Patriarch,
east wall of the narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1380

of the great church. Archbishop Danilo, having in mind the space required by Ecclesiastical Councils, arranged its interior by installing stone seats along the walls, the same kind of which could be seen in the interior of the buildings accommodated to the needs of various spiritual congregations all around the Byzantine world.

The relatively fragile construction of the narthex did not stand the test of time, and there were no conditions for its maintenance. In the course of the first century of Ottoman rule, which permanently spread over Metohija in 1455, the monastery was no more the see of the spiritual heads, nor did it own its former large estates. The village of Peć, which owing to the proximity of the Patriarchate had developed into a settlement with a market-place, became a Turkish town. The fraternity of the monastery—it is seen from the registers of the new authorities—at times numbered only few monks, the life in it was dying out, and the buildings falling into ruin.

The decline and suffering of the large spiritual center was halted by the restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557. The need to control more easily the life of the Orthodox populace in the Empire, which by the middle of the 16th century had been considerably expanded by the conquest of vast areas to the north of the Danube and the Sava, induced the Sublime Porte (Ottoman Government) to separate Serbian bishoprics from the existing administrative division and to return autonomy to them within the borders of the Serbian Church in the second half of the 14th century. Such a decision was influenced by the fact that during these decades a number of highest dignitaries close to Suleyman the Magnificent were of Serbian origin. They reached the sultan's court by the selection from the ranks of gifted boys who were brought to Constantinople within the so called "tribute in blood."

Of the colorful façades of Danilo's narthex, only the southern one was preserved in its entirety—on the occasion of restoration, around 1560—and, apart from it, a part of the western front. It is obvious that the whole edifice was badly damaged, so that all the groin vaults on the ground-floor had to be rebuilt, and on that occasion they became barrel-vaults. The upper floor with the catechumenon and the bell tower was not restored at all. The space which spread before the believers was not shrunk by that. However, the general impression changed, because the interior was not open any more. It is assumed that at that time it was difficult to bring skillful stonemasons and builders who would repeat the light shapes of the pillars and arches, but the main reason must have been the fact that the space of such a shape, in the conditions in which the idea of an open narthex had been achieved, was not suitable for the long prayers of the monks who, from autumn to the spring, were exposed to the cold and humid air blowing along the canyon of the Bistrica river toward the Metohian plain. Because of that the apertures between the piers and pillars—reclining and unsafe—were closed by thick screening walls, while the northern part of the edifice underwent considerable reconstruction.

Simultaneously with the restoration of the ruined and dilapidated edifices inhabited by the dignitaries and officials of the restored church center, the interior of the churches was rearranged, especially of the narthexes. At the be-

ginning of September 1565, as seen from the inscription above the northern door, fresco-painting, entrusted to a group of local artists, was completed. They gathered around the new spiritual administration and in the course of the ensuing years repaired and added decorations in several big monasteries, among which—as already mentioned was Gračanica, whose outer narthex had also been rebuilt and closed.

In the Peć narthex the artists mostly repeated wall painting scenes from the time of Archbishop Danilo. But they also expanded on these, taking advantage of the possibility of painting the walls closing the interior. The largest parts of the upper surfaces, primarily the vaults, were covered with scenes of the Menologion in the eastern bays and the scenes of the Christ's Miracles and Parables in the western, disposed in the order in which the Gospel was read on Sundays before and after Easter. There were special reasons for repeating as many as eight scenes of the Ecumenical Councils here: by returning church administration to Peć, the narthex regained its role in the hall where the prelates of the Serbian Church convened and made their decisions. In this space, the fresco of the Council of St. Simeon Nemanja and the twelve apostles who appear on the piers in the middle, to whom the church in before them was dedicated were invested with the same meaning: the figures of Christ's disciples were reminders of the missionary role of the bishops entrusted with the care of the body of believers. The councils, as at the time of independence, were presided over by Patriarch Makarije, the first head of the restored Church (1557), without doubt sitting on a throne with the figure of St. Sava behind him. On the same wall he is surrounded by the twelve spiritual heads of Serbia—the archbishops on the southern, and the patriarchs on the northern side. Among them, on the pilaster, stands the figure of Makarije as the donor holding a model of the restored narthex, different in appearance from the one held by Danilo II.

The figures of the celebrated Balkan anchorites, as well as of the saints meritorious for the expansion and preservation of the Christian faith, are associated with the row of the highest church dignitaries. The last among them, young gold-smith Georgije from Kratovo who refused to accept Islam, was burnt at the stake by the Ottoman authorities in 1515. The emphasis on the local spiritual tradition was aimed at proving the right of the Serbs to their autocephalous church and fostering self-reliance: under foreign and infidel lords in a land bereft of its own bearers of political power, the Church assumed the responsibility of caring for and preserving the national character of the Serbian people.

The master painters of the Peć narthex were artistically mature at the time of its painting, probably educated in local workshops. They revived the tradition of painting and outstanding examples of their work are icons from Gračanica dating from the second quarter of the 16th century. It is obvious that they were inspired by the "classical" works from the middle of the 14th century, especially by the wall

Patriarch Makarije Sokolović, pilaster on eastern side of the narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1565

Inscription of Patriarch Makarije (Macarius) on the north wall of the narthex about the ranovation of the Patriarchate of Peć, 1565

***Air* (veil) of Hvosno,**
painter Longin, the Treasury
of the Patriarchate of Peć, 1594

decoration in Dečani, although the new frescos of the Peć narthex were of drier and more rigid forms, without the imaginative elements of the painted interior and the richness of color. On the shield of St. Demetrius, still today, is the signature of "the most sinful Andreja, the painter." The most prominent painter who worked on these frescos, however, is one whose hand suggests the young Longin. This educated, versatile and gifted artist who in many monasteries left not only frescos but also icons, engaged in literature and on some occasions—as with the large icon of Stefan Dečanski in his endowment—wrote verses beside the scenes which illustrated his life. At the same time, the icons were equipped with excellent wood-carving whose masters, most probably, had a workshop right at the Patriarchate. Several works of that kind, though unsigned, can be attributed to Longin and anonymous masters who continued to nurture their brilliant skills in the decades to follow.

All the frescos in St. Demetrius do not come down to us from the time of Archbishop Joanikije. During the restoration of the northern Peć Church undertaken in 1619/20 following an earthquake, Patriarch Pajsije entrusted the most famous master of that time, the Hilandar monk Georgije Mitrofanović, with fresco painting. In the course of the previous three years he had worked in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia where he acquired significant experience.

Like most artists of that time, Mitrofanović strictly followed the scenes of the earlier wall painting and endeavored to stay as close to it as possible in style and subject matter. He completely replaced several scenes but on a significant number of those which were not entirely destroyed he carefully restored individual parts. Nevertheless, his distinctive use of color and sculptural modelling in the spirit of Cretan painting which dominated Mount Athos shows a difference in comparison with the frescos of earlier master Jovan and his associates. Ordinary believers primarily interested in "listening to" stories and understanding the messages conveyed by the compositions probably did not notice. The gaze moved across the walls following the sense of the whole, lingering longer on less familiar scenes and rare details.

In the Holy Apostles, Georgije Mitrofanović finished an unusual posthumous portrait of the Patriarch Jovan II (1592–1614) commissioned by his successor Pajsije. With his refined facial features, which the painter could not have known, the dignitary is addressing the Virgin with a prayer beautifully written on a wide scroll, saying that he is offering a "small" gift. Separately, on a dark ground, is Pajsije himself, saying in a restrained manner with few words that the Patriarch's grave was in Constantinople rather than in the church. Behind these words, however, is the dramatic story of the captivity and murder of this Serbian Church leader in the Constantinople jail of Yeni Tower because of negotiations he had conducted with the West, particularly with the Vatican and various Italian courts. In those evil times, fully cognizant of the dangers he was facing but determined in his intention to overthrow Ottoman rule, Patriarch Jovan kept dispatching envoys to distinguished figures whom the Serbian people would recognize as ruler and crown in one of ancient centers, proposing them as liberators of his country. His sufferings, nevertheless, did not put a halt to spiritual life or artistic creativity at the Patriarchate of Peć. In its very center the new leader Pajsije, in the course of his long and more cautious rule, restored parts of the early paintings in the "mother of all Serbian Churches," and enriched the treasuries and libraries of many monasteries with works of art and manuscripts.

The Sacred Land: Art of Kosovo,
The Monacelli Press 1997, pp. 28–36 and 198–219.

Iconostasis Cross, Church of the Holy Apostles, work of Thessalonikan painters, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1724

Iconostasis from the Church of the Holy Apostles; detail of Festival Icons (Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Shroud of the Mother of God and Presentation of the Mother of God in the Temple), the Patriarchate of Peć, 1724

Dedicatory Inscription of Patriarch Maxim (1655/1656–1674),
west wall of the naos, Church of Saint Nicholas,
the Patriarchate of Peć, 1673/1674

The small, single-domed church of Saint Nicholas, leaning on the southern façade of the church of the Theotokos Hodegetria, was erected during the major construction works at the complex of Peć churches undertaken by Archbishop Danilo II during the third and forth decades of the 14th century. First envisioned as a chapel, with time it gained use as a separate house of worship. The original iconography from the 14th century was lost, and the church was painted anew in 1673/74 owing to Patriarch Maxim, as evidenced by the inscription on the western wall of the naos. The wall paintings in the church of Saint Nicholas are the work of the painter Radul, who also painted the icons on the iconostas in this church, as well as several icons kept to this day in the treasury of the Patriarchate of Peć.

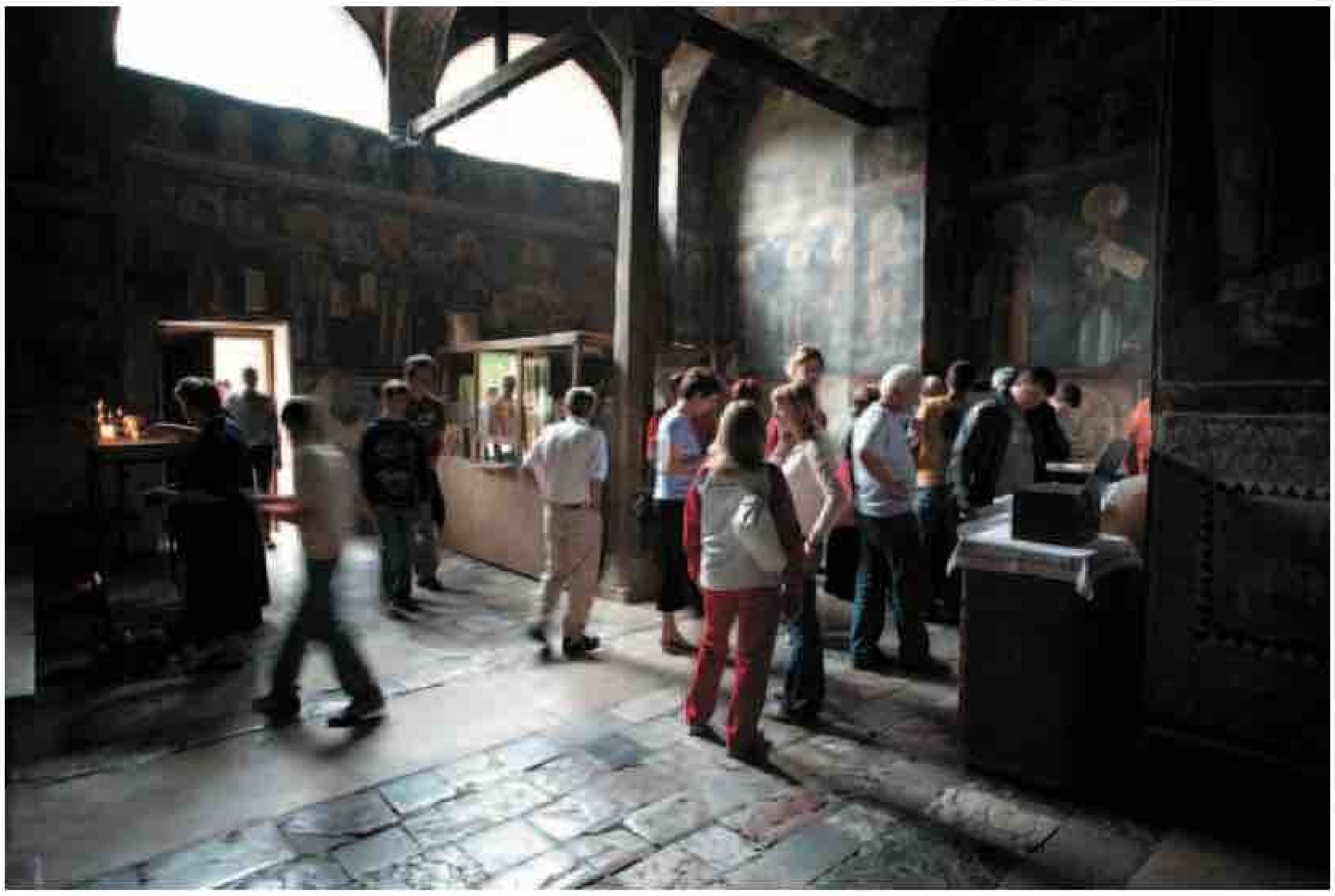
Southern half of the vault with scenes of Life of Saint Nicholas,
Church of Saint Nicholas, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1673/1674

The Death of Saint Sava, icon,
the Treasury of the Patriarchate of Peć, 17th century

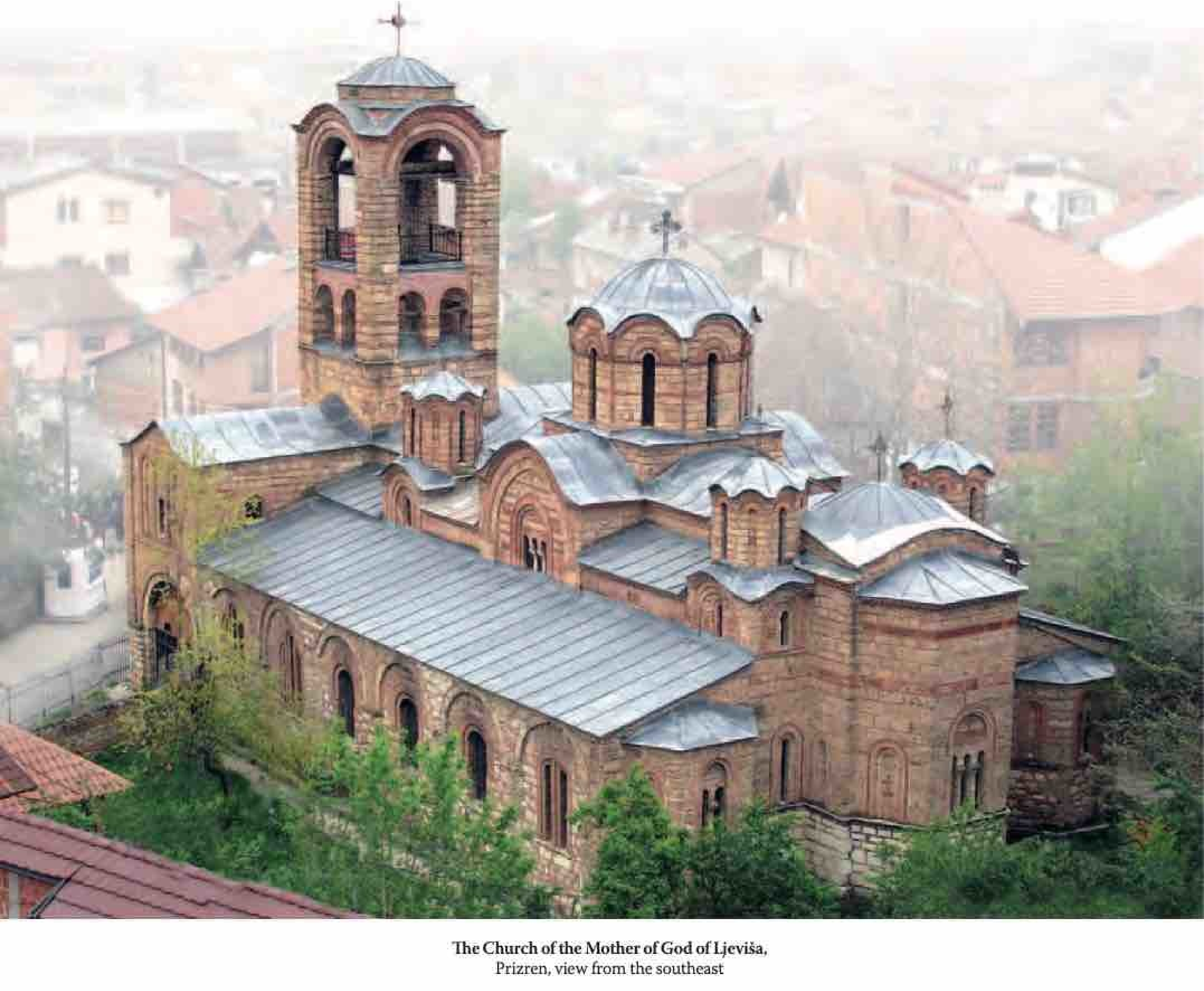
Manuscripts from the Treasury of the Patriarchate of Peć, 14th century

The sisters (nuns) of Peć tend their beehives and produce their own beeswax candles

Serbian Patriarch Irinej serves in front the Proskenitarion with miracle icon of Mother of God *Krasnica* of Peć,
Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, the Patriarchate of Peć



Interior of the narthex of the Patriarchate of Peć



The Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša,
Prizren, view from the southeast

The Cathedral of the Mother of God of Ljeviša

UNESCO World Heritage Site

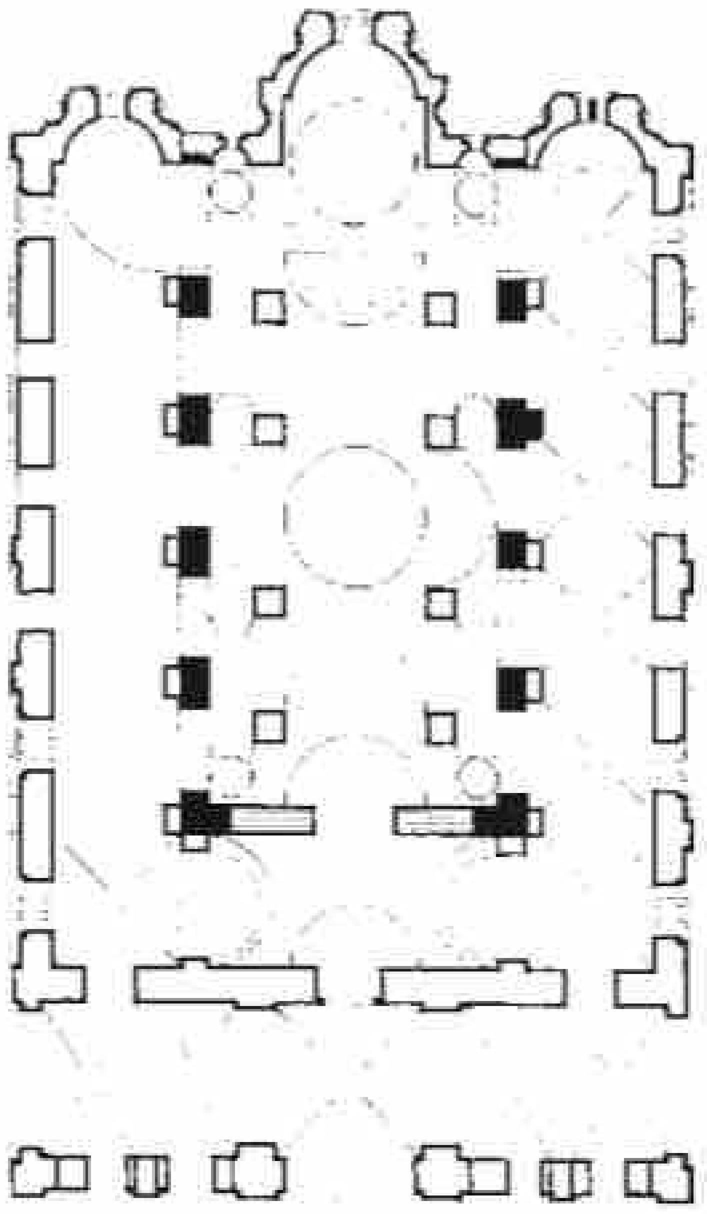
Gojko Subotić

From *Byzantine* times, the church organization retained an episcopate in Prizren and the Cathedral in Ljeviša, a present-day densely populated town traversed by the Bistrica River. The old center was renovated at the time, but only for the needs of the new eparchical administration. Its appearance was radically altered only later, at the outset of the 14th century. The broad, three-aisled church with external three-sided apses and a narthex open toward the church interior, was lighted by windows above the lateral naves, while archaeological investigations have shown that the western façade had a porch with lateral low spaces similar to those along the narthex. It is difficult to ascertain the date when the basilica was erected despite many analogous examples in the architecture of the Eastern Christian world, because it belonged to a type of much earlier Byzantine traditional structures such as prevailed even after the re-establishment of the emperor's authority in these regions. A number of marble fragments from the low altar screen typical of the 6th century testify, as in Hvosno, to the existence of an earlier Christian shrine in this locality. In the 11th century the church was, without a doubt, the seat of the Prizren bishops as cited in a document of Basil II's, in which he confirms the rights and defines the extent of the Ohrid Diocese. For their part, the scant but valuable fragments of bas-relief ornamentation carved in the walls were built later, also confirming by their plasticity and style that they belong to the same period.

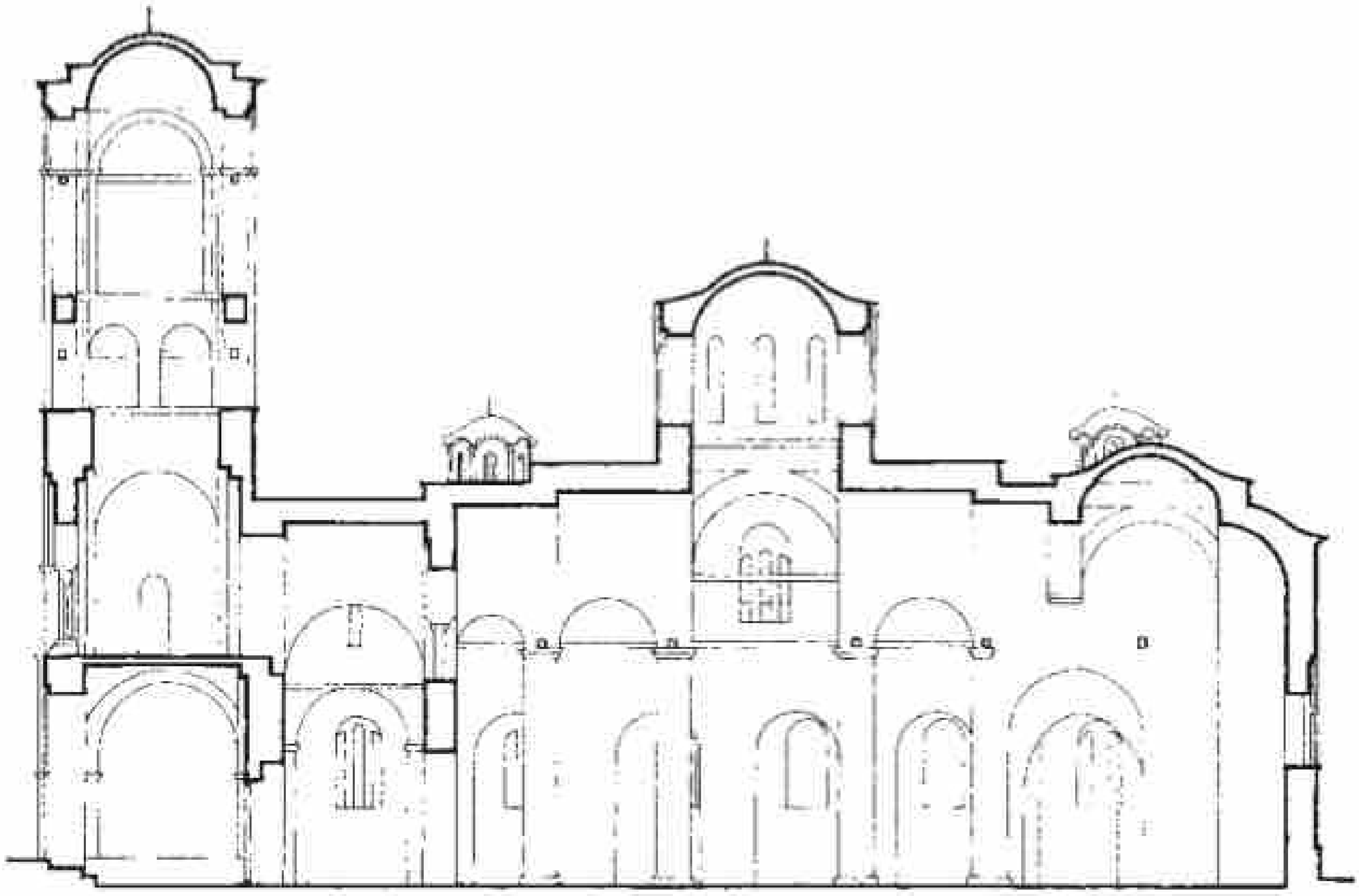
There are no indications that after 1219 the Cathedral, as part of the Serbian Archbishopric, altered its appearance in any essential way. Archaeological excavation has indicated only that the church's lateral aisles—previously covered by a wooden construction—were then placed under a single roof.

The Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, on the other hand, was soon afterwards enhanced with new wall-paintings, but the remaining fragments exposed when restoration work removed the outer layers, revealed only a small part of the once elaborate frescos. A fairly well-preserved depiction of the Healing of the Blind and an image of the Savior from the Wedding at

Mother of God *Eleousa* with Christ Child *the Nourisher of our Life*, southern aisle, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 13th century



Ground plan of the Church of Mother of God of Ljeviša, Prizren



Longitudinal section through the Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, Prizren

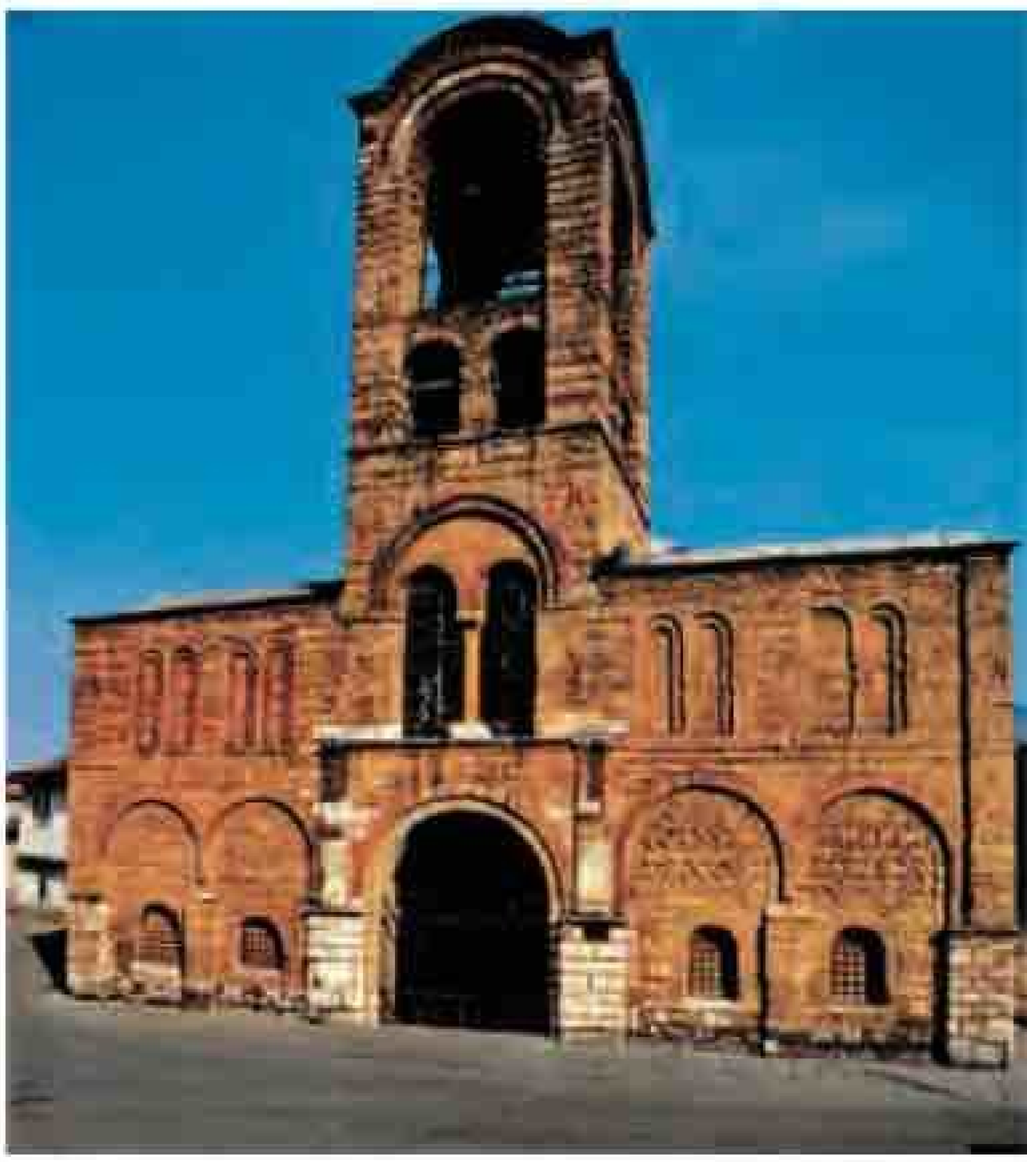
Cana, were a part of Christ's Miracles, painted on the western wall which separated the central nave from the southern aisle. In addition, a rare iconographic image of the Mother of God with Child bearing the epithet of *Provider* and holding a breadbasket was uncovered behind a pillar.

The representations here are cheerful, of simplified form and painted in light colors, thus demonstrating that they had already moved away from the expressiveness of the late Comnenan period which lasted longer in some of the areas of the Byzantine stylistic circle. Nonetheless, some of the saints' features and the trembling folds of the draperies indicate that there still prevailed an enduring tradition of the grand, universal style which was gradually transformed in various ways that led to blunting the sharpness of the linear brush strokes and softening the dramatic tensions of the depictions.

The particularities of the older paintwork in Ljeviša were not an isolated phenomenon in Serbia. They were similar to the frescos in the parekklesion of the Church of Saint Nicholas in Studenica, and in the diaconicon of the main church of the Morača Monastery. It may therefore be reasonably asserted that they were the work of master-builders belonging to the same workshop that was active in the second quarter of the 13th century.

The Prizren bishop Sava—subsequent Archbishop Sava III—endeavored to restore his cathedral church in the 14th century. The old basilica was no longer used significantly, in the physical sense, except for the lower parts of the walls and the interior piers; its spatial plan and exterior therefore acquired a totally different appearance. This time, the Raška tradition was abandoned with its domed single-nave church, the choir transept and the parekklesia. The broad central nave of the former cathedral was divided by a double row of piers forming a cross-in-square in the style of Byzantine architecture. This notion suggested a more complex interior easily perceived from the outside: the branches of the central and transversal nave were taller than the other parts of the edifice, while a cupola was built at their intersection on a square base. Counterbalance to the dome was achieved by four much smaller cupolas placed toward the ends.

Deftly adapting the lower parts of the cathedral, the experienced builder formed a kind of de-ambulatorium from the lateral aisles and narthex such as were also known to urban and monasterial Byzantine builders in various forms. The new entity, therefore, represented a specific, essentially five-aisled edifice with a cross and five cupolas in its central area. This structure, retaining the dimensions of the old basilica, resulted in its elongation, unusual for architecture of this type with added cupolas at a distance from the central one. Its interior divided by piers into a number of segments acquired an exciting rhythm, increased by the mysterious play of shadows and depths resulting from scant sources of light. Of exceptional interest is the exonarthex with its open ground-floor, also lying on the foundations of the old portico, while on the upper floor are two closed areas of the parekklesion with a raised bell tower. There are numerous instances in the cathedrals of the Raška school of exonarthexes added on with one or two lateral or frontal towers, but in Prizren these parts were built at the same time and comprised an integral structure. The bell-tower itself with a wide arched passage on the ground floor and a large two-light mul-



The Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša,
Prizren, view from the east and west

lioned window on the upper level emerges through the body of the exonarthex to rise, with its free upper section, high above the church's dome. Open on all sides so that the entire town could hear the church-bells, its light-weight construction and transparency as well as sturdy proportions embrace the ceremonial western side of the complex. Today, however, like so many other monumental façades it is obscured by a network of narrow streets of the thickly populated quarter "on the Ljeviša," as this part of the town was known in the Middle Ages.

The variety of the construction elements used in rebuilding the Prizren cathedral can readily be noted in its interior arches adequately following the nature of the available space. But the real wealth of forms and architectural texture is most obvious in the façades, till then unknown to Serbian architecture. In keeping with Byzantine building methods, the façade was made of blocks of warm-toned tufa with bricks of different shapes and shades and broad sculptural clasps, altogether creating rich surfaces and warm color blends. The façade itself is highly diverse with its apertures, lunettes and archivolts, shallow pillasters and niches. Some of them, especially elements of the arches, were made exclusively of bricks in multiform sequences and free motifs without regular repetitions, ranging from decoratively disposed elements to a series of delicate ornaments formed for instance, by the stylized patterns of wavesets or incised cross-like small vessels.

This manner of elaborating the Ljeviša façade was a novelty for the Serbs and meant that the earlier, simple broad wall surfaces had been abandoned, but more than that, it was the most representative expression of a long and carefully nurtured practice which had produced major works throughout Byzantium. As was often the case in both earlier and more recent history, examples similar to these Serbian structures in Serbia are preserved in Thessalonica. Still, immediate influences on the skillful builders who restored the Church of the Mother of God in Prizren would to all appearances have to be sought in the workshops of Epirus. From there, particularly in the 13th century, builders fanned out over a broad area; their techniques could be recognized in places which, after the Serbian penetration into the northern regions of Byzantium, lay within its borders.

Two inscriptions on the external side of the altar apse are testimony to the building of the church and those people associated with it. Done in a rare form of full, clear lettering as was the custom of the time, the inscriptions were pressed into soft clay, which was fired and built into the wall as an ornamental band. The higher, shorter inscription mentions Prizren Bishop Sava whose share in the restoration work is recalled by other bricks (five of which have survived) and which simply note the bishop's name without hierarchical titles. The lower, longer text cites, in a first-person statement by the founder of the church, King Milutin himself, that he "maintained the Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša" from the very moment of its foundation. At the end of the inscription stands the year 1306–7, probably indicating the date of the building of the eastern section rather than the completion of the entire church.

Enterior of the Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, view from the east

After reconciling with Byzantium and marrying Princess Simonis, the daughter of the Emperor Andronikos II, King Milutin was at the threshold of large-scale undertakings which lasted the duration of his reign (1281–1321). Before that, he had built a new church on the site of an old katholikon dating from the time of St. Sava and St. Simeon Nemanja, without a doubt the most significant of the early Athonite shrines to survive. This was followed by raising and restoring churches and monasteries in his own country, marking a new era in the history of Serbian architecture (Saint Nicetas near Skoplje, Saint Joachim and Anna in Studenica, Staro Nagoričino and Saint Prochoros of Pčinja near Kumanovo). Banjska and Gračanica were in Kosovo, in addition to the Mother of God of Ljeviša. A most active benefactor at home who enjoyed the support of his prelates at a time of internal rifts, Milutin gained renown by also building shrines and donating churches to large centers abroad. He built a church and a hospital at the Petras Monastery in Constantinople where the sick were cared for by physicians surrounded by famous medical codices. Milutin built his palace and the Church of Saint Nicholas in Thessalonica, while within the Hilandar Metochion he erected the church of Saint George. In Palestine he assisted in the restoration of shrines which included the monastery of Saint Sabbas the Sanctified near Jerusalem, inhabited by Serbian monks.

Generally speaking, the restoration of the Ljeviša church was an articulation of new circumstances and close ties between the Serbian ruler and Byzantine social and artistic life. In this context a new spirit suddenly dominated architecture, especially sacral architecture, which did not exclude western building traditions. The latter were also in evidence during the subsequent decades, particularly in Kosovo and, naturally, in its westernmost parts. A skillful master mason undoubtedly from the coastal area recorded his share in the work on the Mother of God of Ljeviša at the entrance to the church from the outer narthex. Being entirely in the tradition of the Byzantine style, the church did not have the monumental Romanesque portal which was typical of the Raška school (an open porch, vivid detail and a bell-tower imposing its solemn character on the front). The stone-cutter, therefore, applied his western-type skill to the execution of the stone doorposts and architrave. A curling design emerges from the dragon's mouth at one end, hovers over all the surfaces except in the center where a representative of celestial powers, a six-winged seraphim, blocks the entrance of the evil powers while reminding the approaching believer that his heart must be pure. As part of the painted decoration, this was usually conveyed by Archangel Michael with his unsheathed sword and unfurled roll of unequivocal warning. The vine and floral pattern which had been around for quite some time in the Romanesque tradition was to be found on later shrines as well, especially in Dečani which was decorated by master-masons from the Adriatic coast.

These heralds of new ideas and the builders of early shrines in Serbia, have mostly remained unknown to us. However, the name of the talented craftsman of the Prizren cathedral was unexpectedly recorded. As was the custom, several years after the completion of a building, the interior would be painted. The painting included the arches and sides of the portico in front of which the commotion of town life never ceased throughout the day, even in the Middle Ages. This open space was a link between the church and life outside it where local and foreign tradesmen, emissaries and messengers, soldiers, merchants and travellers walked by, but most of all the poor from near and far came to the church for alms. Among the Serbs, as in Byzantium and the West, monasteries gave food to the poor and to all who came to their gates. On certain days people who came were offered wine, and on special occasions even money. The first *typica* of Hilandar and Studenica monasteries in the early 13th century modeled after

the constitution of the famous Constantinople Monastery of the Mother of God Evergetis prescribed the charitable duties of the fraternities. These instructions found a place in the middle of the next century in strict provisions decreed by Emperor Dušan's *Law Code* which stated: "...and in the churches, the indigent are to be fed as the founder decides, but if a metropolitan or bishop or *hegoumenos* fails to do so, he is to be stripped of his rank." Just as the wall near the entrances to the monasteries were inscribed with the charter of the founders confirming their privileges and properties, so in the exonarthex of the Mother of God of Ljeviša there is a record of how much aid was to be distributed to the poor. These words were inscribed on the arched surface of the entrance in fresco technique and were certainly an excerpt from the lost deed granted by King Milutin which is only partly preserved here and which ordained that at all times in summer and in winter, food and drink and salt were to be placed "at the portal." Interestingly, this order contained a statement to the effect that the same amount of food was given to master-builders Nikola and Astrapas who "built the church and painted its interior."

There is no indication of the builders' origins following this mention of their names. In the Serbian inscription the name Astrapas given after the name of Nikola may refer to a man from Greece where architecture of this style was nurtured. It has been noted, however, that Astrapas appears in another instance as the name of a master-builder who, with his brothers Djordje and Dobroslav two decades later, is mentioned in a deed given to Dečani monastery. Nikola evidently worked for King Milutin but one should not hastily conclude that this refers to one and the same person. Many artisans convened to raise the Kings's shrine; it is possible that two different men had the same, common, name of Nikola. It is also of interest to note that in Dečani Nikola was not a master-builder but only assistant to his brother who held the master's title. The significant question, however, is whether a person with experience gained locally in the 13th century—the name of the brother, Dobroslav, reveals Nikola's Serbian origin—could have been such an excellent connoisseur of utterly different notions and of the special techniques that characterized the architecture of the Empire's northern regions. The familiar layout of a western ground-plan with a bell-tower above the portal, a colorful façade and a number of other features can be found, for example, in Omorphokklesia near Kastoria, a definite extant remainder of the practice of Epirote workshops.

The title of master-builder Astrapas, one of the painters of the Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, was,

Inscription beneath the fresco in the exonarthex left by unknown traveler from the East

In a far off time, perhaps soon after those years when the mighty army of Sultan Mehmed II el Fatih, the conqueror of Constantinople, subjugated Serbian cities including Prizren, an elusive traveler from the East entered the church of the Theotokos of Ljeviša. Overcome by her beauty, he paused for a moment and inscribed the above verse beneath a fresco in Arabic calligraphy script, exercising care not to disturb a single figure of that mysterious, foreign, unexpectedly seen frescography. The foreign poet, which he certainly was, did not try to unravel the complex theological contents of the Ljeviša frescos, nor could he experience the religious excitement of the believers for whom they were intended as he stood before them. His admiration must have been similar to that which contemporary man—himself insufficiently versed in mysterious Christian symbolism—feels as he encounters the melodious colors of these old pictures, the harmonic rhythms of their shapes, the freshness of mighty and suggestive figures, and with the craftily-constructed compositions augmented by convincing and strong humanity.

Moved by the brilliance of the paintings at Ljeviša, the wise Easterner of noble spirit, with a fine appreciation for beauty that surpasses time and space, and who seems so close to us even today—much closer than if he had left us him name—rose above the traditions and laws of his land and religion, and excitedly gave sincere recognition to real art.

This recognition was given in the words of an artist, at the beginning of a verse of the greatest Persian lyricist Hafiz, as a greeting to unending joy:

"My eye's pupil is your nest,
(Honor us by coming in, this is your house)."

Service of the Hierarchs, detail: Saint Athanasius, altar, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

with his assistant, as has been said, rather well-known. His name appears in a note written by the artist Michael who in 1294–5 painted the frescos in the Church of the Holy Mother of God Peribleptos in Ohrid and heralded major changes in painting in the new spirit. The discovery of his name beneath age-old layers of grime soon gave rise to disputes which have not been resolved even today. The basic dilemma has been whether one interprets the names of Michael and Astrapas as referring to two separate persons or to only one who appeared at first in Ohrid with a surname, and then later in Prizren without one. It seems natural that in the document ordaining the duties of the Ljeviša Church regarding the town poor, a master-builder would be mentioned only by the name of the illustrious family to which he belonged.

From the preserved excerpt itself, though inscribed in fresco technique, it is evident that the work on building and painting had already been completed. At the same time, the language of the inscription, as in others, suggests that Astrapas had local artists on his team or else that he engaged men of letters for such needs who were well versed in Serbian church literature and able to accompany the frescos with the appropriate quotes.

The interior of the Church of the Mother of God, on the other hand, required of the artisans that the arrangement and nature of the decorative elements should fulfill all the requirements of religious rites and an increasingly sophisticated understanding of wall painting and its role. The elaborate space available after the earlier building was reconstructed was not suitable for the portrayal of certain scenes associated with the functions of its respective parts. Many of the frescos were destroyed during the ensuing centuries of Ottoman occupation when the church was converted into a mosque and the walls covered over with plaster and slaked lime, thus masking their Christian content. Nonetheless, the array of the cycles reveals their more or less preserved scenes while the position of the main themes can be detected by the remaining fragments.

In undertaking the vast task of painting the frescos several years after the church was built—probably from 1310 to 1313—the Thessalonian painter had the opportunity in the Prizren cathedral of demonstrating his exceptional erudition and experience gained over the years in the lively transformation of Byzantine pictorial art. Most certainly King Milutin was well-informed of the excellence of the artists to whom he entrusted the decoration of his endowments through his royal court in Thessalonica where he occasionally stayed. In this he would have been following a long-standing tradition of bonds between the Serbs and Thessalonica, the second largest city of the Byzantine Empire, where St. Sava sojourned while travelling to Athos, and where he met with church dignitaries and commissioned artistic works for the needs of the churches in Serbia and on Mt. Athos.

Starting from the initial concept of a church as God's dwelling on earth, the builders placed Christ Pantocrator in the main dome and Christ's four other images in the adjacent ones—firstly in his usual aspect, then as the Great Hierarch, then the Ancient of Days, and then as Emmanuel. The Prophets who presaged the coming of the Savior were placed in the tambours between the windows, on the pendentives, and underneath them, the Evangelists as witnesses to his life and deeds. In the altar space, in the calotte, and on the lower surfaces, there is the wide scene of the Ascension. The sequence ends on the eastern side with the Holy Mother of God and the Service of the Hierarchs in the apse, the Communion of the Apostles on the sides and a row of the Holy Fathers.

Little has remained of the Great Feasts, usually situated on the highest surfaces as well as underneath them in the naos, on the lateral arms of the cross and in the subdomical area, where we see the Healing Acts of Christ followed by the scenes of his Passion, the events linked to the Resurrection and his Second Coming. The last scenes

illustrate excerpts from the Gospels read in order at matins between Easter and Pentecost.

These scenes, though more extensive for the inclusion of individual cycles previously painted in the narthex, adhered fairly well to the tradition of the previous century. Moreover, the story of Christ's life—his teachings, activities, passion, resurrection and repeated manifestations, all assembled in the central space—was depicted to the believers in all its segments and messages. The parishioners could find both consolation and encouragement in their cathedral. In the previous century, the infant Christ in his Mother's lap and with the bread-basket had already been denoted as the Provider, while on a fresco dating from King Milutin's time his large picture bore the epithet of the Prizren Provider. In the ever-open main church in the town, its inhabitants did see in the holy pictures not only lofty examples of the Christian martyrs but also the Saints whom they venerated for personal reasons. Among them the holy physicians were given a special place as the populace often addressed them for help.

The additional space available for paintings following reconstruction did not necessarily result in a greater number of subjects treated, since narrative tendencies in art had led to expansion of the number of specific cycles and of their episodes, lending them a more complex aura. In the central part of the Ljeviša Church, the scenes, though of a smaller format than the previous ones, did not yet have the character of developed compositions. Despite the changes in use of space, they retained the simplicity of the basic scheme, a special monumentality marking the older paintings.

It is in the same spirit that we see on the surfaces of the groined vaults and lateral sides of the southern outer aisle, the life of St. Nicholas to whom this special chapel was dedicated. Moral themes customarily adorning the monastic premises are portrayed at the other end on the floor above the internal narthex, in the katechoumena accessible primarily to clerics gathered round the archbishop's throne. The popular medieval tale of King Joasaph and the monk Barlaam illustrates the story of human pride with the tree as a symbol of life whose roots are gnawed by mice. This is shown on the western side of the church. And while man lightheartedly sips honey, Hell is lying in wait for him with its jaws wide open. The images of deeply venerated warriors George and Demetrius on horseback are shown on the northern and southern side of the same space. In the east is Daniel the Prophet whose firm faith saved him from the lion's den.

The frescos of the exonarthex are of a different character and have been better preserved. They mainly repeat scenes painted earlier in the western parts of the church in the narthex or in the frescos behind the porch. But the internal content and artistic mode reveal profound changes. Thorough investigations into the paintings of that time and specifically of the Mother of God of Ljeviša have explained its new character and the spiritual layers it stemmed from.

Saint Cyril of Alexandria, altar,
Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

It is usually the narrative character of sacral themes in increasingly complex depictions that used indirect language which was not always easy to follow. Some manifestations were presented in symbols and their meaning in allegories which often demanded a theological and literary education on the part of the viewer. This kind of language, incomprehensible to the needy expecting help at the church door, but interesting and convincing to those who endeavored to fathom what the wall-paintings interpreted, found in the outer narthex a veritable treasury at the very entrance over a wide arch. Believers came upon slender winged female figures borrowed from a series of classical personifications. The northern one represents Day with a *rhipidion* in her hands, whose brilliance intimates the coming of the New Testament, the truth as

King Milutin, east wall of the narthex,
Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

Saint Sava, Saint Simeon Nemanja and King Stefan the First-Crowned,
west wall of the narthex, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

preached by Christ. The south personification is Night with an extinguished torch. There are intricate compositions on the arches of the open porch. On the northern side there is a picture of Christ's forebears, the Tree of Jesse, in a detailed pattern with small figures intertwined in fluttering tendrils. In the opposite field is the Last Judgment with the Savior hovering in the light of the celestial arch, comprising numerous elements of the rich story of Christ's Second Coming. More pronounced than in previous visions of this event here, too, the artist used figures from classical antiquity: nude female figures representing Earth and the male figure of Hell, all astride monsters, bearing symbols in their hands.

The Baptism, often depicted outside the Great Feasts, is the richest representation of the new character of art. It is located in the western part of the church and is connected to the rite of baptism or consecration of the water. This theme was given a ceremonious place on the central vault below the bell-tower, and consists of a series of circularly arranged events recounted without any separation in a unique landscape with the River Jordan overflowing the land in the forefront. In order to portray this rich story, the artist culled its elements from different Gospels just as he used various sources for his other themes.

Other pictures exhibit a profound erudition and effort to express complex theological thought. Portions taken from a broad collection of religious literature, especially poetry, which in delicate terms and metaphors celebrated phenomena and personalities in Christian history by returning to their prefigurations in the Old Testament, interpreted them in the language of dogma. In honor of the Mother of God to whom the church was dedicated, the hymn "The Prophets have predicted you..." is illustrated in the arches, below her representation above the entrance to the church. Old Testament figures six on each side, point to the objects of their visions: David seeing the Mother of God as a shrine, Solomon as a temple with seven columns, Daniel as a mountain and Jacob as a ladder, and the like. It was difficult to transpose ideas and poetic statements into pictures so the artists had recourse to the traditional words of the ancient world, its symbols and allegories which had a continued life in Byzantium and

Christ the *Guardian of Prizren*,
fourth south pillar of the naos,
Church of the Mother of God
of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

were repeated in literature and the arts. Connected with this are also sayings attributed to old sages and prophetresses who allegedly forecast the coming of the Messiah. The well-educated Thessalonian painter Astrapas in whose city the young learned of the works of the ancient philosophers, portrayed on the northern arch, similar to the nearby prophets, Plato, Plutarch, the Ethiopean prophetess Sibylla and others. All these figures reasserted the favorite idea of the harmony between the Old and New Testaments, the conviction that all great personalities and events in Christian history were anticipated by events which preceded them. To these are added paintings of Jacob's struggle with the Angel and Jacob's Dream in a special segment under the Tree of Jesse. A rare illustration of the first sticheron from the second canon of John of Damascus written to the glory of the Dormition of the Mother of God is also represented here.

Like others the Prizren bishopric itself reminded its believers, in the lowest zone of its cathedral of its own past and role within the Serbian Church. Six local archpriests are shown on the northern side of the western wall, and also on the south where we see St. Sava's successors to the archbishop's throne from Arsenije to Jevstatije II. The valuable figures of the local bishops preserved not only name, though most of them are unknown, but also in facial features which may also have been drawn in the earlier church. The Serbian church dignitaries were consistently portrayed in their traditional Orthodox vestements with their white *sticharion* with *epitrachelion, polystavrion* and *omophorion.* From those times on, archbishops were also shown in other, more colorful ceremonial garb which the Serbian Church adopted from Byzantium.

The portraits of King Milutin and other members of the Nemanjić dynasty convey a sense of the opulent clothing that prevailed locally at that time. These portraits cover the surface of the inner narthex. Even earlier, especially in the final decades of the 13th century, the Raška rulers looked to dress and life-style in the Constantinople imperial court. In this sense, it is sufficient to see the portraits of Kings Dragutin (1276–1282) and Milutin (1282–1321) in a slightly earlier founders' composition in the cathedral of Saint Achilleius in the town of Arilje (1296) to confirm the impression of a consistent emulation of the clothing worn by Byzantine emperors. This inclination is also confirmed in an interesting account written by one of the most prominent personages in Constantinople, writer Theodore Metochites. As court chancellor and confidant of Andronikos II, Metochites travelled to Serbia several times in an attempt to settle disputes arising from Serbian conquests in the northern regions of the Empire. During the negotiations he conducted with the Serbian king they finally agreed that Milutin would wed Simonis, the Byzantine Emperor's young daughter, a member of the house of Palaeologos. This marriage was expected to improve relations between Serbia and Byzantium. A frequently cited passage from one of Metochites' letters to the Emperor from Milutin's palace eloquently describes the King and prevalent Serbian custom:

The King himself was beautifully arrayed in jewels. About his body he had numerous jewels of precious stones and pearls, as many as could be worn, and he veritably shimmered with gold ornaments. The whole palace shone in silken furnishings and gold ornaments. Briefly, everything was arranged in Romaic taste and in keeping with the ceremony of the Emperor's court.

The figure of the *King-ktitor* in the Ljeviša Church of the Holy Mother of God, in the attire known to Metochites, corresponded indeed to the formal dress of the Byzantine Emperor: Milutin is portrayed against a strong, deep red background, dressed in a dark *divetesion* with an *epimanikia* and *loros* of golden-ocher hue, covered with semi-precious stones and hemmed with a double row of pearls. On his head he is wearing a typical Byzantine crown topped by an *orphanos* and *prependulia,* from which hung pendants of pearls and other jewels, holding in his hands the insignia of his rule—a scepter and *akakia.* The impressive portrait is larger than the others in the narthex and has a lengthy inscription naming him as founder of the church, listing his ancestors and stressing that he was the son-in-law of the Byzantine Emperor. This portrait is located on the eastern wall alongside the entrance to the naos. Next to him on the surface stands another figure, probably Queen Simonis, while on the right side believers used to be able to see depictions of the ruler's father King Uroš and his mother Queen Helen, a French princess, who was still living at the time (1314). Both these portraits are now no longer visible. However, the portraits of the two kings, the founder and his father, composed an ideological entity with the clear message that their power was derived from the Lord himself. Divine will is also reflected in the three--quarter length portrait of Christ above the entrance with his arms extended toward them in a sign of blessing. The depiction also suggests the succession of the ruler's royal dignity, but the elder brother or the founder, King Dragutin, is absent from this group since Milutin seized the throne from his brother some thirty years before that. Still, such the choice and disposition of the portraits indicates that the conflict between the brothers had ended by the time the murals were painted, at a point when Milutin was able to assert his full legitimacy to the crown, in all probability in 1313.

Detail of the painted dado,
west wall of the narthex,
Church of the Morher of God
of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

Directly reflecting the current political relations in the land, the narthex portraits also expressed the idea of the

The illustration of the first sticheron of the second canon by Saint John of Damascus dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God, detail, lunette in the exonarthex, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

saintly origin of the dynasty. Emphasized by the inscription next to King Milutin (*...the independent, of divine birth and the God-fearing Stefan Uroš, King of all the Serbian lands...*), it was also illustrated on the opposite, western wall of the narthex: the founder of the dynasty, St. Simeon Nemanja, with outstretched arms is pointing to the chosen descendants—on the south side stands St. Sava who ensured that the religion would have an autocephalous status, and to the north is his heir, King Stefan the First-Crowned, and possibly the future ruler, Milutin's son Stefan Dečanski, dressed in attire also worn, modeled on Byzantium, by the highest dignitaries in Serbia. Below them on a fairly high socle and on the opposite wall as well there are two double-headed eagles, emblems of the family of Palaeologos, close kin to the Serbian king.

The space entered from the open porch was dedicated entirely to the ruler, his ancestors and family members in a way that reflected profound changes in the life of the country, its political precepts and the ruler's pretensions. He did not present himself as in the other endowments holding a small model of the church, offering it to Christ or the Mother of God, nor was he in a humble posture as were rulers in the Raška shrines of the 13th century, or in a procession of ancestors headed by their founder, Simeon Nemanja. The King is represented to the local population and everyone coming to this open and busy town in full splendor, invested with power as the scion of the holy dynasty by Christ himself. Whatever could be learned from the Byzantine and Serbian sources—biographies, chronicles, charters and inscriptions—was vividly manifested by the new form of portrayal of the ruling family and by the intimation that the path to be trodden lay in the future of its younger members.

Portrayals of earlier historical personages were adapted to the new spirit prevailing in the life of the royal court and the Church. Even St. Sava—separated from the group of the heads of the Serbian Church and shown in the family circle—is adorned in sumptuous vestements and a richly embroidered *sakkos,* not actually worn in his day. This modernization can be also seen in the garments of the saints who were far removed from the historical reality of Serbian or Byzantine society of the time. People from the early history of Christianity, such as Sts Constantine and Helena, sacred personages of imperial origin and others all wear costumes of the Byzantine Emperor (Basileus) and court dignitaries of the time when the frescos were painted rather than of the periods to which they be-

The Last Judgement, detail: Personifications of the Earth and the Sea, exonarthex, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

Saint Paul the Apostle, intrados of the entrance to the naos, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

Saint Barbara, fourth south pillar of the naos Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

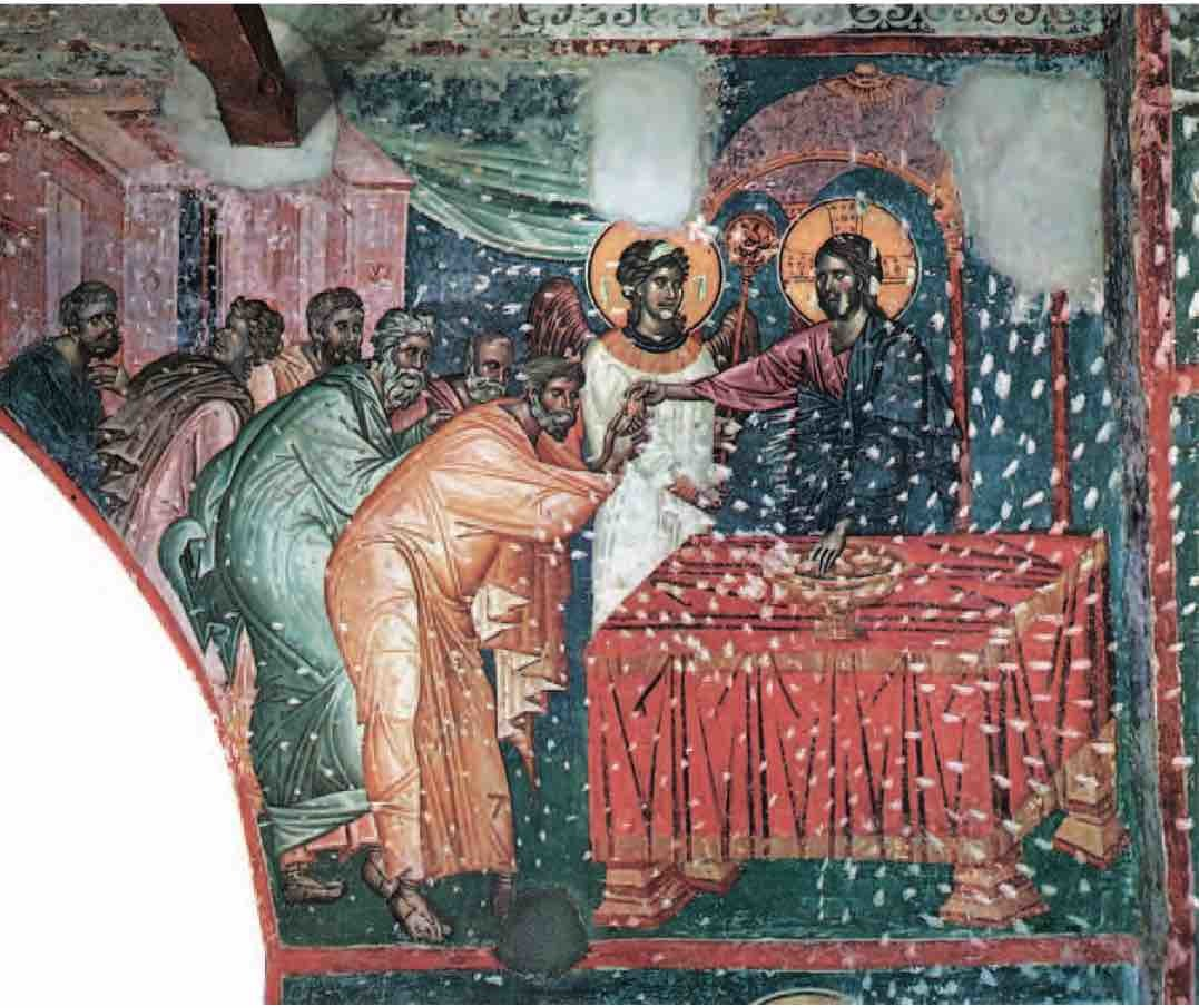
longed. In the same way, they are referring to earlier periods sometimes echo relations and phenomena belonging to the when they originate.

As other churches which were first devastated and then restored to serve the needs of the Islamic confession, the Ljeviša Mother of God preserved only fragments of the stone ornamentation from former times. Nonetheless, it was admired for its structural beauty and for the still uncovered wall-paintings by Christians and Muslims alike. One of the latter, a lover of poetry and perhaps himself a poet, carved next to one of the paintings the first part of a couplet by the great Persian poet Hafiz: "The pupil of my eye is your nest."

The wealth of ritual objects, primarily icons, ancient furnishings, holy vessels and textiles most likely date back in the cathedral to the time when the Greek bishop, subordinate to the Archbishop of Ohrid, sat on the throne. The church's treasury was doubtlessly enhanced in the 13th century, particularly when the earlier Byzantine edifice was rebuilt and its façades re-faced by King Milutin. We do not know from which epoch the "Miraculous Visage of the Virgin Immaculate" mentioned by King Stefan Dečanski in his charter to the Mother of God of Ljeviša (1326), actually dates. It is possible that it belonged to the earliest history of the church which received gifts at a later time as well, especially when the Prizren episcopate was raised to the rank of Metropolitanate in 1346.

In the meanwhile, in Kosovo and Metohija other shrines, even more splendid, were raised, which, favored by destiny, attest with their preserved ambience and collections to the character of the royal endowments of the age.

The Sacred Land: Art of Kosovo,
The Monacelli Press 1997, pp. 26–27 and 63–80.



The Communion of the Apostles, detail: Bread Communion,
altar apse, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1308–1314

*The cup of blessing which we bless is it not a communion (κοινωνία) of the Blood of Christ?
The bread which we break is it not a communion of the Body of Christ?
Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body,
for we all partake of the one loaf* (1 Cor. 10:16–17).

The Communion of the Apostles, detail: Wine Communion,
altar apse, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša , 1308–1314

Eucharistic communion, placed in this perspective of St. Paul, is not only *communio in sacris* but also and at the same time *communio sanctorum*. The early Church was from the beginning deeply conscious of this fact, which decisively influenced her whole life and structure.

Church of Saint Stephen, Banjska Monastery

Queen Theodora's Ring

A masterpiece of the Serbian goldsmith's trade.
It was found in the grave of Emperor Dušan's mother, who had died in October 1322, and had been buried in the Monastery of Banjska.

The Banjska Church

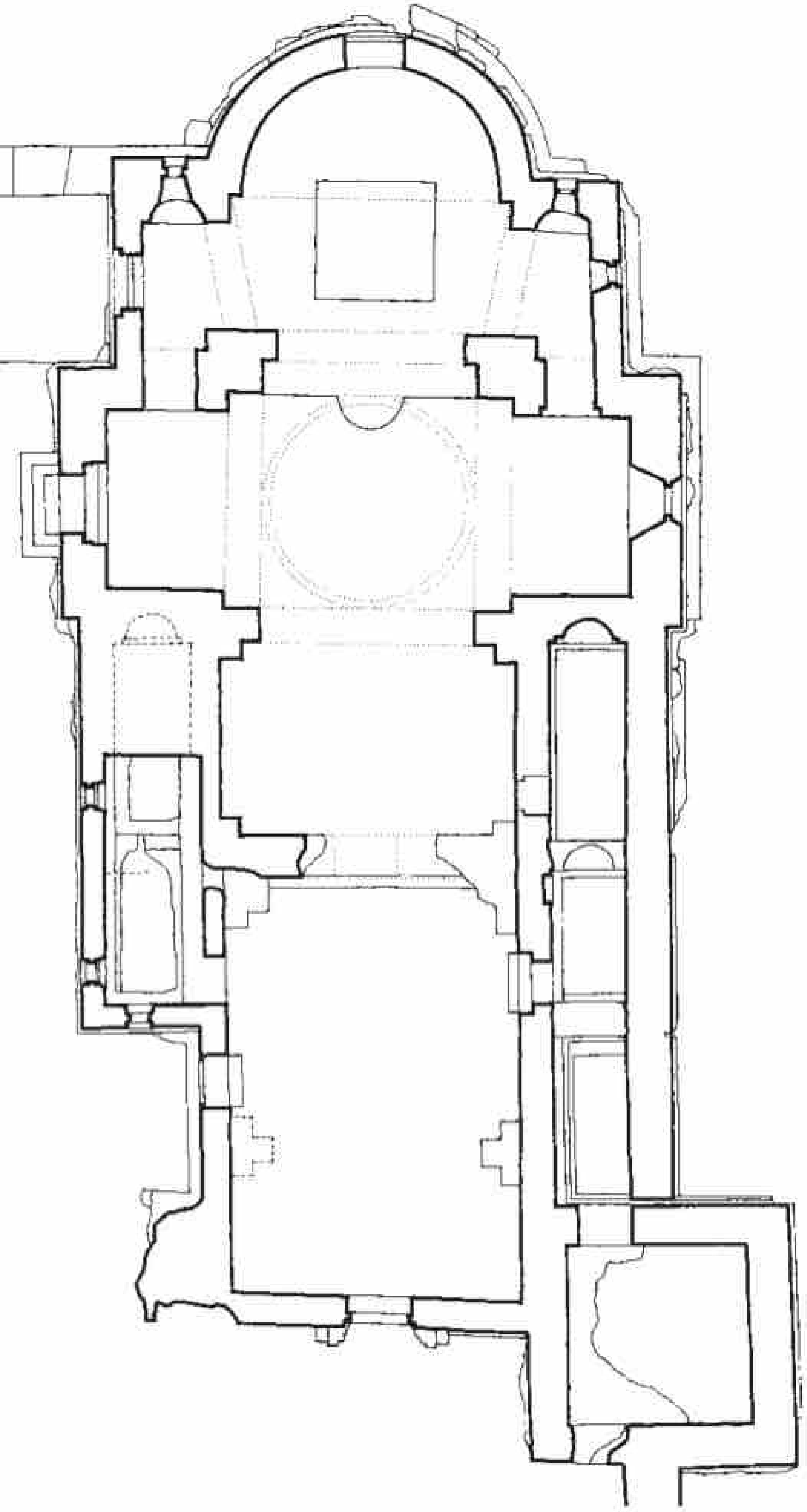
Gojko Subotić

DIRECT and reliable information about the endowments of the Serbian rulers and church dignitaries has come down to us from the writers of their Lives. These were writings belonging to a special literary genre which combined hagiographical narration with reliable, often personal testimonies of the writers themselves. The most significant of them is a collection entitled *The Lives of the Serbian Kings and Archbishops* whose first and longest section was the work of Archbishop Danilo II (1324–1337), a gifted writer and participant in a number of major political events. A description of the building of Saint Stephen's Church in Banjska by one of Danilo's disciples was appended to the vividly written biography of King Milutin. Danilo played a considerable role in this impressive undertaking.

Prior to the restoration of the earlier monastery which was also the see of the Banjska bishopric there were disorders in the land caused by the unresolved question of succession to the Serbian throne. One segment of the King's noblemen, as noted in his biography, even went over to the side of his elder brother Dragutin, the previous ruler who held sway in most of the northern regions of the state. Milutin, however, enjoyed the support of the Church. He therefore invited Danilo, whom he knew well and to whom he entrusted his valuables for safe-keeping in the Banjska monastery, to come from Mt. Athos during the final period of the dynastic conflicts. His choice was no coincidence. Earlier, Danilo as the *hegoumenos* had valiantly defended the Hilandar Monastery during a siege laid by a Catalan company of mercenaries who pillaged and ravaged the monastic settlements on Athos throughout the years from 1307 to 1310. At one point during the turmoil, Danilo deftly managed to remove valuable objects from Hilandar and deliver them to the King for safe-keeping.

It is known that a powerful *pyrgos* (tower) was built near the entrance to Banjska during Danilo's administration of this monastery where he was appointed bishop. This was an exceptional redoubt with pronounced pilasters and an enclosed lower part which is thought to have housed the ruler's treasury in troubled times. It fully corresponded to the towers on the Athonite peninsula, particularly to Milutin's tall fort in front of Hilandar which protected approaches to the monastery from the sea. It was undoubtedly Danilo himself with the experience he had gained on Mt. Athos where fraternities were constantly exposed to sudden attacks—who required that the redoubt should have a specific appearance and size; he may well have personally selected the skilled masons who raised similar structures on Athos.

The monastic complex has not yet been completely freed from centuries-long debris which until lately covered its greater parts. Alongside the *pyrgos* built in the Byzantine mode of stone, bricks and mortar, the remains of a well-placed entrance with a tiled vestibule and a rectangular area embellished with frescos have been excavated. From here, the monastery extended down a gentle slope along a mountain rivulet which flowed calmly into a fertile plain several hundred meters below.



Ground plan of the Saint Stephen church,
Banjska Monastery

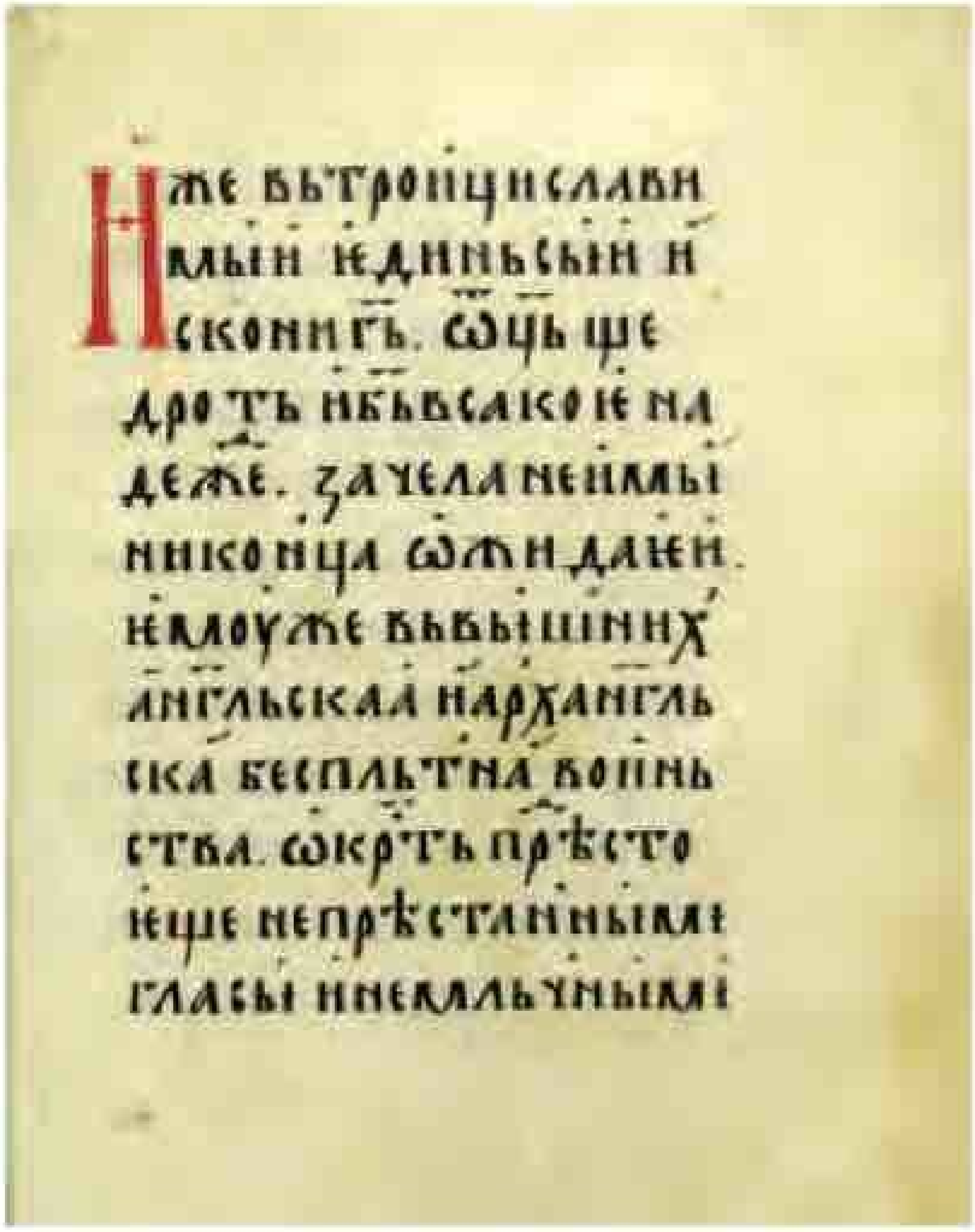
The fact that the monastery was well-fortified must have influenced the King's decision to build a new large shrine on this site which was to be his sepulchral church, cautioned by the instance of Peć, for which a safer location was found after the devastation of the old archbishopric in the vicinity of Trepča, a major mining center and a powerful citadel in the south of the state. Milutin's biographer states that in this regard the ruler sought the advice of his mother, Queen Helen, his brother Dragutin after their reconciliation in 1312, and Archbishop Sava III. Then he issued a chrysobull to the monastery granting it a large estate of seventy-five villages and hamlets and nine summer pasturelands with five hundred families, as well as certain royal privileges. The *hegoumenos* (prior) of Banjska was allotted the fourth position in rank of the most prestigious monasteries in the land after Studenica, Mileševa and Sopoćani. In the aforementioned monasteries there lay the earthly remains of Simeon, the progenitor of the Nemanjić dynasty, the Archbishop Sava, founder of the Serbian Church, and the ruler's father King Uroš. Banjska was no longer to be the bishop's seat. The new church with the ruler's tomb was to enjoy a peaceful existence and that is why the charter of Saint Stephen stipulated that "the church should be the seat of neither an archbishopric, nor a metropolitan, nor a bishopric." The King entrusted the building of the sumptuous endowment to Danilo himself who, as his disciple testifies, was well-versed in the builder's craft.

All the sections of the Banjska complex reveal the underlying concept of unity and the skillfulness of its master-builders. Today we can see only certain structures on the northern side where during Ottoman rule buildings housing the *imaret* (Ottoman mess halls for the poor) and a mosque were built within the fortification which itself had encroached upon a part of the church. Inside, one can today still see the elements of construction materials which suited the requirements of the Islamic cult.

In the upper section of the monastery, separate from the *pyrgos* and the ramparts was the refectory with a broad apse for the table of the *hegoumenos* and distinguished elders who shared the most important duties with him. The elongated rectangular part had built-in seats with carefully carved stone tables which could accommodate a large number of monks. A wide span between the walls indicates that, as was customary, the hall had a wooden roof, while its proportions and beautiful execution rank it among exceptional specimens of this kind of premises, of prime importance in the life of monastic communities.

Below the refectory, downward along the southern ramparts there follow a string of cells with a common portico facing the church. Although basically simple, preserved only in its lower part and made of spatial elements of equal—sized floor plans with rhythmically placed piers, the building allows us to imagine its former appearance with perhaps the same or similar premises on the upper

The Mother of God of Sokolica with Christ Child,
originally from Banjska Monastery



Opening page from the King Milutin's Charter of Banjska Monastery

This Charter also known as the *Chrysobull of Saint Stephen*, was carried of to Istanbul by the Turks after the Battle of Kosovo (1389). Since the mid-15th century its been kept in the Sultan's Treasury of the Old Saray.

floor and with porches that gave the façade a lightweight appearance. By analogy with other monastic complexes whose ground plans are known to us, the initial excavations on the northern end have already indicated that the residential quarters and subsidiary buildings followed the line of the external walls on the other sides as well, thus enclosing the complex almost totally.

Today the open prospect of Milutin's church enables us to view its monumental forms in their overall harmony, better than they could be viewed in medieval times when this was not visible from inside the walled edifice. Present restoration of the ruined parts of the edifice, however, reveals only a section of its former sculptural ornamentation. In the days when it served as a mosque, especially in the subdomical area, these ornaments were altered with regard to their original condition. On the other hand, excavations have shown that the church, erected on a rocky base high above the other structure, was clearly visible from the outside.

While building his sepulchral church in Banjska, King Milutin did not retain parts of the early, still well-preserved cathedral church as he did in Prizren. According to the ruler's design this new church was to be built "after the image of the Church of the Mother of God at Studenica" because it held the remains of Stefan Nemanja, the founder of the Royal House. The previous building was therefore demolished and completely replaced by a new one. The recently adopted Byzantine architectural mode was replaced here by the older Raška type. The special reason for this was that the ruler, devotedly remembering his forefather had clearly in mind "the kind of building and religious ornamentation he chose to preserve the peace of his holy body."

The large new church did not, of course, literally copy Nemanja's endowment. Its forms point to the spatial structure of later thirteenth-century shrines with subsequently appended elements that came into existence here simultaneously with the others. In the central part beneath the dome, the wide naos was given a broad span subsequently not seen in any blueprint. In the north and south, churchgoers had an unrestricted view of the rectangular choir as wide as the diameter of the dome. On the east side this developed into a three-part altar space with a semi-circular apse whose proportions were meant to be seen from the center of the subdomical area. From outside, the church looks like a three-aisled basilica with low lateral roofs traversed by a high transept. In front of the naos there was also a broad narthex and on each flanks two parekklesia, some of which were undoubtedly of a funeral character. One of King Dušan's charters reveals that his mother Theodora, the wife of King Stefan Dečanski, was buried in Saint Stephen's Church. It appears that two rings were found in her tomb in the northern chapel near the narthex, one of which bore the inscription: "May God help one who wears this."

The chief entrance to the church, reached by steps, was located on the western side framed by towers of which only the lower part of the southern one still stands. The comprehensive and delicate task of restoring the former appearance of the church which could be undertaken only after all the parts have been excavated would demonstrate more tangibly the sculptural values of the church. It is not very probable, however, that we could obtain reliable data about the height of the dome preceding the present one which was constructed without a drum or an opening at the time when the church was converted to a mosque.

The powerful and harmonious proportions of the monumental edifice were made of superbly cut blocks of blue, pink and white stone. Their neat surfaces are not disturbed by the shallow pilasters which divide them in regular intervals or mark their ends. This kind of masonry of multicolored, alternating blocks in the pattern of a checker board, was not unknown in Romanesque architecture on the Adriatic Coast; it especially recalls the tradition of Tuscany churches. The design relies on the founder's mausoleum and its relation to the basic layout and Romanesque exterior which did not have the customary white marble façade with pilasters. On the other hand, the two churches did have the same ceremonial portals with archivolts and columns resting on lions as well as Romanesque windows which on the altar apses had three-light mullioned windows and consoles of small blind arches running beneath the roof, decorated with stylized floral motifs and animal heads. Judging by all this, the lateral portals of the Banjska church were built in much the same way as they were in Studenica.

The scattered fragments, today mostly in the church's *lapidarium*, do not help us to reconstruct a sense of the whole. In order to understand its nature, one needs to study in particular the richly sculpted representation of the enthroned Mother of God with Christ in her lap, which writer Rastko Petrović found in an unexpected condition after the First World War in a village church at Sokolica near Banjska. The village parishioners, honouring the sculpture in their own peculiar way, had dressed it in a folk costume. Although quite badly damaged, the Virgin's face recalls the ornamentation in the lunette of the portal of the Studenica church. There can thus be no doubt that the artisan, told to emulate Studenica, first wanted to familiarize himself with the Virgin's image and especially the carved decorative motifs which he undertook. This is why it can be assumed that as in Nemanja's church, the Virgin and Christ here were flanked by the figures of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. The traits of the earlier Studenica sculptoral decoration with visible

King Milutin's silver dinar of matapan type.
Obverse: King receiving banner from Saint Stephen, legend: UROSIUS REX S STEFAN;
Reverse: Enthroned Christ

elements of the late Comnenian manner and rich, trembling folds of draperies were, however, not repeated in the Romanesque modelling of the figures in the Banjska church. Here, too, we note the reverberations of Byzantine influence, especially in the selection of ornaments on the Virgin's throne. These could have reached the artisans indirectly by way of the Romanesque art of the Appenine Peninsula whose 12th and 13th century depictions display some similarities with them. It is certain that the artists of the Zeta coastal area worked in the same spirit by creating characteristically large, heavy static figures. The very surface of their broad heads and necks corresponds to the placement of the sculptures above the entrance, visible only from the front, allowing the artist to disregard their side appearance.

Parts of the archivolts which earlier found their way into the collections of the National Museum in Belgrade and the Archaelogical Museum in Skoplje with entwined figures of beasts and birds also echo the ornamentation in Studenica. For example, the motif of a wolf with a sheep in his jaws has been copied here exactly. Moreover, similar works—not precisely dated—are to be found in coastal towns as well as in later shrines which coastal master-build-

Detail of archivolt (bird),
Banjska Monastery, 1312–1316

Detail of archivolt (wolf),
Banjska Monastery, 1312–1316

A fragment of the stone carved ornament with interweaving,
Banjska Monastery, 1312–1316

ers created in the inland of the country. This is confirmed by the continuity of the stone-masons' workshops along the Coast engaged to work for rulers and other commissioners from Serbia. A Dubrovnik document dated August 1313 mentions the departure of five master-builders and stone-masons to Serbia where they appeared to have remained for several years in view of the fact that the Dubrovnik Archives do not refer to them again until 1320. It is feasible that they were the ones who worked on the Banjska Church. One year earlier, in 1312, one of the skilled Dubrovnik artisans, Giovanni della Vecchia, signed a contract at the request of King Stefan Uroš to spend one year roofing his churches with lead. During those years, construction was underway on sites throughout the country; the exodus of good craftsmen from Dubrovnik early in 1314 compelled the authorities there to express concern for the needs of their own city and decree that builders, stone-masons, carpenters and caulkers could no longer accept jobs in Serbia without a special permit from the Duke (*Knez*) of Dubrovnik and the Minor Council.

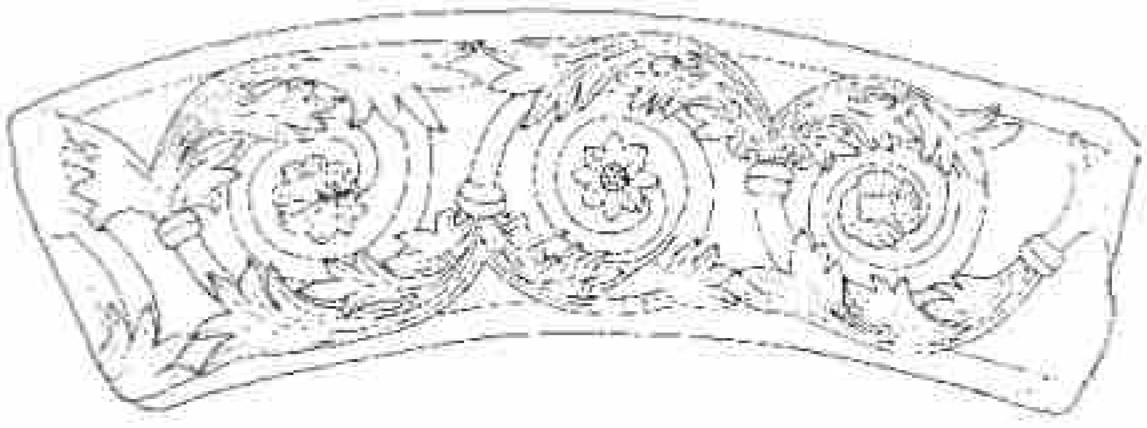
At times, builders engaged by the ruler travelled from further afield. It has been noticed that certain animal heads of Romanesque character situated on the consoles of the capitals under the eaves in Banjska, are virtually identical with those on an earlier portal of Milutin's church in Hilandar, although that church was chiefly executed in the spirit of Byzantine sculptural decoration. On the other hand, parallel with western-style sculptural ornamentation in Banjska there are fragments which by their stone--cutting and ornaments in the niello technique—meaning a carved-out back filled with a dark paste accentuating the drawing—reveals the work of artists trained in the tradition of Byzantine art. This was perhaps an influence which came via Italy, where Byzantine art dominated in certain periods. The shrines of Kosovo and Metohija as well as the coastal parts of the medieval Serbian state and even a broader area of the Mediterranean reflected in various degrees the symbiosis of two stylistic modes visible mainly in their structural forms, building practices and ornamentation.

In the devastated interior of the Banjska Church, numerous ornamental fragments have been found. These will find their proper place in the restored whole. Among them we recognize certain elements of the early, rich, stone furnishings of the churches and on the high arches we still see the remains of dazzling painted ornaments. It was in the tradition of the rulers' endowments of the 13th century for frescos to gleam against gold backgrounds. The paintings of the King's mausoleum church largely covered in gold leaf confirm this in a rather convincing manner. For this reason, a Belgrade writer of the early 15th century ranked "Banjska gold" among the finest works of art in the country. A small number of remaining images which by their soft delineations, broad modeling and warm colors harken back directly to the then still vital Hellenistic tradition in the major Byzantine centers speak of the work of skilled artisans, probably from Thessalonica. They represent the mature phase of a style to be found here as somewhat later ornamentation on other shrines.

Further excavations will probably clarify the nature of the edifice on the slope south of the monastery, built in the same technique as the others in the complex. Judging by available evidence we can infer that this was Milutin's palace to which reference was made in his biography, namely, that he built "royal palaces" in Banjska.

After King Milutin's death at Nerodimlje, in Kosovo, in October 1221, his body was placed in the tomb he had prepared for himself in Saint Stephen's Church. However, by the time of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 his body had to be removed because of the insecurity of the location and reinterred in the Trepča citadel, and subsequently, in the 15th century, to Sofia where it still reposes.

The Sacred Land: Art of Kosovo,
The Monacelli Press 1997, pp. 63–80.



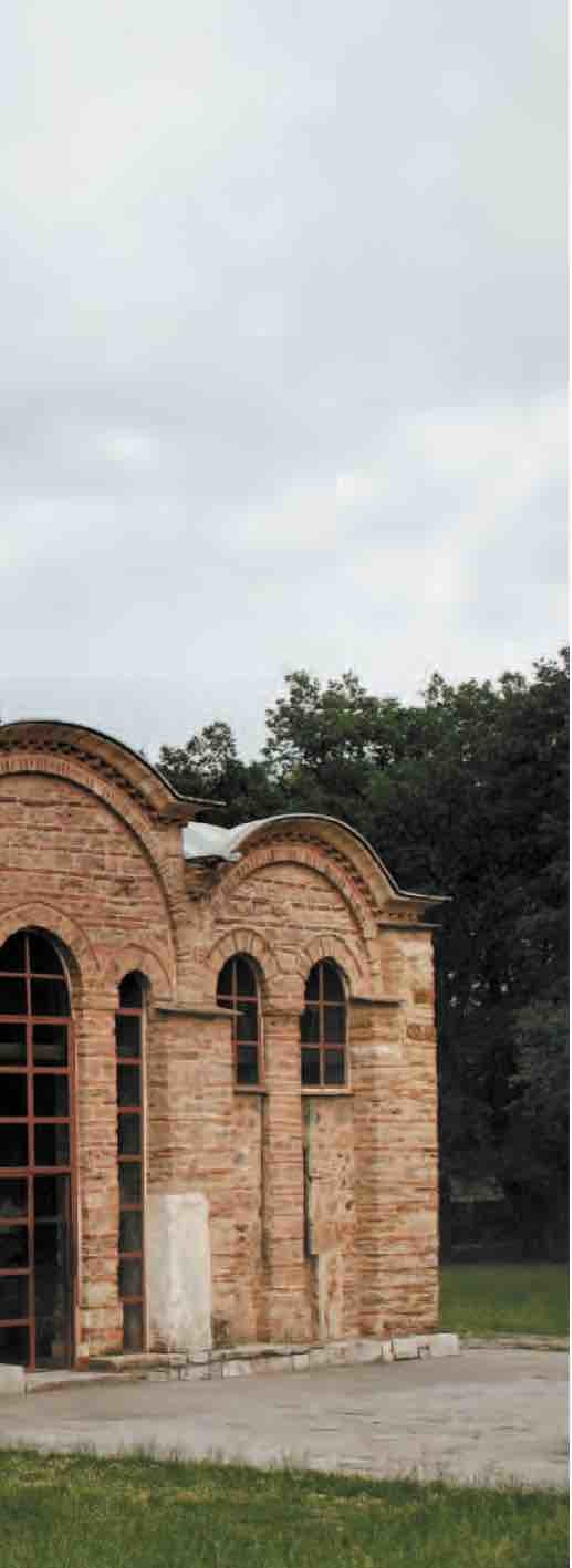
Archbishop Danilo II, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, naos, southwest pilaster, the Patriarchate of Peć, after 1337

At the time of the apex of the Serbian state, Archbishop Danilo II wrote his works, relying heavily on Domentian's poetics. Using the traditional Serbian biographical form, he attempted to explain the complex destiny of people who were predestined at birth to the difficult task of ruling, a theme which had already been broached at the end of the twelfth century. In Danilo's work, man and his relationship with good and evil is in the foreground. Danilo bore witness to his time through the biographies of three characters from the ruling family, all connected by emotive and conceptual ties. This offered him the possibility of constructing three powerful personalities and of making use of several points of view at the same time.

Queen Helena was the literary counterpart of Nemanja (1316). Her elder son, King Dragutin, was not a negative hero even though he desecrated the Serbian throne through his transgression toward his father; he was truly penitent and through the strength of his will he gained esteem (1317). Danilo (after 1321) rewrote the autobiography of Dragutin's younger brother King Milutin (1317) in which his numerous successes on the battlefield are attributed to the heavenly protection of the Serbian saints, Sava and Simeon. Danilo liberated the biography of hagiographic additions and excessive rhetoric, of miracles and pathos; he was thus able to present Milutin's life as a real and coherent cycle of stories about wars, and the success Milutin experienced on the battlefield was attributed to his skill as a warrior. Danilo retained the traditional conception of the dual accomplishments of the ideal Serbian ruler, those of state and those of the faith, but he does not insist on Milutin's personal spiritual accomplishments, because the ideal man and ruler had come to be seen in Alexander the Great, who Danilo used as a comparison to his own hero. The Serbian ruler is no longer the loving father, like Nemanja, but is rather the powerful sovereign of a mighty state on the brink of becoming an empire. Gathered into one collection, these three biographies present a sweeping version of the history of Milutin's time, which was a significant step in the spread of historical concepts in Serbian literature.

Danilo's anonymous "Pupil" continued to write along the same lines. The Pupil described the life of his teacher (after 1337), but presented only the spiritual life and ecclesiastical career of Danilo. Danilo's profuse activity as a statesman was presented by expanding the role he played in the biographies of the rulers which Danilo himself had written, while in the biographies of King Stefan Dečanski (after 1331) and his son Dušan as king (after 1335), of which the Pupil was the author himself, he gave Danilo a leading role from the very start. By uniting all these texts afterwards, adding to them a series of biographies of leaders in the Serbian Church, texts by Danilo and other authors, the Pupil put together a great historical codex entitled *Danilo's Annals*; this volume represents the greatest degree of the development of narrative structure in Serbian medieval literature.

Radmila Marinković



Gračanica: King Milutin's Church and Its Architecture

UNESCO World Heritage Site

Slobodan Ćurčić

The church of the Dormition of the Mother of God is the only surviving structure of the medieval monastery of Gračanica.[1] Surrounded by modern monastic buildings, the church is situated in the village of Gračanica, in the Plain of Kosovo, nine kilometers from Priština.[2] The modern asphalt road from Priština to Gračanica roughly coincides with the medieval road which once linked Priština, a major medieval urban center of Serbia, with Gračanica, and further with Novo Brdo, Serbia's principal medieval mining center.

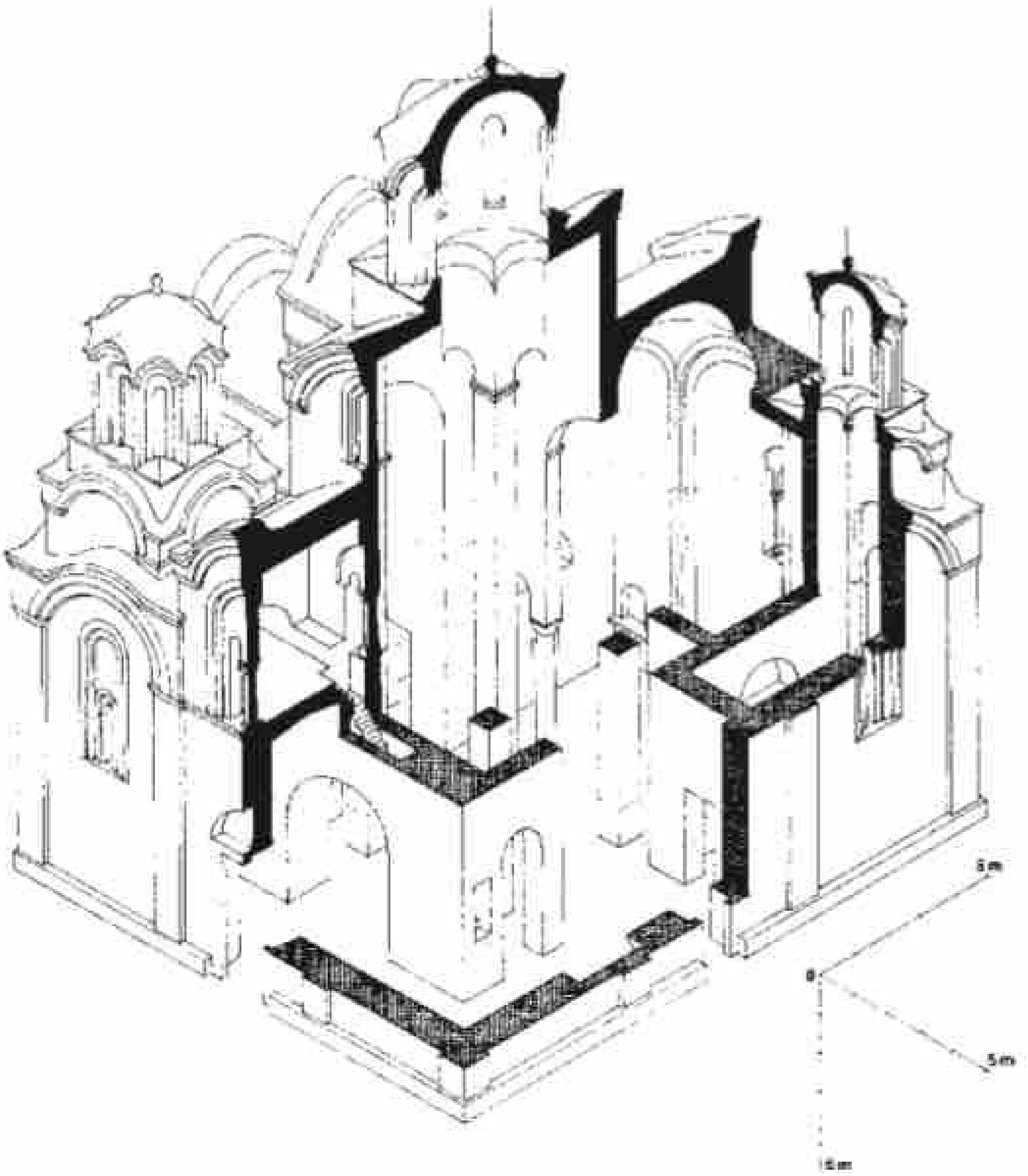
Gračanica is probably the most frequently photographed monument of medieval Serbia. Its picturesque five-domed form has been exploited visually for endless purposes from the most trivial product advertisements to the sophisticated tourist posters and calendars-yet it remains an essentially little-known building. In fact, Gračanica is the only major church of medieval Serbia without a scholarly monograph. Current basic scholarly knowledge about Gračanica rests largely on the pioneering work of Gabriel Millet.[3] The elementary state of knowledge of Gračanica's architecture is obvious in general works on

[1] Hereafter the name "Gračanica" will refer to the church itself unless otherwise specified.

[2] The location of Gračanica is frequently confused with a town of the same name in eastern Bosnia. Unfortunately, this error has gained currency by having appeared recently in several general works on Byzantine art: David Talbot Rice, *Art of the Byzantine Era* (New York, 1963), map on pp. 12–13 (this particular map contains several other errors); John Beckwith, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (Baltimore, 1970), map preceding p. 1; Wolfgang Fritz Volbach and Jacqueline Lafontaine Dosogne, eds., *Byzanz und der Christliche Osten, Propyläen Kunstgeschichte* № 3 (Berlin, 1968), map on pp. 152–53.

[3] Gabriel Millet, *L'ancien art serbe: les Églises* (Paris, 1919), pp. 102–6.

Church of the Mother of God, northwest view, Gračanica



Isometric analytical drawing, Gračanica

Byzantine architecture, and even the extensive archaeological investigation and subsequent conservation of the building carried out between 1957 and 1967 have contributed little toward altering the accepted generalized conceptions about Gračanica and its place in the history of Byzantine architecture.[4] One of the most misleading generalizations about Gračanica was initiated by Millet; further articulated by Louis Brehier, it has become widely accepted by scholars.[5] According to Millet, Gračanica was a supreme achievement of a local "school" under Byzantine influence, while to Brehier Gračanica was an "interpretation" of Byzantine architecture by the "Serbian national genius." The effect of these generalizations has been the isolation of Gračanica from its proper historical context, and the resulting inability of scholars to define the true place of Gračanica in the history of architecture.

The cultural conditions in Serbia under King Milutin have been the subject of much serious study. The importance of this critical period in the history of medieval Serbia can hardly be overestimated. It is hoped here to demonstrate the existence of a direct relationship between the political developments and the cultural climate in Serbia during the first two decades of the fourteenth century. Gračanica is one of the finest manifestations of these conditions.

The history of Gračanica itself has been less illuminated, having been sketched in broad outline only. Earlier attempts at compiling a history of the monastery have failed to establish its relationship to the general political history of the region. Furthermore, little attempt has been made to correlate the known facts about Gračanica with the results of recent archaeological investigations. The principal aim here is to rectify some of these shortcomings by presenting a complete history of Gračanica, thus illuminating in some detail the causes of its present state of preservation.

The scrutiny of Gračanica has shed new light on this unique monument. It emerges not only a supreme architectural achievement of King Milutin's builders-a notion easily anticipated-but a salient monument of the turbulent political and cultural developments in Serbia during the first two decades of the fourteenth century. Considered against the background of internal unrest in Serbia during this period, Gračanica illuminates Milutin's prolonged struggle to settle the question of the legitimacy of his succession. The links with Banjska are of particular consequence in this context. Seen in the light of broader political developments in the Balkans, Gračanica represents a manifestation of a subtle ideological program formulated by King Milutin as a challenge to the Byzantine Emperor's supreme authority. Imperial ambitions, first harbored by Milutin and ultimately exercised by his grandson Dušan, provided the basis for an intensive cultural "byzantinization" of Serbia. Gračanica represents the epitome of these circumstances. In considering its architecture, then, one is compelled to broaden the frame of reference from a "local school under Byzantine influence" to the broadest, imperial scope. Ultimately, Gračanica emerges not merely a highlight of a provincial creative flare, but one of the supreme achievements of Late Byzantine architecture in the most general sense.

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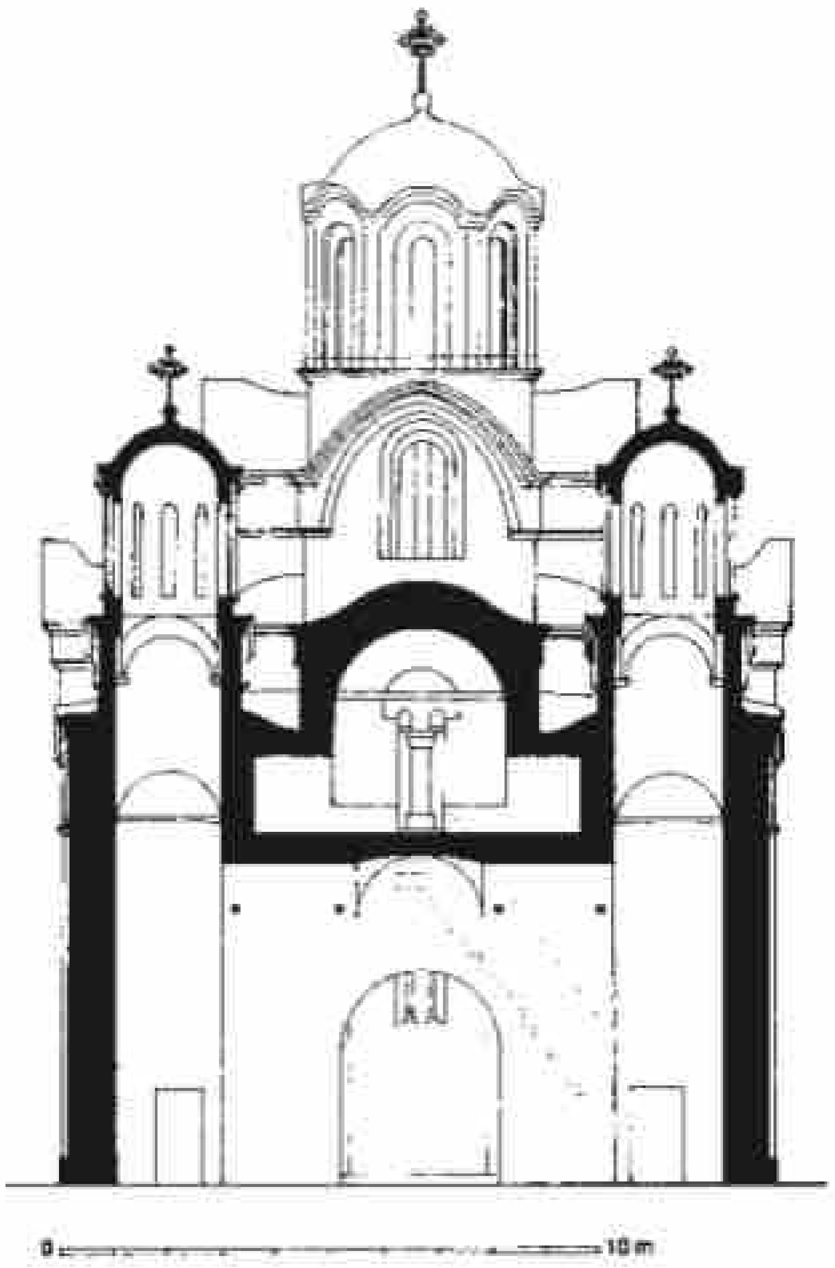
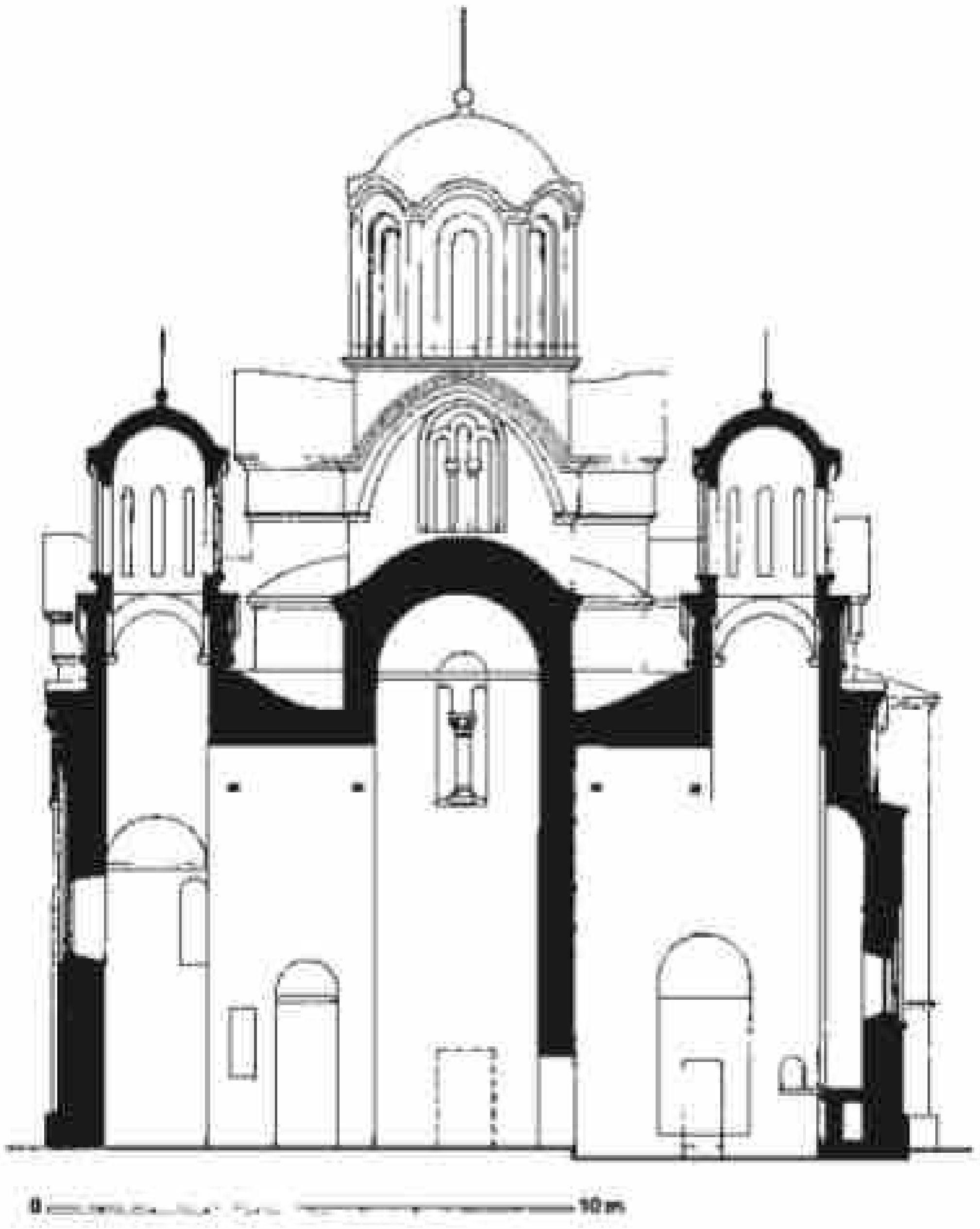
4 William MacDonald, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (New York, 1962), p. 46; Richard Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 1st paperback ed., rev. (Harmondsworth, 1975), pp. 461–62; Cyril Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York, 1976), pp. 316–19, to mention but the most important recent general works in English. The final reports on the excavations and the conservation of the building by Pavle Mijović and Branislav Vulović, respectively, are expected to appear in the forthcoming publication entitled *Vizantijska umetnost početkom XIV veka*. This publication will constitute the Acts of the symposium "L'Art byzantin au commencement du XIVe siècle," held in Belgrade and at Gračanica on October 8–14, 1973. The main preliminary reports published thus far are: Pavle Mijović, "Gračanica, ranohrišćanska bazilika i srednjevekovni manastir," *Arheološki pregled*, 6 (1964), 128–33, and Branislav Vulović, "Manastir Gračanica," *Starine Kosova i Metohije*, 4–5 (1968–71), 165–75.

5 Millet, *L'ancien art serbe*, p. 102, and Louis Brehier, "Utisci iz Gračanice," *Starinar*, 3rd ser., 4 (1928), 5.



Transverse section through exonarthex and gallery chamber, Gračanica



Longitudinal section through south ambulatory wing and lateral chapel, Gračanica

Political and Cultural Conditions in Serbia under King Milutin

The reign of King Stefan Uroš II, Milutin (1282–1321) was a crucial period in the history of medieval Serbia.[6] During the four decades of his reign, Serbia was transformed from a provincial backwater into a major political and economic power, challenging the Byzantine Empire in the quest for supremacy in the Balkans. The transformation was remarkably swift and was paralleled by an equally remarkable shift in the realm of culture. The decisive factors determining the course of Serbia's political and cultural development were her steadily expanding economic base and her greatly increased interaction with Byzantium. Serbia's growing economic strength depended heavily on the mining of iron, copper, lead, silver, and gold, and on her trade ties, particularly with the West.[7]

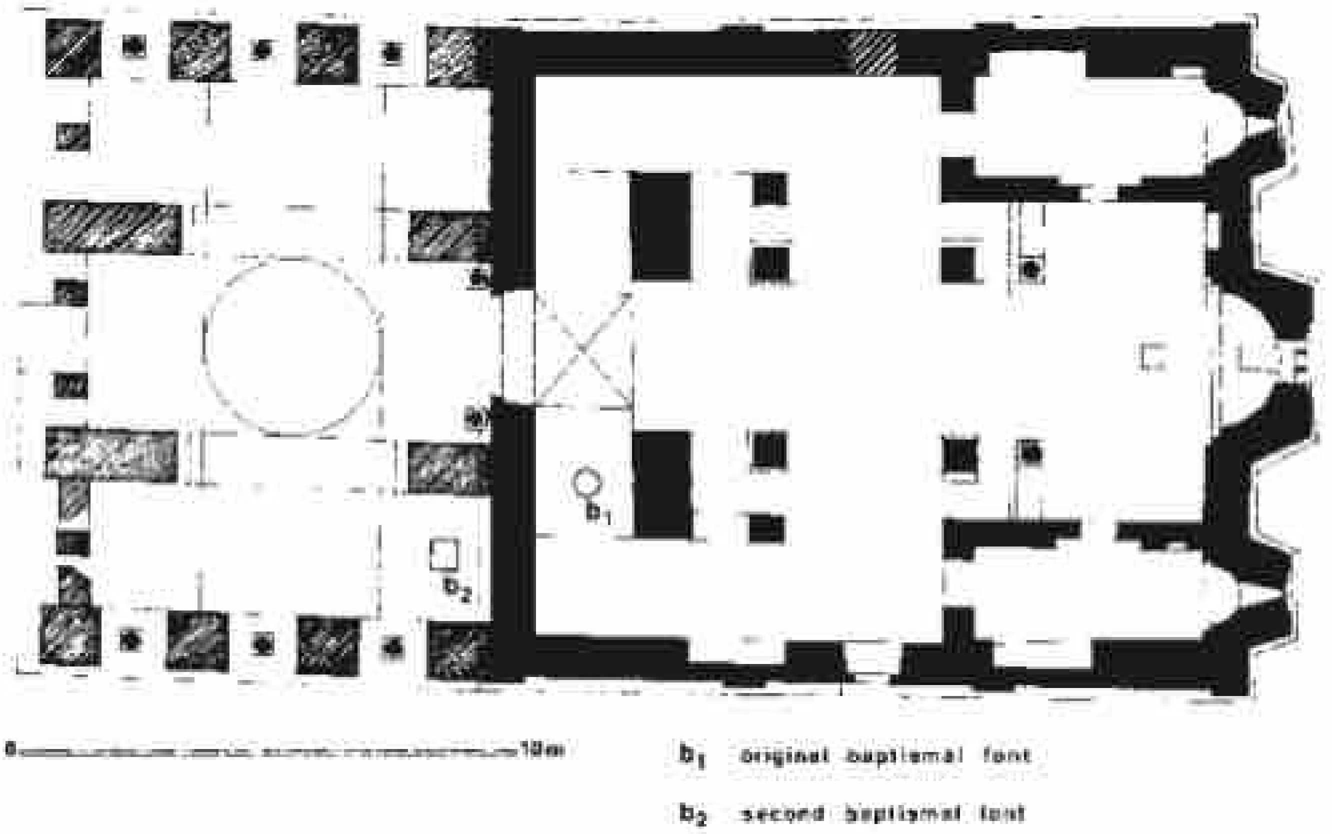
Interaction with Byzantium was characterized by continuous hostilities until 1300, when cordial coexistence prevailed. King Milutin launched his first campaign against Byzantium soon after ascending to the throne, in 1282, in compliance with an agreement reached between his father, King Uroš I, and Charles of Anjou. Although Charles's grand scheme against Byzantium failed, Milutin's offensive, quite independently, turned into a major success. In the same year, following the conquest of Skoplje, a Byzantine stronghold, the way was open for further conquests within Byzantine Macedonia.[8]

Milutin took full advantage of the opportunity which lay before him in the following years. By the end of the century he had succeeded in pushing the Byzantines as far south as the Ohrid-Prilep-Štip line. Having all but conceded military defeat, the Byzantine Emperor Andronicus II, at the advice of his general Michael Glabas Tarchaniotes, entered into negotiations which culminated in the marriage of Milutin and Andronicus' daughter, Simonis (Simonida, in Serbian) in 1299. For Milutin, this marriage represented a true political triumph; he became the son-

[6] The most exhaustive study, Leonidas Mavromatis, *La fondation de l'empire serbe: le Kralj Milutin*, Byzantina keimena kai meletai, 16 (Thessaloniki, 1978), unfortunately appeared too late to be considered in this book. Mavromatis' main conclusions, however, are in agreement with this author's. Other studies of the subject include Stanoje Stanojević, "Kralj Milutin," *Godišnjica Nikole Čupića*, 46 (1937), 1–43, and the more authoritative treatment, Konstantin Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, trans. Jovan Radonić, 2d ed. (Belgrade, 1952), I, 190–202 – an updated version of the original German publication, K. Jireček, *Geschichte der Serben* (Gotha, 1911), I, 3 30–54. For the interaction between Serbia and Byzantium in their quest for the supremacy in the Balkans see George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. Joan Hussey (New Brunswick, NJ., 1969), pp. 478–98.

[7] On the importance of mining in Serbia, see Desanka Kovačević, "Dans la Serbie et la Bosnie medievales: les mines d'or et d'argent," *Annales Economies Societes Civilisations*, 15, № 2 (1960), 248–58. On Serbia's trade ties, see Bariša Krekić, "La Serbie entre Byzance et l'Occident au XIVe siècle," *Proceedings of the 13th International Congress of Byzantine Studies* (London, 1967), 62–65.

[8] The usually accepted date for the conquest of Skoplje – 1282 – has been challenged by Leonidas Mavromatis, "La prise de Skoplje par les Serbes: date et signification," *Travaux et memoires*, 5 (1973), 329–34, who questions the established interpretation of sources. Mavromatis' views, however, have come under sharp attack by Vladimir Mošin, "Žitije kralja Milutina prema Arhiepiskopu Danilu ili Milutinovoj povelji autobiografiji," *Stara srpska književnost*, Zbornik istorije književnosti № 10 (Belgrade, 1976), 133–34.



Ground plan showing later exonarthex, Gračanica

in-law of the Byzantine Emperor and as dowry obtained Byzantine concession of the lands which he had conquered. For Andronicus II, the marriage was an act of sheer political desperation: his daughter, only a child, was given away against the strong opposition of the Patriarch John XII in an obvious attempt to appease the Serbian ruler and thus to stop Serbian expansion by diplomatic means.

Serbian conquest of a large portion of Byzantine territory and Milutin's marital ties with the Byzantine court were to have far-reaching effects on the development of Serbian culture after 1300. The Serbian ruler deliberately retained and built upon the local governmental and social structure inherited from the Byzantines in the conquered portion of Macedonia.[9] The ultimate result was an intense cultural byzantinization of Serbia, the clearest products of which are to be seen in contemporary art and architecture.[10] Milutin's admiration of Byzantine culture, which he so willingly embraced, was intimately related to his keen interest in Byzantine imperial institutions, soon manifested in the form of plain mimicry. King Milutin, dressed in garments studded with precious gems and glittering gold, received Theodore Metochites in a sumptuous chamber furnished in silk and gold. Duly impressed, Metochites wrote: "In short, everything was arranged in accordance with the Roman taste, and in the manner of the ceremonial of the Imperial court..."[11] By special permission of Andronicus II, the King wore a crown similar to the Emperor's own.[12] Contemporary portraits of the Emperor and his son-in-law graphically illustrate this remarkable similarity.[13]

Milutin was genuinely interested in emulating the Emperor in substance, not merely in image. One of the most effective ways which he chose to accomplish this goal was through the generous patronage of the church. King Milutin is credited with having built more churches than all his predecessors on the Serbian throne together.[14] This building frenzy implies not only considerable economic

[9] Vladimir Mošin, "Vizantiski uticaj u Srbiji u XIV veku," *Jugoslovenski istoriski časopis*, 3 (1937), 149 ff.

[10] The art of the period of King Milutin has long been considered one of the high points of Late Byzantine art in general. Most recently Vojislav Djurić, "L'art des Paléologues et l'État serbe : Rôle de la cour et de l'église serbes dans la première moitié du XIVe siècle," *Art et société à Byzance sous les Paléologues*, ed. A. Grabar (Venice, 1971), pp. 179–91.

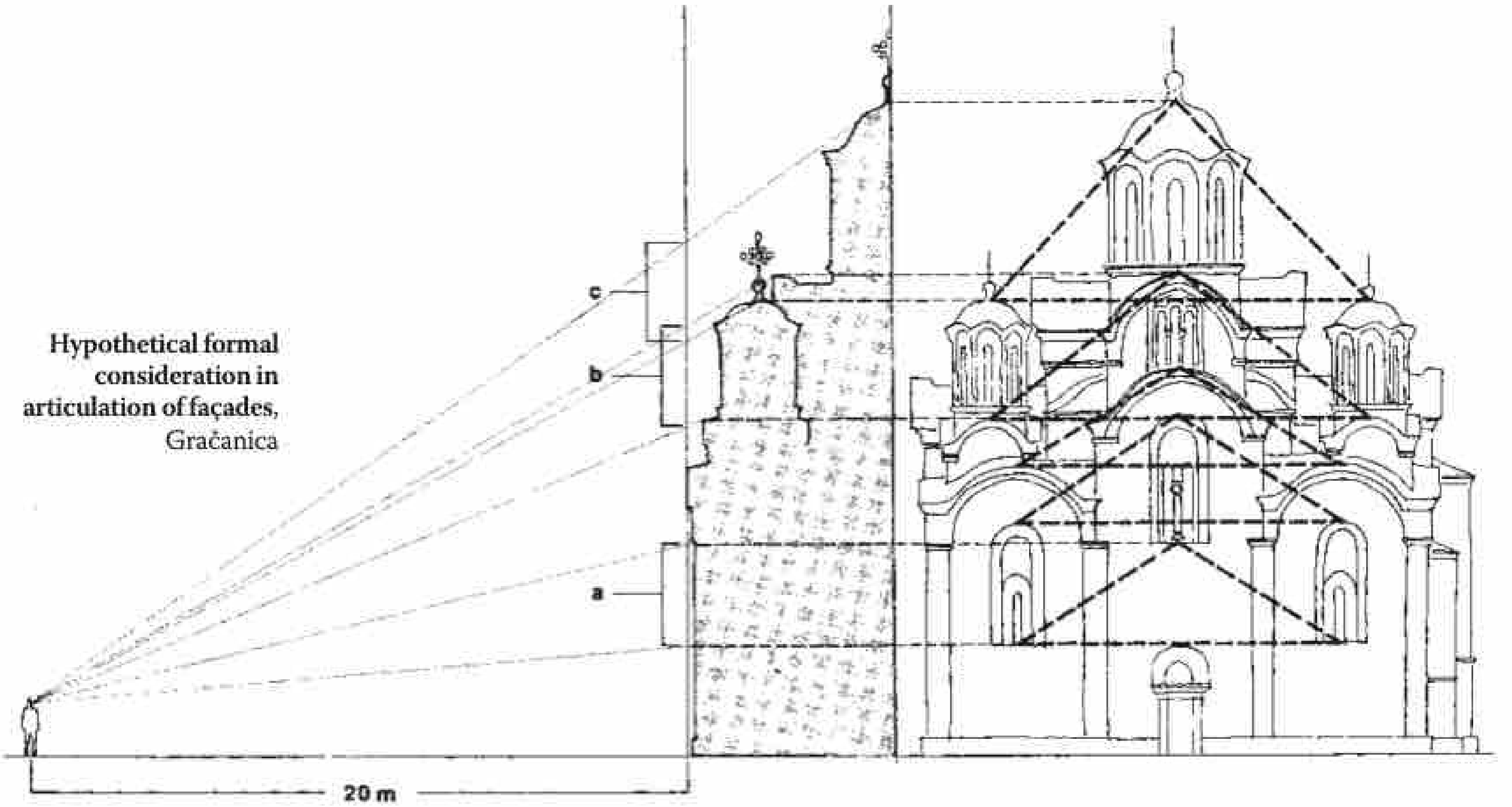
[11] Konstantinos Sathas, *Bibliotheca Graeca mediiaevi* (Venice, 1872), I, 172–73; also in Serbian translation, "Teodora Metohita poslanica," trans. M. Apostolović, *Letopis Matice srpske*, 216 (1902), 42.

[12] Nicephorus Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Ludwig Schopen, I. Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae № 19 (Bonn, 1829), Book VII, Chapter 5, p. 242.

[13] Compare, for example, the portrait of Emperor Andronicus II on the Monemvasia Chrysobull of 1301 (Byzantine Museum, Athens) with the portrait of King Milutin at Bogorodica Ljeviška in Prizren, dated 1307–9. For the former see Tania Velmans, "Le portrait dans l'art des Paleologues," *Art et société à Byzance sous les Paleologues*, ed. A. Grabar (Venice, 1971), fig. 13 and p. 104; for the latter see Draga Panić and Gordana Babić, *Bogorodica Ljeviška* (Belgrade, 1975), pl. I and pp. 58–59.

[14] Stanojević, "Kralj Milutin," p. 43. For the most thorough discussion of King Milutin's patronage of church architecture see Vasilije Marković, *Pravoslavno monastvo i manastiri u srednjevekovnoj Srbiji* (Sremski Karlovci, 1920), pp. 88–98. The principal primary source regarding King Milutin's patronage is his Biography, written by the monk Danilo, the later Serbian archbishop Danilo II- Arhiepiskop Danilo et al., *Životi kraljeva i arhiepiskopa srpskih*, ed. Dj. Daničić (Zagreb, 1866), pp. 102–61 passim. Danilo attributes fifteen churches to King Milutin and lists them in the following order (pp. 132–51): (1) The main church of Hilandar (Hilandari) monastery on Mount Athos; (2) A church in a monastery of Prodromos in Constantinople; (3) A church of Sv. Nikola (St. Nicholas) in Thessaloniki; (4) A church of Sv. Georgije (St. George) in Thessaloniki; (5) The church of Dormition of the Mother of God, now better known as Bogorodica Ljeviška (the Mother of God of Ljeviša) in Prizren; (6) The church of Annunciation, actually Dormition of the Mother of God at Gračanica; (7) A church of the Three-handed Mother of God in Skoplje; (8) A church of St. George on a Serava River (the identity of this river has not been determined); (9) A church of St. Constantine in Skoplje; (10) The church of St. George at Staro Nagoričino; (11) The church of Joachim and Anna, now also known as the King's Church at Studenica; (12) A church of St. George at Orahovica in Dabar; (13) The church of St. Nicetas near Skoplje (in the village of Čučer); (14) A church in Jerusalem; and (15) The church of St. Stephen, King Milutin's mausoleum church at Banjska.

This list of churches does not seem to have been compiled in any particular order. Clearly, neither chronological, nor geographic, nor hierarchical order was adhered to. Of the fifteen churches on the list, only seven that survive have been positively identified (Hilandar, Bogorodica Ljeviška, Gračanica, Staro Nagoričino, the King's Church at Studenica, St. Nicetas at Čučer, and Banjska). Attempts have been made to attribute a number of other churches to King Milutin, but most of these attributions are based on later sources and other information of questionable reliability. A list of these churches was compiled by Slobodan Nenadović, *Bogorodica Ljeviška: njen postanak i njeno mesto u arhitekturi Milutinovog vremena* (Belgrade, 1963), pp. 18–19.



Hypothetical formal consideration in articulation of façades, Gračanica

resources, but also availability of large numbers of qualified builders. The general style of the majority of King Milutin's surviving churches indicates that his builders must have come largely from the south: from Thessaloniki, from Thessaly, even from Epirus. The vast building program of King Milutin was not restricted to Serbia: in the true manner of the great emperor-patrons, Milutin strove to make his patronage universal. His buildings were to be found in Jerusalem, in Constantinople, in Thessaloniki, on Mt. Athos, and elsewhere. Such generous patronage not only built up Milutin's general popularity, but secured him the staunch support of the Serbian church, which fully supported his policies.

It would be misleading, however, to think that Milutin's active byzantinization of Serbia was conducted without any internal opposition. Milutin's position was at first far from invulnerable. He inherited the throne from his older disabled brother, Dragutin, apparently on the condition that Dragutin' s son would succeed after Milutin's death. The problem of the legitimacy of his own rule and the question of the succession plagued Milutin throughout his reign. During the first decade of the fourteenth century, the issues between the two brothers erupted into open warfare.[15] Although Milutin ultimately emerged victorious from this struggle, the very fact that such a conflict took place and lasted for over a decade indicates that Milutin had to cope with serious internal opposition and dissent. This became apparent again in 1314 during an abortive uprising led by his son, Stefan. Although the contemporary sources, and particularly the official ones, are very skimpy or completely silent on these matters, apparently Dragutin enjoyed the support of the nobility, while Milutin relied on the support of the church.[16] Milutin had alienated the nobility initially through his marriage with Simonida and the reconciliation with the Byzantines, which marked the end of territorial expansion in the south. Moreover, Milutin was all too willing to abandon native traditions and to replace old offices and institutions with new ones borrowed from the Byzantines. Hence anti-Byzantine sentiment mounted, fueled from the outside by the Catholic Church, which observed with great displeasure the course of events in Serbia. These anti-Byzantine feelings among the Serbian nobility were observed by Theodore Metochites during the negotiations leading to Simonida' s marriage to Milutin. The King, wrote Metochites, is "surrounded by corrupt people who do not comprehend the state of affairs and what is good... The friendship which is being negotiated and the impending marital ties are causing them concern, and they have great fears."[17] The Byzantines were well aware of the role played by the Catholic Church in Serbia. Its chief exponent was the Dowager Queen Jelena, who until her death in 1314 remained one of the most influential figures in Serbia. Indeed, the Byzantine marriage negotiators insisted on her presence at the wedding ceremony and the administration of the oath. From Milutin's excuses in rejecting this demand, it is clear that Jelena actually disapproved of the marriage.[18]

Despite the byzantinization which he initiated, Milutin's actions, in general, were far from radical. Milutin was a shrewd diplomat. Keenly aware of the internal dissent,

[15] Mihailo Dinić, "Odnos izmedju kralja Milutina i Dragutina," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta*, 3 (1955), 49–80, has shown that despite the silence of contemporary Serbian sources on this matter, civil war raged in Serbia for over a decade.

[16] Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, I, 198; also Dinić, "Odnos," p. 58.

[17] Sathas, *Bibliotheca Graeca*, I, 165–66; also "Teodora Metohita poslanica," pp. 36–37.

[18] Sathas, *Bibliotheca Graeca*, I, 174–75, 179; "Teodora Metohita poslanica," pp. 43, 46.

West façade, Gračanica

he persistently quelled it in continuing efforts to establish the undisputable legitimacy of his succession to the Serbian throne. He achieved these goals with the help of his advisors, outstanding among whom was the monk Danilo, the future Serbian Archbishop Danilo II (1324–37).[19] Danilo was an extraordinary man of many talents, who served the king in numerous capacities. He was an Orthodox monk, but above all he was a first-rate diplomat. Although we know little about his specific diplomatic activities, his long and eventful life bears witness to extraordinary human energy, patience, flexibility, and negotiating skill.

The construction of King Milutin's mausoleum church at Banjska Monastery, perhaps better than any other episode, illustrates Danilo's skill in playing a compromising role to accomplish a specific goal. At the height of his power, following the military defeat of his brother, Dragutin, King Milutin convened an advisory council consisting of his mother, the Dowager Queen Jelena, his brother, Dragutin, and the Archbishop Sava III, for the purpose of reaching a decision about the King's mausoleum church.[20] The end result, the church of Sv. Stefan (St. Stephen) at Banjska Monastery (hereafter referred to as Banjska), at first appears surprisingly conservative. Built in the traditional Romanesque manner, Banjska stands out against the new architectural style adopted under the auspices of King Milutin. Danilo, who was charged with the supervision of Banjska's construction, explains in the biography of the King that it was Milutin's explicit desire to have his mausoleum built "in the image of the Mother of God of Studenica." While it might seem paradoxical that Milutin should have taken such a conservative stand at the height of his power, it should be remembered that his older brother was still alive and that the question of the eventual succession to the Serbian throne was still an unresolved issue. Thus Banjska should be seen as a politically motivated concept. By building Banjska Milutin was assuring his subjects of the continuity of the dynastic tradition, while emphasizing the legitimacy of his own succession. The last decade of King Milutin's life saw unprecedented generation of political propaganda with art, architecture, and literature, all used as tools in the fulfillment of the King's personal ambitions. The choice of the model for his mausoleum-church was but one of the many carefully calculated steps in a complex political scheme. The mastermind of such a political program was, in all likelihood, the King's confidant and advisor, the monk Danilo.

King Milutin's reliance on art as a tool of his political propaganda is best witnessed in the surviving frescos. Although the monumental painting of this period generally fits into the broader framework of Byzantine art, certain iconographic themes are distinctly Serbian. Some of these themes had long-established traditions; others were entirely new creations of King Milutin's ideologists. Among the revived cults, as reflected in monumental painting, we find the cult of St. Stephen and particularly the cult of Sts. Simeon and Sava. The promulgation of the cult of St. Stephen has been interpreted as a means by which Milutin chose to underline his personal importance vis-à-vis

[19] The principal source for Danilo is his biography, written by one of his followers (Arh. Danilo, *Životi*, pp. 328–77) although episodes from his life appear dispersed through biographies of King Dragutin, King Milutin, King Stefan Dečanski, and Queen Jelena. Danilo' s versatile career has been discussed lucidly by Milan Kašanin, *Srpska književnost u srednjem veku* (Belgrade, 1975), pp. 210–33. Danilo's career was also analyzed by Miloje M. Vasić, "Arhiepiskop Danilo II: monah i umetnik," *Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor*, 6, no. 2 (1926), 231–64; also idem, *Žiča i Lazarica* (Belgrade, 1928), pp. 16 5–2 3 7 et passim. Vasić depicted Danilo as an exponent of Hesychasm, a controversial mystical movement widespread in the Orthodox world of the fourteenth century, and insisted that he was neither an artist nor an architect. The latter view was subsequently supported by Vladimir R. Petković and Djurdje Bošković, *Manastir Dečani* (Belgrade, 1941), I, 115–19, but they rejected Vasić's ideas about Hesychasm. Most recently, Svetozar Radojčić, "Archbishop Danilo II and the Serbian Architecture Dating from the Early 14th Century," *Serbian Orthodox Church: Its Past and Present*, 2, no. 2 (1966), 11–19, also rejects ideas concerning the influence of Hesychasm on Danilo. Radojčić, however, not only portrays Danilo as the principal art ideologist in Serbia during the first decades of the fourteenth century, but insists that he was also an architect.

[20] On the building of Sv. Stefan, see Arh. Danilo et al., *Životi*, pp. 149, 151; the current state of scholarship on the subject is summarized by Vojislav Korać, *Graditeljska škola Pomorja*, Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti. Posebna izdanja № 384 (Belgrade, 1965), pp. 102–6, with earlier literature.

Dragutin.[21] The cult of SS. Simeon and Sava, on the other hand, has been seen as part of King Milutin's general support of the Serbian Church.[22] Although the church had been the principal promoter of this cult, its acceptance by King Milutin had broader ideological implications. By promulgating the cult of his saintly ancestors, Milutin obviously hoped to emphasize the legitimacy of his succession. As time went on, this theme was increasingly emphasized. In the church of Joachim and Anna at Studenica, the cult of SS. Simeon and Sava was juxtaposed with the cult of Christ's ancestors-Joachim and Anna-in an obvious allusion to the divine origins of the Nemanjić family. Finally, at Gračanica, graphic representation of this ideologically complicated iconography crystallized in the creation of an entirely new composition—the Nemanjić family tree.[23] Based on the established iconography of the Tree of Jesse, the Nemanjić family tree even more explicitly alluded to the Nemanjić as the divinely chosen lot. The appearance of King Milutin at the top of the family tree as the pendant to its root—Nemanja—finalized in the most eloquent way the professed legitimacy of Milutin's succession as an inevitable act of the Divine Will.

Striking this note, however, Milutin infringed on another territory. According to the Byzantine point of view, of all rulers, only the Byzantine emperor was divinely appointed; he was Christ's Vicar, the ruler of His earthly realm. Milutin's ideological intrusion into this concept was no accident either. His titles clearly illustrate this development. The earlier titles proudly displaying the fact that he was the son-in-law of the Byzantine Emperor eventually gave way to a simplified title form in which such references were omitted.[24] Although he stopped short of calling himself "Emperor" in documents, the word *car* (emperor) does appear on some of King Milutin's seals.[25] Toward the end of his reign, Milutin had shed all inhibitions in stating the true nature of his goals. Having quelled the dissenters within his own state, he could calmly watch the growing breach between the aging Emperor Andronicus II and his ambitious grandson, Andronicus III. Had his death, on October 29, 1321, not stopped him, Milutin might well have let his ambition carry him one step further. That decisive step was taken only by his grandson, Stefan Dušan, who proclaimed himself Emperor of the Serbs and Greeks on April 16, 1346.

East façade, Gračanica

In summary, several points must be emphasized. Politically, the reign of King Milutin was extremely complex. The pivotal event was the peace treaty arranged with Andronicus II in 1299, terminating nearly two decades of warfare and bringing Milutin into a family bond with the Byzantine court through his marriage to Simonida. Consequently, the year 1300 represents a watershed in the development of medieval Serbia. Economically strong, guided by personal ambitions, and relying on the prestige of being related to the Byzantine imperial house, Milutin could concentrate on building his strength internally and quelling opposition to his policies. Having defeated his brother, Dragutin, he could devote the last years of his life to systematic political propaganda aimed at eradicating any doubts about the legality of his succession, and to creating an ideological base for the eventual challenge of the Byzantine Emperor.

Culturally, the picture is no simpler. Although byzantinization represented the main theme, other factors must not be entirely overlooked. Despite an almost total cultural reorientation, Serbia did not sever its traditional cul-

21 Mirjana Ćorović-Ljubinković, "Odraz kulta Svetog Stefana u srpskoj srednjovekovnoj umetnosti," *Starinar,* n. s. 12 (1961), 53–54.

22 Mirjana Ćorović-Ljubinković, "Uz problem ikonografije srpskih svetitelja Simeona i Save," *Starinar,* n. s. 7–8 (1958), 81.

23 Slobodan Ćurčić, "The Nemanjic Family Tree in the Light of the Ancestral Cult in the Church of Joachim and Anna at Studenica," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta,* 14–15 (1973), 191–95; on the family tree, see pp. 191–92, and n. 1 with the listing of earlier literature.

24 The inscription on tiles on the exterior of the main apse of Bogorodica Ljeviška in Prizren mentions the donor, King Stefan Uroš (Milutin), and further refers to him as the son-in-law of the Greek Emperor Andronicus Palaeologus. The inscription is dated 1306–7; see Nenadović, *Bogorodica Ljeviška,* pp. 24–25. Another inscription of similar content and phraseology accompanies Milutin's donor portrait, to the left from the door leading from the esonarthex into the naos of the same church; ibid., p. 25. The particular reference to Milutin' s relationship to Andronicus II is conspicuously missing in similar donor inscriptions in Milutin's subsequent foundations such as Staro Nagoričino, King's Church at Studenica, and Gračanica.

25 Vladimir Mošin, "Povelje kralja Milutina-diplomatička analiza," *Istorijski časopis,* 18 (1971), 62.

North façade, Gračanica

tural ties with the Hinterland, the coastal region on the Adriatic and her window on the West. Daring as he was in his political undertakings, Milutin also knew moderation. Thus the cultural flow in contacts with the Hinterland continued in both directions. Its apparent reduced rate was created largely by the overwhelming effect of the Byzantine input. In the process of byzantinizing Serbia, Milutin also did not lose sight of certain traditional values, though largely for the sake of political expedience. The same general cultural trends were to continue after Milutin and were to play a major role in the shaping of a more distinctive culture under Stefan Dušan. The political, social, and cultural ingredients of Dušan's empire, however, were conceived under King Milutin.

Our analysis of the architecture of Gračanica, its relationship to contemporary architecture within the Byzantine sphere of influence in general, and its place within the context of the culture of King Milutin's Serbia yields a new understanding of this extraordinary monument. Gračanica can be comprehended and its importance properly established only within the general scope of Late Byzantine architecture. The romantic attribution of Gračanica to the "Serbian national genius," which was first circulated by Millet and Brehier, has subsequently accomplished the opposite from what these French scholars had in mind. It has confined Gračanica to the scope of Serbian architecture under Byzantine influence, and has resulted in its treatment as a highlight of but one of the many local provincial workshops.

Such a notion is utterly misleading. Gračanica represents one of the high points of Late Byzantine architecture in the broadest sense. This contention is corroborated by the political and cultural developments in Serbia at the time. King Milutin's expansionist policies, his emulation of the Byzantine Emperor and the imperial court, his universal patronage of art and architecture, his political propaganda generated through the arts, and the general style of his art and architecture all unmistakably point to the fact that Serbian artistic and architectural accomplishments of the early fourteenth century must be considered in a broader framework transcending the national boundaries of Serbia. Therefore, the key to proper understanding of Serbian art and architecture at the outset of the fourteenth century lies in the correct assessment of the patronage of King Milutin. As direct conflicts indicated, it was King Milutin, and not the Byzantine Emperor, who was the most powerful ruler in the Balkans around 1300. His strength was based on Serbia's sound economy nurtured by successful mining of silver and gold, and by active trading, especially with Dubrovnik. King Milutin used his great wealth to maintain his military superiority and to promote the cultural growth of Serbia. While Serbia was experiencing a process of political and cultural ascendancy, the Byzantine Empire was undergoing a process of steady decline. Political and cultural decentralization of Byzantium had become very much a fact under Andronicus II despite this emperor's attempts to reverse the trend. The importance of Thessaloniki rose considerably with the establishment of the court of his consort, Empress Irene, who left Constantinople apparently as a result of a dispute with her husband over the question of partitioning the empire. The pres-

Main apse window, Gračanica

Main dome, Gračanica

ence of an imperial court at Thessaloniki and the presence of the Byzantine princess Simonida at the Serbian court must have been the most vital factors influencing the course of development of Serbian culture at the time. Seen in this context and in terms of King Milutin's personal aspirations, his artistic and architectural patronage emerges in a new light.

In considering the architecture in Serbia specifically, major practical factors must also be kept in mind. Up to about 1300 Serbian architecture exhibited only occasional direct contacts with the Byzantine sphere. After 1300 the shift was dramatic. Virtually overnight, Byzantine church architecture took firm root in Serbia. We must ask ourselves certain pertinent questions. How did this happen? Where did the builders come from and why? The answers are not simple, but they can be sketched in broad outline. The usual explanation that the architectural style and the builders were inherited from the Byzantines by King Milutin after his successful conquest of large portions of Macedonia falls short of being satisfactory because the surviving monuments indicate that this conquered area was characterized by small-scale, provincial architecture, with the most representative monuments found in such centers as Prilep and Ohrid. The architecture of Prilep and Ohrid, however, has very little in common with the architecture of King Milutin. The churches built under the direct patronage of King Milutin (Hilandar, Bogorodica Ljeviška, Staro Nagoričino, Gračanica), on the other hand, display standards of construction quality as high as one may expect to find in Thessaloniki, or even in Constantinople. Such standards could hardly have been maintained by local craftsmen operating on the territory conquered by King Milutin. Furthermore, the sheer quantity of construction compels us to question the notion that a few stagnant provincial building crews could have produced so much within a decade or two. Considering all the factors involved, we can hypothesize that King Milutin, in his ambitious efforts to compete with the patronage of the Byzantine emperor and relying on his substantial resources, had reached beyond the immediate frontiers of his own realm to acquire skilled craftsmen. Some must have come from Thessaloniki, the most accessible and the best source of artisans at the time. However, Thessaloniki most likely could not have provided all

the artisans needed by King Milutin. Others must have been recruited from Thessaly and Epirus. Stylistic aspects of King Milutin's architecture corroborate such a supposition.

Seen against this background, Gračanica begins to make sense. A building in which diverse elements are brought together, it reveals a characteristic design approach of Late Byzantine builders-compilation of building components to achieve new entities. However, the degree to which these diverse components are integrated into the total composition suggests a competence which presupposes considerable previous building experience.

The builders of Gračanica (at least some from the group) must have previously worked on other commissions for King Milutin. Among the surviving churches the church of Bogorodica Ljeviška in Prizren is the most likely possibility. Our picture, unfortunately, will never be complete, since several major churches built for King Milutin in and around Skoplje have vanished without a trace. In any case, it seems that once hired by King Milutin, the Greek builders remained in Serbia working on several of his commissions. Although Greek builders are never mentioned explicitly in any of the Serbian sources, their presence in Serbia is implied by Danilo II in his biography of King Milutin. Relating the decision to build the mausoleum church for the king at Banjska, he states that he was chosen to supervise the construction of the church because he was a Serb. Such insistence on national affiliation implies that not all builders in Serbia at the time were natives. Nor should they have been. Having initiated the process of expansion to the south, with clear imperial overtones, Milutin had made it plain that he was ready to transcend established local traditions. This undertaking was not simple, nor was it without internal opposition. Its fruits were reaped only some three decades later in Dušan's Serbo-Greek Empire. Nevertheless, the monuments of art and architecture patronized by King Milutin remain unquestionable proof of the path he had chosen.

Earlier attempts on the part of some scholars to see such aspects of Gračanica as its elongated proportions or its pointed archivolts at the base of the main dome as evidence of direct Gothic influence must be dismissed. Even if Gothic input may be detected in such isolated details as the crocket capitals, these are most likely a result of a secondhand borrowing via Epirus, rather than a perpetuation of the faint Gothic tradition established in Serbia in the course of the thirteenth century (e.g., at Gradac). Gothic influence on Gračanica can be properly understood only in light of a general exposure of Late Byzantine architecture to western influence. Thus attempts to portray Gračanica as a work of local builders who consciously perpetuated the established tradition of the Raška School appear highly superficial.

Window on the south façade, Gračanica

Having determined Gračanica's place within the broader framework of Serbian culture under King Milutin, we could turn our attention to some of its features that have previously been either overlooked or misunderstood. Foremost among these are the three arcosolia, planned from the outset and built integrally with the church. These arcosolia, considering that Gračanica was King Milutin's foundation, must have been intended for burials of the members of the royal family. The arcosolium in the southern ambulatory wing is of particular significance because of its relative location in the church. By observing earlier and subsequent localization of tombs of Serbian rulers, it was established that almost all of them occupy the same relative position within respective mausoleum churches. On the basis of this and several other factors it was proposed that Gračanica was initially planned to be King Milutin's mausoleum church. This notion is also supported by the subsequent adoption of the five-domed church as a royal mausoleum church type (the church of Holy Archangels, Ravanica, and Manasija). Our hypothesis about the original intentions for Gračanica appears contradictory, because King Milutin was actually buried in the church of Saint Stefan, at Banjska Monastery. By analyzing the legal relationship established between Banjska and Gračanica through their monastic charters it was possible to detect that their relationship was altered in favor of Banjska, probably after the construction of Gračanica had begun. This, in turn, introduced a new factor into attempts to establish the probable beginning date of construction at Gračanica.

On the basis of the relative chronology of Banjska and Gračanica, it is possible to propose 1311 as the most plausible beginning date of Gračanica's construction. This is corroborated by the historical circumstances. Seen in historical perspective Banjska appears as one of King Milu-

South portal, Gračanica

tin's concessions to the conservative forces following his victory over his brother Dragutin in 1312. Prior to that date, at the height of the conflict between the brothers, Milutin may well have been ready to abandon the traditional form of Serbian royal mausoleum churches in favor of a new, Byzantine five-domed church type.

The proposed early date for Gračanica does not significantly alter our current understanding of King Milutin's patronage of arts and architecture. On a somewhat more limited scale, it does change the relative chronology of three specific monuments—the Mother of God of Ljeviša, Staro Nagoričino, and Gračanica. Built by King Milutin, these three five-domed churches have always been considered to exist in a convenient chronological sequence. Our proposed date of 1311 for the beginning of Gračanica's construction, however, eliminates the conventional notion of a linear path of development. This could also be deduced from our analysis of the architecture of these three churches. Whereas the Mother of God of Ljeviša and Gračanica, though different in building technique and decorative elements, share certain common planning, spatial, and structural concepts, Staro Nagoričino shows few affinities with Gračanica. At the same time, Staro Nagoričino displays great similarities with the Mother of God of Ljeviša in building technique and in the repertoire of its decorative elements. It is possible that the original team of builders working on the Mother of God of Ljeviša was split up between the two following projects--Gračanica and Staro Nagoričino.

This study has investigated a monument whose relative importance has long been apparent. It has shown, however, that the importance of Gračanica exceeds the obvious. The examination of Gračanica, in the context of Serbia's changing culture under King Milutin, and within the general framework of Late Byzantine church architecture, compels us to revise the established notion characterizing it as one of the finest achievements of Serbian architecture under Byzantine influence. Gračanica, indeed, represents one of the summits of Late Byzantine architecture in the most general sense.

Slobodan Ćurčić, *Gračanica: King Milutin's Church and Its Place in Late Byzantine Architecture* (The Pennsylvania State University Press: 1979), pp. 1–11, 140–143.

Monograms of King Milutin, west wall of the naos, Gračanica

Mother of God
***Higher than Heaven*,**
altar apse, Gračanica,
1318-1321

The Charter of King Milutin,
inscribed on the north wall of Chapel
of the Mother of God, Gračanica, 1318-1321

Nemanjić Dynasty Family Tree,
1318–1321,
Gračanica.
This replica belongs to the National Museum, Belgrade

The Art of Gračanica

Gojko Subotić

The Nemanjić Dynasty Family Tree, detail:
King Milutin, narthex, east wall, Gračanica, 1318–1321

In the last year of his long reign, 1321, King Milutin issued a chrysobull (charter) granting estates to the monastery of Gračanica, the seat of the bishops of Lipljan, after he had built a church there and was about to finish painting its walls. A copy of the document has survived, spelled out in fresco technique on the wall in the southern chapel, most probably functioning as a diakonicon here—storing precious liturgical vessels and important manuscripts, especially foundation and gift-granting charters. In addition to a list of assets enhanced by the king with his own contributions, the charter discloses that here in the fertile plain of Kosovo he had completely rebuilt the earlier cathedral of the Bishopric of Lipljan. Excavations of the church interior suggest as much. They reveal not only the remains of an early Byzantine basilica with a narthex and lateral wings, but also foundations of a smaller, elongated religious building above its central nave. It is not certain whether the lower structure was the old episcopal seat of Ulpiana, a nearby ancient town whose tradition was continued by subsequent spiritual dignitaries. The ground plan of the upper edifice, however, certainly was the seat of the Bishop of Lipljan, one of the first archpriests ordained by St. Sava in the autonomous Serbian church. It was a modest single-aisled building with pilasters, suggesting that it was domed (the excavated fragments of murals show that the frescos were painted in the decades around the mid-13th century). Apparently it was demolished when King Milutin had the new, monumental edifice built. Nowadays, the king's charter is all the evidence that remains of a formerly grand, still uninvestigated monastic complex of which only a few buildings can be reconstructed on the basis of preserved foundations.

The church of the Mother of God in Gračanica—the last in a series built in the second decade of the 14th century by the greatest patron in medieval Serbian art—represents the most significant achievement of the Byzantine architectural tradition he embraced. With its complex and gracious forms it deeply impressed writers of travel accounts and was sung by folk epics. Experts, for their part, early saw in it a creation of outstanding artistic skill. The focus of their research has, naturally, shifted from the analysis of forms and the outer appearance, whose beauty is captivating, to consideration of spatial structure, its elements and origin.

The church's floor plan is rectangular, while further up it develops into forms which articulate into sloping masses, ascending toward the main dome. Basically simple and easy to comprehend, the composition of these masses reveals to a great extent the intricate internal plan, although the character and disposition of all spatial and constructive elements do not have corresponding counterparts in the exterior. In the core of the building is a cross-in-square form with four freestanding piers crowned by the dome which springs from a square base. It is supported by lofty barrel vaults spanning the arms of the cross, dominating the entire entity. Spatial elements encompassing the central section play a special role in the external composition. Of diverse forms and height, they create with their harmonious relations and characteristic rhythm an entity of unique compositional value: in the extension of the arms of the cross, bays maintaining the same width are covered by barrel vaults placed at a lower height, while the corners are topped by domes of appearance and structure identical to the main dome. It has been emphasized in scholarly literature that this simplified scheme is formed "by placing one cross-in-square onto another;" the whole is assembled in a fashion aiming to achieve a perfect outer appearance.

"Double, two-level intersected vaults" with the dome in the center and four elevated cupolas at the ends as counterparts, certainly represent the skeleton of the structure. Symmetrically placed as the vaults rising above the outer

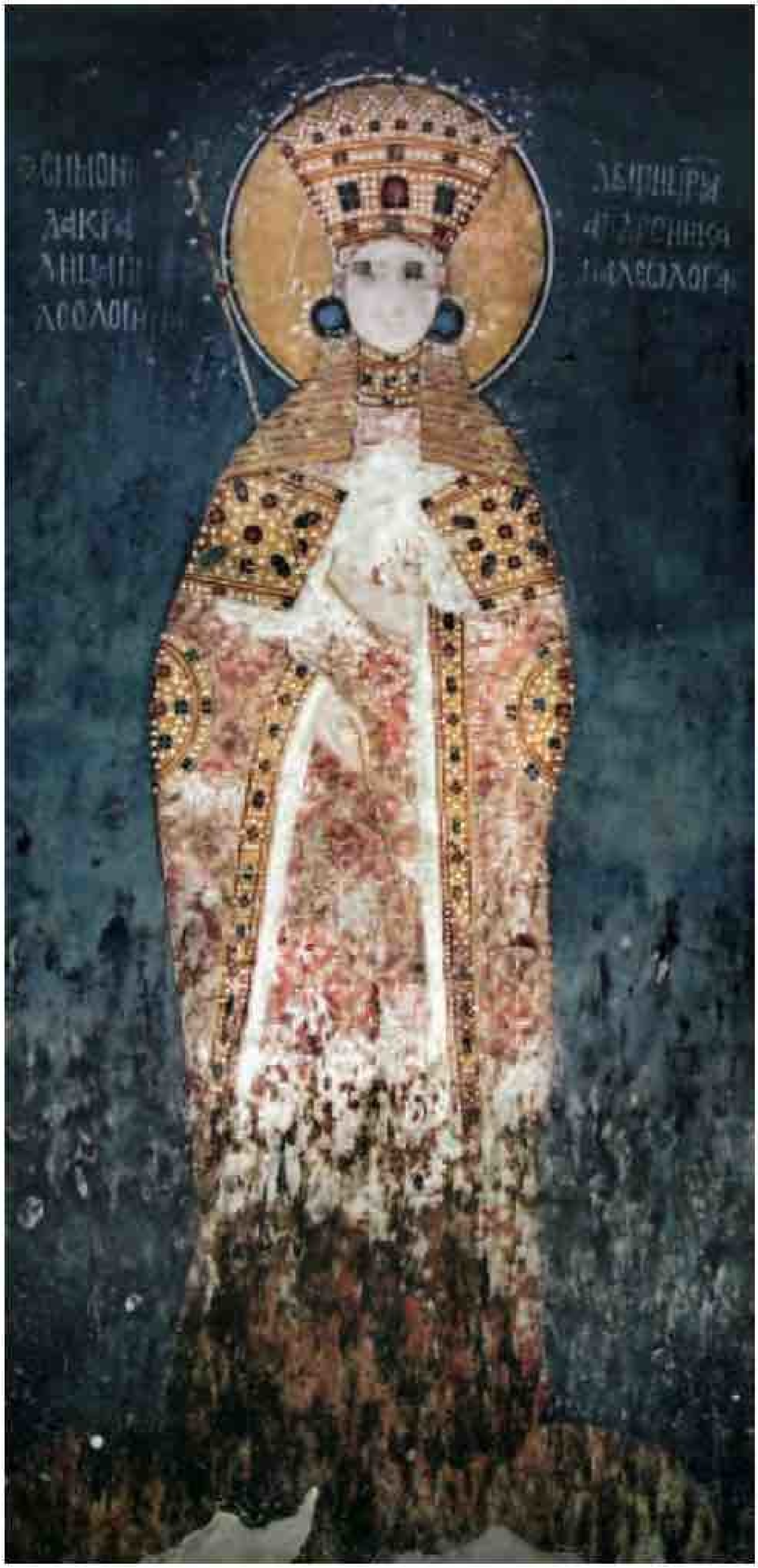
Coronation of King Milutin and Queen Simonida,
detail: Christ and Angels bringing the crowns,
the arch between the pillars of the narthex, Gračanica, 1318–1321

bays, they cover different elements of space invested with articulated meaning and function.

The real character of the whole and parts in the intricately designed space can be established only by observing the structure and all its components, the easiest approach being their analysis on diverse levels. As a matter of fact because it is divided by a multitude of supports which block the view of some of the sections, the interior does not readily expose itself to the observer, though impressing profoundly with the richness of forms and interplay of light. The spaces on all sides are open to view below the dome, depending on the height and manner in which the respective bays are vaulted. Through the arched apertures placed between piers and pillars in the east there is a large bema, the width of which is equal to the naos whose central bay carries a blind calotte. The broadest, unrestricted views from the center toward the exterior sides of the church opens to the north and south where the last segments, somewhat lower, originally had direct lateral entrances, while in the west the round-arched passage allows a view of the space of the exonarthex with the groin-vaulted central section. On the upper floor above it there is a middle-sized chamber which in other episcopal churches had the function of a katechoumena. It was reached by a stone staircase through the southern part of the wide wall between the narthex and the naos, lit by a window on the western side.

To the north and south of the naos and the altar the church had special ambulatory wings terminating in the east with the enclosed parekklesia with semi-circular apses. In the interior these spaces were of uneven height, vaulted in a different manner, and the domes at their corners were not placed at the height of the neighboring bays. With their square bases resting on relatively narrow rectangular spaces they rose to a height at which they established a remarkable harmony with the central section, thus constituting an entity whose forms rank among the noblest in Late Byzantine architecture. The effort to repeat particular forms consistently and preserve their sophisticated rhythm also contributed to this. Thus, the roof over the low blind dome of the sanctuary was turned into a barrel-vault in order to correspond to the forms of the vaults on the other sides. It is evident that the gifted architect concentrated his attention on the plastic articulation of the edifice, not completely fulfilling the well-known tenet regarding the relationship between the interior structure and the outer appearance of the building, so that the spatial forms and construction elements in it became easily distinguishable from the outside. In Gračanica, the wide wall areas of the lower portion thus had shallow pilasters dividing them into well-proportioned, harmonious surfaces, but the space behind them was designed in an utterly different manner.

The building material and construction techniques were typical of widespread building practices used for shrines in towns and the western provinces of the restored Byzantine Empire, chiefly in the closing decades of the 13th, and the beginning of the 14th centuries. The standard use of stone, bricks and mortar reached a high degree of sophistication here, manifested in the choice of material and its adaptation to the proportions and structure of particular parts. The face of the dome, the sides of the arms



Queen Simonida, wife of Saint King Milutin,
in a beautiful Gračanica fresco; she was celebrated by Serbian poet Milan Rakić in the famous verses: They gouged out your eyes, beautiful picture! / On a stone slab, under night's guise. / Knowing that none could see him then, / An Arbanas with his knife dug out your eyes.

Holy King Milutin (1253–1321),
the great-grandson of Serbian King Stefan the First-Crowned (Provenčani), depicted as Gračanica monastery founder. His incorruptible and miraculous honorable Relics rest in peace in the Church of Saint Kyriake (Nedelja) or Holy King's Church in Sophia, in Bulgaria.

of the cross and the surfaces of the base of the dome were executed in tiers of large blocks of sandstone and limestone of different hues, interpolated by of two rows of brick with layers of mortar. Stone blocks were mostly framed by mortar joints and vertically placed bricks—thicker in the lower zones—in the so-called cloisonne technique. However, the cornices below the eaves, the frames of openings, the archivolts closing the gables of the particular sections of the façades and the cubical base of the drum, and the entire dome as well were carried out in brick whose rows, in color and fabric, stood apart from the level surfaces made in stone. The lunettes above the windows, as was customary, were an opportunity for ornamentation: the bricks, in fairly simple, mainly semi-circular rows, formed several motifs there. The manner of their arrangement and construction was neither rigid or strict. The best sample of masonry workmanship is the eastern façade of the church, its silhouette slender; adorned areas clustered more closely together than on the other sides. The relatively tall surfaces of the externally three-sided apses broken by elongated windows topped with fields of ornamentation also contribute to the density of the façade. With regard to this angle, the builder enlarged the height of the upper portions in order to convey full proportional harmony.

The interior, subdivided by piers, received unequal amounts of light not only because of the diversely proportioned sections of the structure, but also because of unequal light sources. As in other domed churches, the greatest amount of light, chiefly admitted by the tall windows piercing the drum, spread over the surfaces of the subdomical area and the neighboring bays; it penetrated into the arms of the cross through three-light mullioned windows placed on the gables of their lower segments. But the smaller domes, raised high over the relatively narrow spaces in the corners, could not provide light of the same intensity to the lower parts, nor could light directly spread from them and illuminate the bays next to them to the same degree. In such an interior the lighting of the upper sections—a celestial residence in the cosmic understanding of God's abode—was replaced in the lower zones by deep shadows, enhanced by dark fumes of candles and incense in which holy paintings lost their contours during most of the day.

As work on the wall-paintings was drawing to an end—probably in the summer or at the beginning of the autumn

Queen Helen of Anjou and King Uroš I depicted as monastics, east wall of the narthex, Gračanica, 1318–1321

of 1321—King Milutin and Queen Simonis were painted on the lateral sides of the passage leading from the narthex into the naos, dressed in solemn vestments echoing Byzantine imperial garb. High above, accommodated at the apex of the arch, Christ pronounces a blessing on them, while the angels, expressing God's will, are offering crowns to them.

The king on the left side holds a vividly articulated model of the church in both hands. This depiction, however, does not show the exonarthex, today forming a well—balanced, inseparable and, it seems, logical part of the whole. The confidence with which all the details of the sprawling, compelling building model were executed leaves no doubt that at the time when the fresco painting of the church was about to be completed the exonarthex still did not exist. In all probability, it was added soon thereafter. Excavations have revealed that it was of the same volume, but with a different spatial disposition: massive piers subdivide it into six bays above which a belfry formerly rose at the west end.

A large part of the original exonarthex appears to have been destroyed in the first Ottoman raids and in a fire in the monastery before the battle of Kosovo (1389). It is difficult, however, to say what was retained from its original plan in the reconstruction undertaken soon afterwards. Having gained experience in the erection of open narthexes in the second and third quarters of the 14th century, the master-masons raised a serene structure whose height, forms and construction were a fortunate addition to Milutin's endowment. The lateral sides were composed of sturdy piers with arches resting on the pillars between them, while the western façade featured narrower piers between the corresponding supports, also linked by arches—two on each side and three in the central section providing access to the church. In that, the narthex successfully adopted the rhythm of the upper portions of the church which was of tremendous importance for the entire structure: the apex of the blind dome above it was placed in continuation of the slanting plane, whose angle was determined by the height of the main and subsidiary domes.

Light and transparent, the narthex remained open in the course of almost two ensuing centuries. It was blocked up afterwards before being furnished with new wall-paintings after the renewal of the Patriarchate of Peć (1557). Prior to this time, in a wood-cut showing the contemporary appearance of the church in a book printed in Gračanica (1539), a belfry was depicted above the narthex. This belfry may have been demolished after that because of stricter measures imposed by the Ottoman authorities regarding the use of bells.

The full extent of the remodeling of the exonarthex carried out in the 16th century has not yet been ascertained. It is therefore difficult to perceive the character and all the merits of the former structure. Its present-day appearance does not display the same polished, refined masonry as the church itself does.

In searching for the origin of the master-masons employed by King Milutin and the place they were trained we cannot name any single workshop. The analogies regarding the articulation and conception of space open up a series of possibilities in the northern regions of Byzantium, especially Thessalonica, while similar designs occur primarily in Epirus and Thessaly. The masters from these regions readily joined building projects undertaken by the Serbian ruler and having brought in by local associates, developed ideas and experiences with them.

Now that the building has been cleaned the details are more visible; the wall surfaces in the interior of the church of the Mother of God accommodate numerous representations, comprising the culmination of wall-painting in Serbia during King Milutin's epoch with their profusion and selection. It can be claimed with considerable certainty that until the very end artists from Thessalonica were exponents of the new style which matured before the eyes of the Serbian founders and the clergy. Architecturally preceded by the five-domed churches of the Mother of God of Ljeviša at Prizren and Saint George in Staro Nagoričino, created some years before in the restoration of earlier structures erected in the Byzantine tradition, the Gračanica wall-paintings grow out of this tradition in a confident manner. The underlying ideas and forms of expression neither fluctuated nor flagged in further elaboration of the program and the refined interpretation of messages which the earlier seat of the bishopric had striven to transmit to its congregation. Finding a place for the entire subject matter in such a complex space necessitated experience and skill. We are not sure, however, that this was done in a manner befitting the abilities of the faithful. Aside from those thematic segments which, despite noticeable differences in the shape of the building, were common to all, only with considerable effort could great connoisseurs of ecclesiastical history and doctrine follow the painted thought of the man who commissioned the building and the artist. Representations were frequently placed at a large distance from the observer on surfaces difficult to be seen due to the angle. The question at issue, understandably, was not merely recognition of the subject matter, although this in itself was not always simple. Scenes which were iconographically similar or even identical were interpreted by, and occasionally differed from each other only through Biblical quotations or verses from ecclesiastical poetry the texts of which, situated far from the observer, could only be read with great difficulty. It is possible, however, to single out certain larger cycles, although their sequence is not always easy to grasp.

The sanctuary posed the least problems though it does include representations invested with various meanings. In the spherical area of the wide apse beneath Christ Emmanuel, the Mother of God is painted with archangels

Saint Kyriake, north aisle, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Michael and Gabriel in a circular segment of light surrounded by cherubs. With her appearance and outstretched arms, the Mother of God corresponds to her frequent epithet Wider than the Heavens because she carries in her the Lord himself. Liturgical themes—the Communion of the Apostles and the Service of the Hierarchs are below it. The last composition features the fathers of the church preceded by John Chrysostom and Basil the Great whose mystical action evokes Christ's sacrifice. It repeats an oft-used iconographic formula formed at the end of the 12th century. In accordance with the character of the space, several individual images of the holy fathers were painted on the other sides as well, while the Resurrection was placed over the central section in the blind calotte. The neighboring vaults and areas below them display a series of events from the Virgin's cycle (The Refusal of Gifts of Joachim and Anna, the Return of Joachim and Anna from the Temple, the Annunciation, the Presentation of the Mother of God at the Temple, etc.). The second significant group includes the Sacrifice of Abraham, the Invitation of the Three Angels into the Home, Hospitality of Abraham, Gideon's Fleece, the Tabernacle, Divine Wisdom Which Hath Builded Her House, etc. Several scenes evoked the Eucharist, but in accordance with the Old and New Testaments they represent at the same time prototypes (prefigurations) of the Mother of God and the embodiment of the Logos. More recent studies dealing with the complex meanings and stock iconographic content typical, for instance, of the Old Testament Tabernacle, disclose not only an early established dogmatic foundation, but also expressions in religious poetry which disseminated certain ideas that prompted painters to include them in their wall-paintings.

Certain scenes linked with the Virgin's life are painted in her parekklesion, i.e. the southern one, while the northern contains illustrations recounting the life of St. Nicholas to whom this space is dedicated. The chapel's apse, however, also received St. John the Forerunner. His impressive image with its vigorous features became widely known and contributed greatly to a proper understanding of the values of the Gračanica frescos.

The subject matter of the main dome is similar to that of many such churches: at its apex personifying the celestial heights in the notion of church as universe, Christ All-Sovereign (Pantocrator) is customarily represented; below him is the Divine Liturgy painted after the model of the liturgical service on this earth, itself invoking the participation of the heavenly powers with the small Christ—the Lamb on the communion table (hagia trapeza) and rows of angels dressed as diacons in stycharia with oraria, holding liturgical vessels.

The Great Feasts are in a fresco on the tall vaults of the naos, while the emphasis on narration typical of the epoch has come into full play on the lower sections of the corresponding areas. This was an important feature, by which the new current in the Palaeologan painting was simply called "narrative." Numerous passages relating to Christ's teaching are portrayed from the Gospels, while his parables are vividly illustrated. Christ's Passion, in the main position beneath them, is represented in as many as twenty compositions, from the Last Supper to the Resurrection, in which the Crucifixion, although painted within the Great Feasts, appears as well. The significance given to Christ's suffering renders its illustration essential to each sequence, though several decades later it was considerably shortened. They had soteriological significance—the suffering and death of the Son of God were a pledge to the salvation of mankind.

Christ's appearances after his death form a special cycle. They were embodied in the liturgy itself with the appearance of the priest at the Royal Door blessing the believers and retreating afterwards like Christ, while the selection and order of representations corresponded to the order in which the appropriate passages from the gospels were read in liturgical services during Lent before Easter—Three Women and the Virgin at Christ's Tomb, the Myrrophoroi, Do Not Touch Me (Noli me tangere), the Myrrophoroi Informing the Apostles, etc.

The painters, inspired by a wealth of religious literature, depicted in the west part of the naos the end of the Virgin's life, illustrating it in a series of episodes: the prayers before her death announced to her by the angels; trees,

bending, bow to her, her farewell to the Apostles who, when they are summoned, arrive on clouds, and the Dormition featuring numerous participants and Christ with the accepted soul which the angel is to carry through the opened door of paradise. In the continuation, one can see the passing of the Virgin into heaven with the apostle Thomas who is given a belt from her; the Apostles find the empty tomb with Thomas behind them confirming that he encountered the Virgin by showing her belt. Evolving this theme in great detail, painters produced various versions of it in the second decade of the 14th century, obviously well acquainted not only with the writings attributed to St. John the Theologian and his contemporaries, but also with several more recent works which relied on them, ranging from synaxaria to various poetic creations.

In the outlined themes with liturgical and dogmatic content, special significance was attached to the idea of incarnation, while "historical" representations derived inspiration and motifs from various apocryphal texts. They also altered the character of painting. Their profusion and arrangement on relatively small surfaces, frequently only on the sides of piers, had as a consequence the reduction of scenes, especially the number of participants recounting the events. Only by such reduction was it possible to depict the calendar with representations of holy events and personalities for each day of the year. Several centuries before that, the Menologion had been illustrated in codices. Apparently it made its first appearance in wall-painting in the 13th century. Locally, however, it had been represented in a similar vein in Staro Nagoričino two or three years preceding Gračanica. The masters from the same region must have been using the same source: the calendar of the Constantinopolitan church for both churches. It is certainly interesting that, except in Serbia, the Menologion appears only in Thessalonica whence the masters must have come, in the church of Saint Nicholas Orphanos, quite a well-known structure which King Milutin had built and dedicated to this saint in the second town of the Empire.

The reasons why the cycle of the Calendar occupied a different position in this church than it had in the others lies in the spatial scheme and the general disposition of ornaments. As a matter of fact, their entire repertoire and exact arrangement cannot be established on account of considerable damage to particular surfaces, and we therefore cannot be sure whether the Menologion—analogies for this exist as well—was illustrated here in its entirety. However, large sections, sometimes in bands, can be followed on different sides—on the piers and passages, below the small domes on the western side of the church and in the narthex. With their appearance and disposition, they correspond in many aspects to individual images of saints, most frequently martyrs, predominantly encountered here in the lower zones.

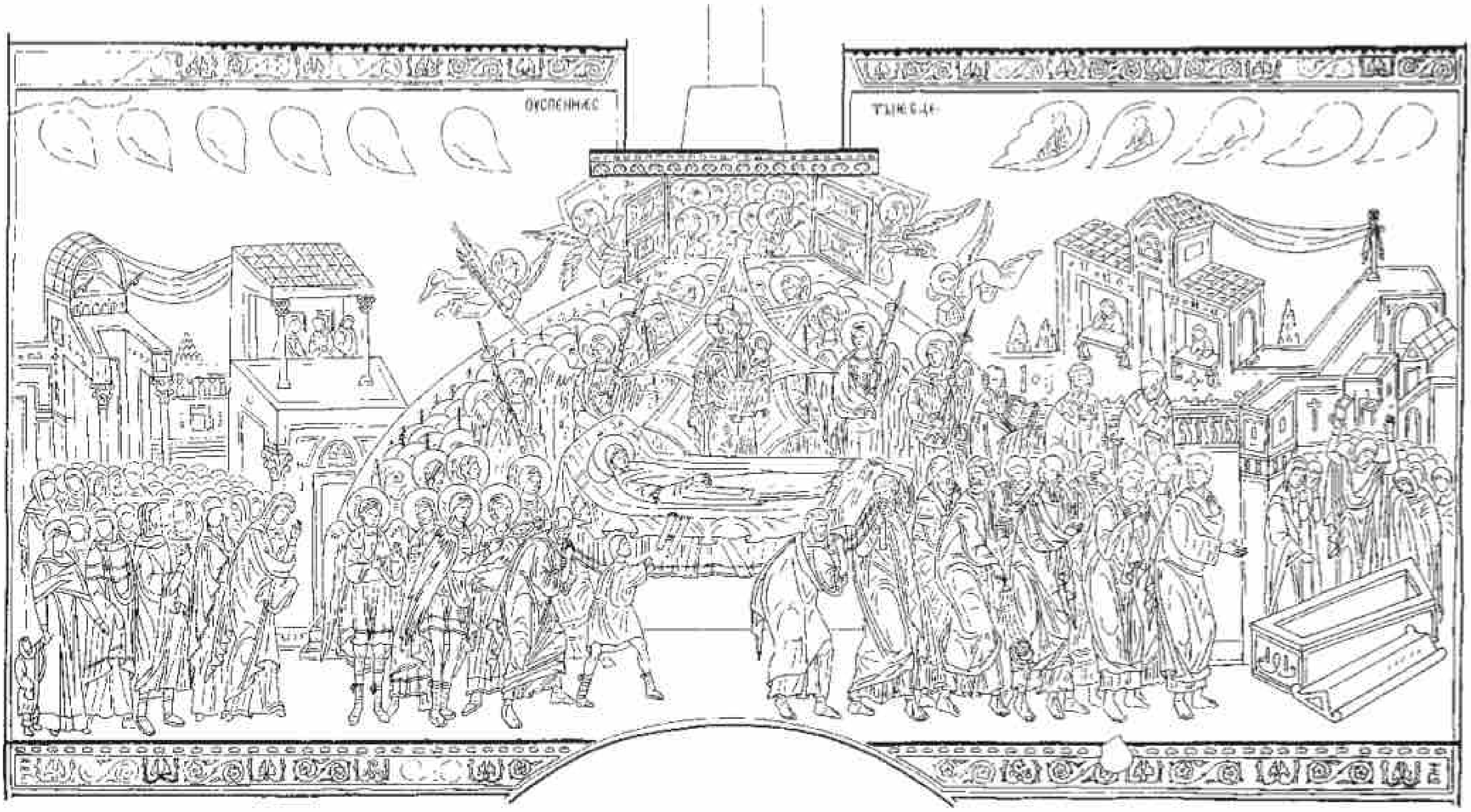
Saint Jacob of Persia, south aisle, Gračanica, 1318–1321

In a series of themes the subject-matter of which has eschatological connotations or bears a message associated with salvation, the representation of the Last Judgment in the western part of the church was customarily given the central place. At the entrance to the narthex the faithful were encountered by a complex vision of the Apocalypse—Christ, the Virgin and John the Forerunner, the apostles, the angels rolling up the heavens, sounding the trumpet and weighing souls, the lake of fire from which fish, beasts and birds on its banks are returning parts of human bodies at the last hour, the personification of the Sea and the Earth from which the dead emerge, and terrible suffering awaiting the sinful (cold, fire, worms and gnashing of teeth); on the other side is the fenced garden in Paradise with Abraham, the righteous in his lap, the Virgin and the Righteous Criminal, while the choirs of the heavenly powers and the righteous (holy women, martyrs, prophets, monks, etc.) are represented separately. The picturesque scene, primarily based on the narration of John the Theologian, had its pendant in theological literature which the artist used with endless open or implied references to the end of human life and the road of salvation which can save a man from a terrible sentence.

In the same space, in the passage leading toward the naos stand King Milutin and Queen Simonis in a scene of the ruler's investiture, wearing Byzantine imperial garb

The Wedding at Cana of Galilee, west wall of the naos, Gračanica, 1318–1321

The Wedding at Cana of Galilee, detail, Gračanica, 1318–1321



The Dormition of the Mother of God, drawing by Branislav Živković, Gračanica

The Dormition of the Mother of God, details, west wall of the naos, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Denial of the Peter the Apostle,
detail, north bay, Gračanica, 1318–1321

with angels offering them crowns. The close tie with the Constantinopolitan court is especially emphasized by the inscription next to the young queen designated as "Palaeologina, daughter of the Emperor Andronikos Palaeologos."

In a more ornate manner the divine origin of rule is stressed in the depiction of the holy dynasty of which King Milutin is a descendent. The elaborate genealogical composition of the ruling house over a century and a half on the Serbian throne repeats the imagery of Christ's family tree branching out of Jesse's root in the shape of foliage. The bottom of the Serbian rulers' tree is taken by Nemanja, while his descendants are placed in four rows above him, in tendrils. The most distinguished members of the dynasty have been selected from this lineage teeming with offspring, including, understandably, those who, following St. Sava, belong to his spiritual branch. In the vertical, direct line, kings Stefan the First-Crowned, Uroš and Milutin are represented as the most significant upholders of Nemanja's work. At the top, Christ is blessing the entire Tree with outstretched arms while angels on the lateral sides, flying, repeat the symbolic investiture, handing his regalia—the crown and the loros—to the king in power.

After several changes in the manner in which the Serbian sovereigns were painted and the emphasis on the divine origin of power invested upon them, the house of the Nemanjić in Gračanica for the first time was represented in a meticulously designed, visually clear iconographic formula. The number of its members displayed on the joint picture is considerably larger than on other compositions of this kind. In a broader aspect such a representation, understandably, was not new and it could be traced back to antiquity, from which the Tree of Jesse also originates; the Arabians and dynasties in the West were also familiar with it. However, it is not encountered in Byzantine art from which Serbia, as a rule, derived all iconographic patterns. The very position of these Nemanjić in relation to the position of the Second Coming of Christ, opposite Paradise—that "fortunate" segment of the apocalyptic vision which threatened other sinners on earth—was certainly selected by the master himself or his spiritual counselor from the ranks of the local clergy, in charge of such undertakings.

The wall decoration at Gračanica, the work of Thessalonica masters commissioned by King Milutin, concluded the maturation of painting during his reign. The numerous frescos, considerably damaged, yield no information about their painters, as was true with the frescos in several other shrines. There is no reason, however, why they should not be associated with the reputable artists Michael Astrapas and Eutychius. The frescos in Gračanica are closely aligned to their perception of art and style, the development of which can be followed on signed and dated frescos over a quarter of a century preceding Gračanica. It seems unlikely, therefore, that as early as 1319–1321, after Staro Nagoričino was completed (1317/18), entirely new artists came along, fully mature and sophisticated, who belonged to the same stylistic circle and produced works indistinguishable from those of their predecessors. These brilliant artists introduced new styles from the major Byzantine centers, while also participating creatively in their adaptation to the environment where they were engaged for many years on grand churches under obviously favorable conditions. Their work secured for them in scholarly literature the name of the "school of King Milutin's court." Their sojourn in Serbia coincided with his reign and ended in about the same month, after they had completed the last in a series of the king's portraits when he was already of an advanced age with a long, grey beard, and "seemed to have been touched by death."

Under well-protected vaults roofed with lead the fresco-paintings remained undamaged for many years and did not require renovation, as otherwise was frequently the case. There are only two frescos created at a later date, linked with events which came about in the meantime. In the southern chapel dedicated to the Mother of God Intercession (Parakklesis) under the arcosolium where the tomb was originally situated of Bishop Ignjatije who supervised construction of the church stands a depiction of the Death of the Bishop of Lipljan Teodor: over his body lying in state is a monk priest a prayer and swinging incense, accompanied by singers with pointed caps and a reader with an open book which is being read by all of them.

In close proximity, on the surface of the former entrance to the same parekklesion, young Teodor, the eldest son of the Despot Djurdje Branković (1427–1456) was painted after his death, some time before 1429. The confident-

ly and meticulously drawn portrait features and the nobility and beauty of the painted subject-matter attest to the value of the painting of this epoch, only known, in fact, in a small number of surviving works of art.

In the hardships that befell Gračanica and other monuments following the first attacks of the Turks, the original outer narthex with its entire fresco decoration was devastated, and subsequently, after its restoration, a greater part of the frescos dating from a later time were destroyed as well. Several representations have survived in it, of which the depiction of the Second Ecumenical Council and the illustration of the poem "In the grave bodily..." are especially interesting in thematic terms. The Baptism in the southern portion of the east wall, however, is the most telling example of the character of the style: of a very complex iconographic pattern, it features the troubled and wide course of the Jordan River cutting across the scene, and several episodes accompanying the event. Superbly painted and of glowing harmonies of colors, almost all the figures of the participants and the antique personifications have, unfortunately, lost their facial features, so that opinions concerning the exact date of their creation differ considerably. In all probability, they can be dated to the second quarter of the 16th century, during the time of the educated and energetic Metropolitan of Gračanica Nikanor who took an active part in spiritual life, renovated the library which had burned down, and even established a printing press in the monastery. The large icon of Christ the Merciful (139 x 269 cm) with the Ancient of Days and the apostles, offers a more direct testimony to the painting of this period, very poorly known in the Balkans. On the lower part of the frame, between the ancient sages and the prophets, the Metropolitan Nikanor commissioned his portrait, outstandingly painted in the proskynesis, with a poetically composed prayer written on a long scroll, and an angel offering him in Christ's name the Archbishop's mytra in the act of investiture.

The icon of the Mother of God, of smaller dimensions with prophets holding scrolls and the objects of their visions in their hands probably dates to the same period. Nowadays, the iconostasis of the church and its parekklesia do not contain earlier works; neither does the treasury, which must have been very rich. However, several works created at a later date have survived, of which the most significant is an icon from 1607/8 depicting the life of St. Feuronia, who rarely appears on her own with a portrait of Viktor, the Metropolitan of Novo Brdo (Gračanica) in that epoch.

The restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć stirred up the spiritual life in the state, having left a visible trace primarily in the large centers of ecclesiastical administration. At that time, the character of the Gračanica exonarthex was significantly altered by blocking up the space between the columns on its open sides, although with their light structure and the form of the vaults they had been excellently adapted to the plastic values of Milutin's temple. In the most recent conservation works it regained some of its former value, but all elements of its original appearance have not been established with certainty, neither was it possible to remove all sections subsequently added because of the fresco-paintings these later additions contain.

Newer murals which were completed in September 1570 exhibit a genuine profusion of themes and even iconographic rarities. Most of the paintings relate to the Mother of God to whom the church was dedicated: episodes from her life previously depicted in the church, scenes from the Old Testament which have the meaning of her prototype, and illustrations of the Akathistos in which she had been venerated from the 14th century. Special stress was laid on the role of the Mother of God as the mediator of mankind addressing the Son, on her own or with John the Forerunner in the developed Deisis with the apostles. In the last scene she is humbly approached by the founders, the Patriarch Makarije, the first head of the restored Serbian Church, with the Metropolitans Antonije and Dionisije. In all probability, the latter archpriest passed away some time before the work on the fresco-painting was done, so his death was depicted here. Because of the moment at which Metropolitan Dionisije died and undoubtedly because of his merits, in the depiction of his funeral dozens of spiritual and secular dignitaries have gathered in groups with their arrangement and expanse forming one of the most beautiful compositions of its kind. At the same time, with emphasis on the long tradition of the Serbian Church as confirmation of its autonomy, its heads were depicted in the lowest zone, starting from the first Archbishop, St. Sava, to the last, Patriarch Makarije, whose image has been damaged.

In comparison with painting dating from King Milutin's time, whose masters produced works which resonated with tension even in their later years, always creatively modulating their visions, the decoration of the exonarthex was duller and more schematic, evolving from extinguished artistic centers which were being brought back to life, repeating the traditional features of earlier art. Nonetheless these paintings can be counted among the fine work by masters who had, before that, left their art in the earlier shrines of Peć and Studenica.

The Sacred Land: Art of Kosovo,
New York: The Monacelli Press 1997, pp. 63–80.

Holy Warriors: Saint Eustathius and Saint Mercurius, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Gračanica, endowment of King Milutin, was built on former foundations and painted around 1320. Highly valuable frescos are preserved in the main church of the Monastery, real achievements in the style of the so-called Palaelogan Renaissance in view of the excellent drawing skill of artists, lovely movements of perfectly modeled figures and harmony of colors. As was the manner of the time, the lowest zones of the walls depict holy warriors, who with their earthly exploits and martyr death, raised themselves to ideal of Christian faith. Those heroes are presented as strong, stout, and skillful armored soldiers, archers, fighters. Saints Eustathios and Mercurius are equipped with weapons most probably used by soldiers of King Milutin in their expeditions against Byzantine troops. Swords, spears, arch and bow, shields, adorned helmets, coats of mail with short tunics on top, were usually worn by 14th century warriors. On the Gračanica frescos they move gracefully, quickly pull their swords unaware of the burden they shoulder, emanating supernatural power and heroic beauty admired by believers.

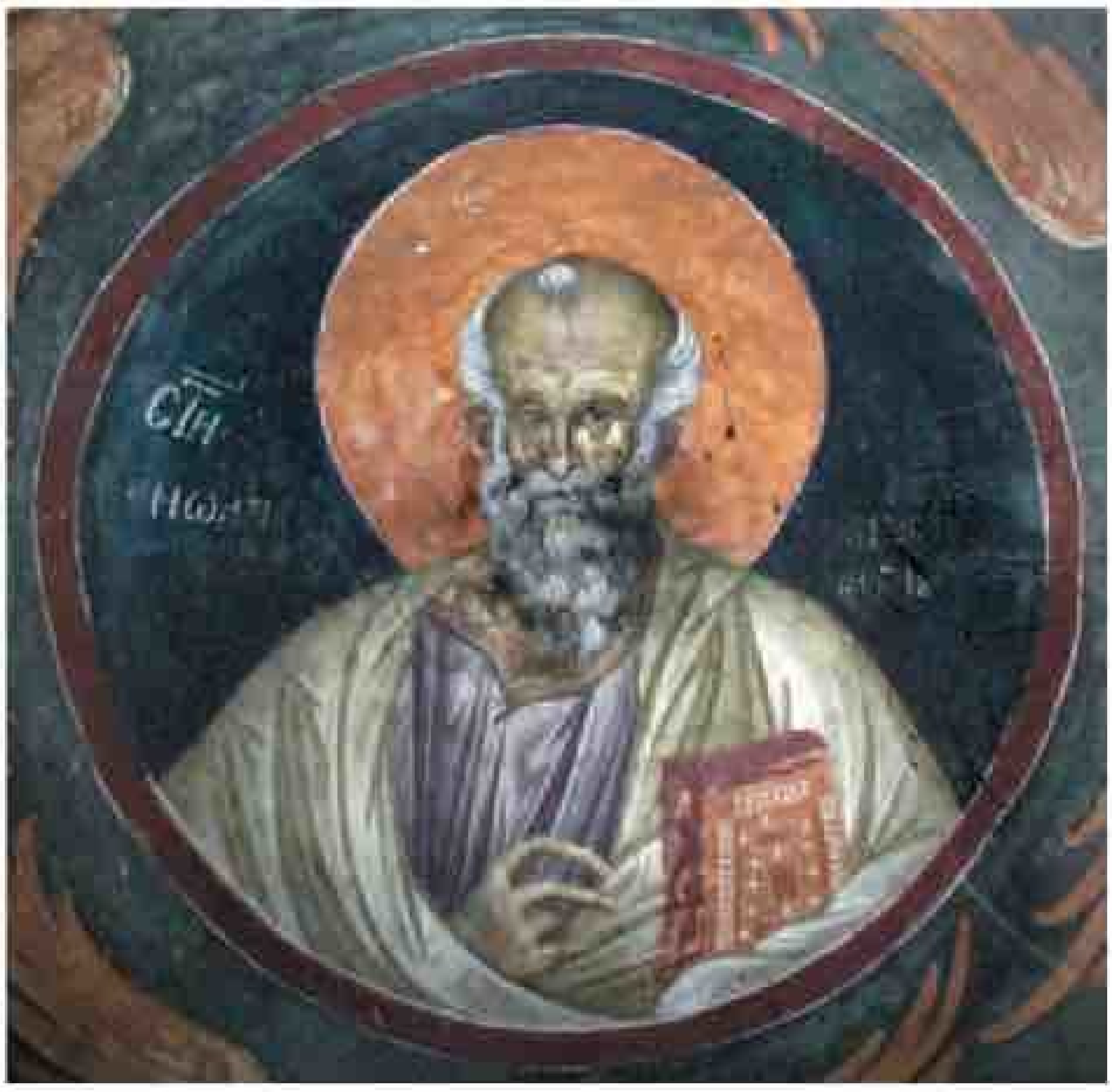
The Last Judgement, detail: Personification of the Sea, narthex, west wall, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Expulsion of the Merchants from the Temple, higher zone of the naos, west wall, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Christ Calms the Storm on the Sea of Galilee, Chapel of the Mother of God, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Saint Marko the Evangelist,
southwest pendentive, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Saint Matthew the Evangelist,
southeast pendetive, Gračanica, 1318–1321



Saint John the Evangelist,
southeast dome, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Saint Luke the Evangelist,
northeast dome, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Saint Sava of Serbia and Holy Emperors Constantine and Helena, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Saint Cosmas the Hymnographer and Saint John of Damascus, Chapel of the Mother of God, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Be like a child and you shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, detail, Chapel of Mother of God, Gračanica, 1318-1321

The Lamentation of Christ, south wall of the naos, Gračanica, 1318–1321

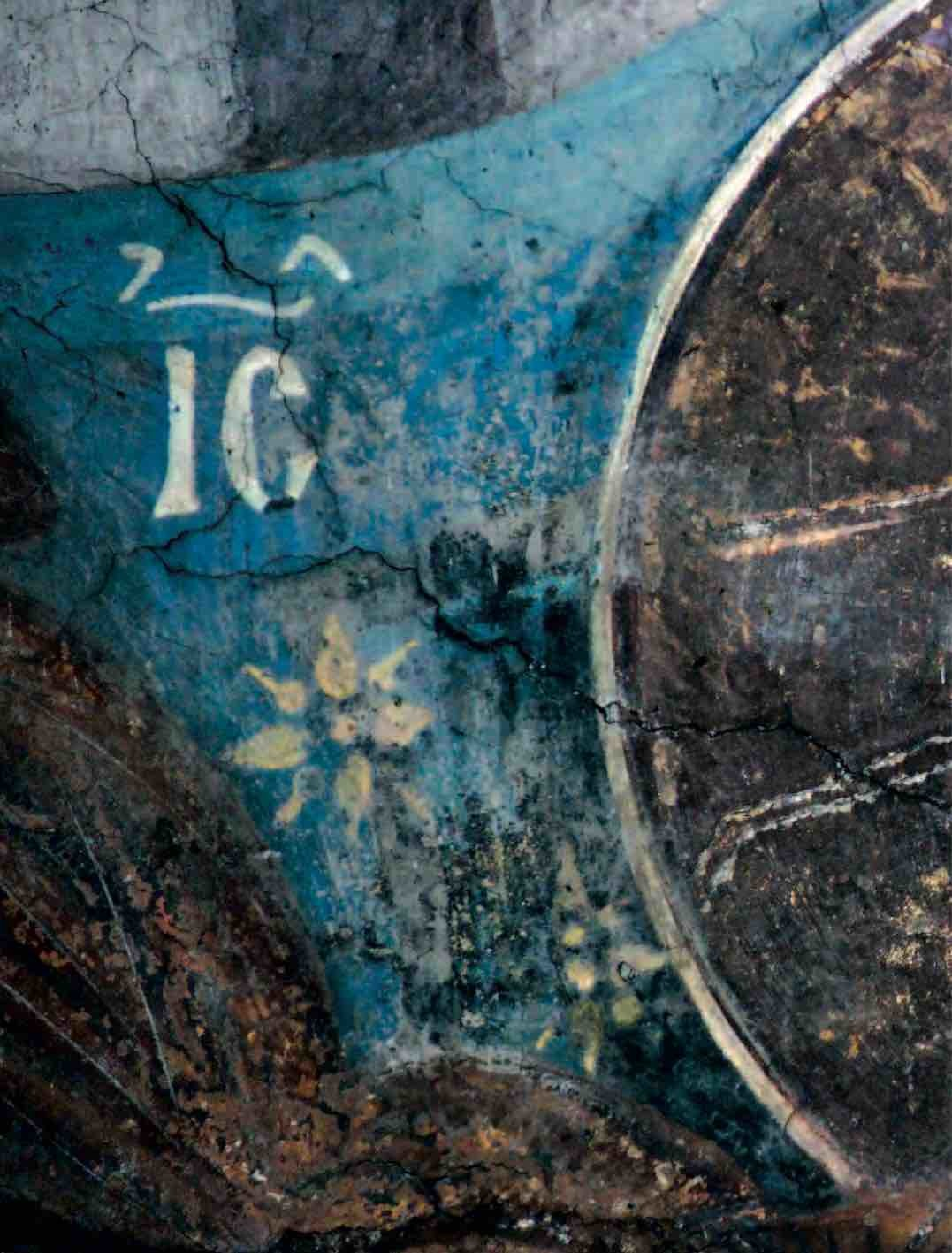
Descent into Hades (Resurrection of Christ),
east wall of the naos, Gračanica, 1318–1321

The frescos in Gračanica are the culmination of the artistic tendencies that evolved in the leading painting workshops at the time of King Milutin. The wall painting of Gračanica impresses one by the sheer volume of its themes and by its artistic qualities. Several painters that worked on it had a difficult task to adapt a dozen of extensive themes to the complex internal architecture of the church. Such themes include the cycle of the Great Feasts, the cycle of the Passion of Christ, the cycle of events after the Resurrection and the cycle of Christ's public ministry, the scenes from the life of the Virgin, a series of symbols of the Virgin, scenes from the Life of St. Nicholas, the Menologion, the Last Judgment and many portraits, among which the portraits of the members of Nemanjić family. The highly cultured artists painted from life. The best among them, a representative of the climax of the artistic evolution at the time of Milutin, achieved an ease of expression that none of his contemporaries could match. What had previously been only a suggestion of the new style achieved its perfect form in Gračanica. The innovative character of the Gračanica painting style extended beyond the first decade of the fourteenth century.

The paintings of two masters, Michael and Eutychios, these already established artists, first appeared towards the end of the 13th century in the Church of the Mother of God Peribleptos in Ohrid (1295), painted in transitional style. About a decade later, the two artists began to work for the Serbian king. By that time, they were under the strong influence of the Constantinople style of the Palaeologan Renaissance and created some of their best works in this style. The two artists are exceptionally experienced painters in the layout of the painted themes and in the artistry of paintings.—B. Todić.

Ressurectional Appearances of Christ: The Appearance of Christ to Luke and Cleopas on the way to Emmaus, the Supper at Emmaus and Luke and Cleopas inform other Apostles about Appearance of Christ, south and north bay of the naos, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Next pages: **Descent into Hades (Resurrection of Christ),** detail, east wall of the naos, Gračanica, 1318–1321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Unique Characteristics of Gračanica's Icon of the Pantocrator

Fr. Stamatis Skliris

From time immemorial, through the sprawling labyrinths of time, over the misty highlands of earth, across the vast expanses of space, through grandiose reflections of things past and future—likely and unlikely outcomes, murky speculations, cavernous fantasies, and foggy uncertainties of what exists, existed, will exist, or did not exist, or what is decreasing or increasing, or what is being conceived, or what is latently inconceivable—all races, all genders, all human societies, and every person individually who has wanted to be unique, who has wanted to be god, every single one of them has contributed to painting a portrait of God. Both the believer and the unbeliever, both the primitive and the civilized have—consciously or inadvertently—chiseled the ineffable, molded the uncreated, sketched the unseen and insoluble riddle of the Person of the Most High, the Immeasurable One, Who is Everywhere and Nowhere, the Conjectured, the Intangible, Incorporeal Being that some pray is the "really Real" [ο όντως Ὤν], the One Who is hidden behind what is seen, the External and Infinite of what is real, and the internal of hearts.

It does not matter what they call Him or Her or It (God? Deity? Divinity?). It does not even matter if they want it or not. What matters is the fact that everyone lives and acts believing in something "other," waiting for something "other," loving and attributing special value to something "other." It almost seems as if they cannot live or act or do something themselves without belief and faith in something, without the love of something, without the expectation that something is coming. And every time they do something, make something, assume something, or dream something, it is as if they were attempting to reify the Hidden Intangible. In spite of its Intangible Essence, they attempt to express it with something tangible. Even when three people are working together to kill or rob a fourth person, they actually believe in love, which is precisely what they are going to murder. They believe and they love, because without elementary cooperation nothing can be done. So that which we are calling something like love is a fundamental presupposition of being. When those three are working together, each believes that the other will do that which he has promised to do. So faith is also a fundamental presupposition of being. Therefore, every act of love, cooperation, acceptance, trust, and faith is like etching the portrait of this *sine qua non*, of that which is without form. All of us are trying to sketch this, to depict that which is theoretical and inexpressible, to give shape to the amorphous. It is in the crux of this battle between man and his fate that the so-called arts lie. And, in an enigmatic way, the arts somehow manage to speak to the fundamental issue of ineffability. Different people, different cultures, and individual artists have contributed something to this ecumenical portrait that never stops being woven artistically throughout time.

Christianity has also participated in this perpetual effort with the image of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the God-Man. The culmination of this figurative expression of the God-Man is the mural painted at a church's highest point, in the dome. If we trace the historical development of the iconographic subject of the Pantocrator, the Almighty, we see that it began with the depiction of the Ascension, which marks the Apostles' last experience with Christ is Galilee, where He left them His final counsels, where they received the message of His Second Coming and Judgment, and where He was borne into heaven by angels. The upper tier of the composition of the image of the Ascension was the core for the Pantocrator, Who is surrounded by airborne angels. This icon depicts a powerful risen eschatological Christ and not the humble historical Jesus who lived among humans as an equal. As He told His disciples after the Resurrection, He was given all authority in heaven and on earth. The word *Pantocrator* (as might be misunderstood in modern Greek) does not mean that He holds everything in His hands. From the ancient Greek word *κράτος* meaning power, we understand that the Pantocrator is the One who holds all power and authority. It is, in other words, the iconographic representation of the Lord's words that "all power on heaven and earth has been given to me." The Church's Pantocrator, however, is characterized by two contradictory concepts. He has power, but He also leans down to human beings with love.

Byzantium's 14th century made its own contribution to this iconographic theme within the framework of the so-called Second Byzantine Humanism which was expressed in painting mainly by the anonymous painter of Sopoćani, by Michael and Eutychius Astrapas, and by Manuel Pan-

Christ Pantocrator from Gračanica, replica from the National Museum, Belgrade

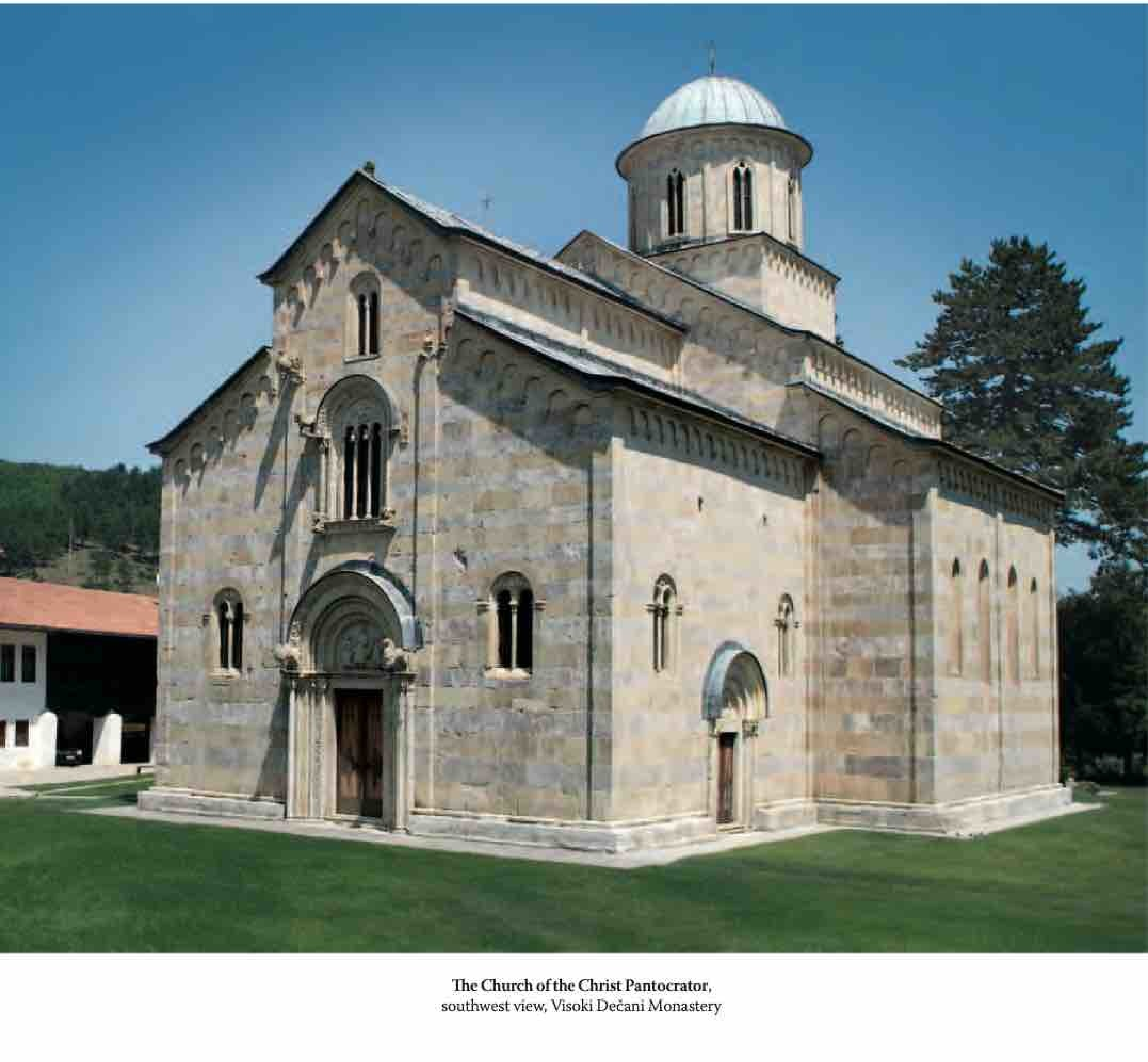
selinos. They all somehow avoided the severe side of the issue and painted Christ with a beautiful face that expressed sympathy for human beings, with that which the Fathers of the Church called, theologically, "kenosis," i.e., the emptying of the divine majesty and condescension to human humiliation. In this school we should also include Astrapas' anonymous students, who did the iconography at Gračanica. They added, however, a detail that differentiates it from the other work of the time.

They painted a beautiful, robust Pantocrator, combining humanity and divine glory. But the look in His eyes has something special, which deserves special mention. The Pantocrator's eyebrows are emphatically raised, so that Christ's eyes are particularly focused on the believer, who converses in prayer with the God-Man. His raised eyebrows draw the facial muscles upward and create horizontal wrinkles which furrow the forehead. He "leans" over the viewer. He pays special attention to that person, not passing him over indifferently, but looking at him with wide-open eyes that raise the upper eyelids, wrinkling the forehead of the God-Man as if He loves man so deeply that He suffers with him, considering his plight, desiring to support him, to help him. Here we have the central idea and theological reality that characterizes the Astrapas school—God's humanity. Gračanica's uniqueness lies in the fact that the so-called Pantocrator, which inspires liturgical awe, is depicted not just as the God-Man—i.e., God who assumed human nature—but as Co-Man, identifying Himself with man in his suffering and helplessness, identifying Himself with human pain through His suffering on the Cross and His humiliating death. Through His philanthropic gaze, the majestic Pantocrator lowers Himself and meets His creation. The eternal and infinite meets the finite in a particular place and time, within history, where they reconcile within the same fate.

This composition, with its wrinkles in the forehead, was not repeated in other Byzantine churches, perhaps because its boldness brought it to the threshold of the psychologization of the divine drama. The drama of the Cross is not confined to the human emotions of pain and torment, but within the Church's liturgy is illuminated by the overcoming of tragedy by the Resurrection of Christ, who thus becomes the Savior of both man and all creation. Gračanica's Pantocrator is, therefore, truly unique, since it was not copied from anyone. It is original and loving, and for this reason it constitutes a portrait of God, as Christ's wonderfully loving eyes have revealed it to human beings. The riddle of human destiny finds its solution in the Pantocrator's theandric gaze.

Translated from the Greek
by Fr. Gregory Edwards

Icon of Christ Pantocrator from Gračanica,
egg-tempera on wood, painted by sister Magdalina, 2000



The Church of the Christ Pantocrator, southwest view, Visoki Dečani Monastery

Visoki Dečani
UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Gojko Subotić

In 2004, UNESCO listed the monastery of Visoki Dečani on the World Heritage List, citing its frescos as "one of the most valued examples of the so-called Palaeologan renaissance in Byzantine painting" and "a valuable record of the life in the 14th century." This Monastery, the first cultural monument on the territory of Kosovo and Metohija Province to be inscribed in the list of UNESCO World Heritage, has long been known as one of the architecturally most interesting and best preserved Serbian medieval churches in which traditions of Romanesque architecture meet artistic patterns of the Byzantine world. The most recent photographing of the entire fresco-painting of Dečani Monastery has revealed a beauty of fresco painting which has so far largely remained unnoticed in academic and iconographic circles.

A*T THE VERY* end of his life, King Milutin allowed his elder son Stefan—who, after rising up against his father and being blinded, lived in exile with his family in Pantocrator Monastery in Constantinople—to return home to his country. Even though before this he had borne the title of young king (heir to the throne), Stefan had not received a place in the scene of the Family Tree in Gračanica Monastery, painted, judging by available facts' shortly before this. In the unrest resulting from the death of Milutin, however, Stefan, aided by some of the landowners and rumors of a miraculous return of his sight, succeeded in seizing the throne. These events have also left a direct trace on the shrines that he built. In Banja near Priboj where due to ill health he resided from time to time for its medicinal waters, a church was dedicated to Saint Nicholas, to whose aid his cure was attributed; and in Metohija, south of Peć, he undertook the building of Dečani which he dedicated in remembrance of the years of banishment, to Christ the Pantocrator. In gratitude the King also richly endowed the famous Holy Site in the capital city of Byzantium.

The excellent location of Dečani Monastery near a river with wooded hillsides on one side, a gorge cut into the mountain behind and fertile land before it, was already described with rapture by Grigorije Camblak, a gifted writer and head of a brotherhood, at the beginning of the 15th century in his *Life of Stefan Dečanski*.

Most of the information, however, on the construction of this great endowment is found in the founding charter itself. Its first, original version—officially written on a roll of parchment over five meters in length with the ruler's signature in red ink and a seal of gold—in cultured language, presents the motives which moved the benefactor to undertake this work, emphasizes his royal birth and in a special, moving way describes the unfortunate misunderstanding between father and son.

The document furthermore calls to mind the King's great donation to the monastery in expensive items, and the lists the numerous lands and the people on them by name, which, alongside the estates of Hilandar Monastery, made up the greatest landholding of this type in medieval Serbia. All of this, one learns from this Act, was ratified at an assembly which met most likely at the palace in Nerodimlja where the Charter was written. Some time before this, it is also noted, while the Document was being put together, the country was attacked by Bulgarian Emperor Mihailo; at the battle on Velbužd on July 28, 1330, he was defeated and also lost his life. The result of this great battle in which young King Stefan Dušan proved himself, permanently affected a change in relations with the neighbor to the East.

The detailed Charter of Dečani—also preserved in other versions allowing the life of the monastery and its large land holdings and changes to be subsequently followed—includes excellent topographical and onomastical material of 14,000 names; and also offers, rare for an act of this kind, information on the state of building project and the experts who took part in them. Thus the overview of estates verifies the village of Manastirica, granted already by King Milutin to Protomaster Djordje with his brothers Dobroslav and Nikola "for their work in the adornment of many churches throughout all the Serbian lands." It adds furthermore that in the "home of the Pantocrator"—as the entire monastery is called here—they built a refectory and a great tower over the entrance gate, and in the "city" (the monastery complex is surely meant) and "around the church" (on buildings no longer extant today) they also carried out many other jobs. The refectory, thus, was finished before the great church, whose construction—the charter mentions—was underway when the conflict with the Bulgarian Emperor broke out; and at the same time certainly, the ramparts were built which provided solid protection for the complex in the valley.

The refectory, whose primary appearance is, fortunately, known to us, and the tower with an open area facing the interior through which even today one enters the monastery, bear witness that the builders—as their name also suggest—were born there and raised on the local tradition. The refectory, as is often the custom, was situated west on the church, its placement adapted to following the outside walls. In later centuries, however, its appearance changed numerous time. A primary room with tables for monastic meals and a wide semi-circular apse with the abbot's table occupy the larger, northeastern part of the building; in front of this, in the center, was a so-called *mutvak*, a kitchen with heart—similar even today to the preserved examples on Mount Athos—with a vaulted structure and raised chimney which became narrower by degrees. The onetime character of the other, western wing of the refectory, as well as its appearance in its entirety could reasonably be reconstructed, so a few years ago it was rebuilt. On the exterior, shallow pilasters along the walls separated the even areas of the façade into fields, but it appears they were without relief decorations. Masterbuilder Djordje and his brothers, judging what is by known, were given jobs which did not require special stone cutting experience.

The construction of the great church was entrusted to builders from the coast, led by master builder Vita of the Franciscan Order, who after the work was completed left an inscription over the southern entrance: *Fr. Vita, Friars Minor, from Cattaro (Kotor), city of kings, built this church of the Holy Pantocrator, for Lord King Stefan Uroš the Third and his son, the eminent and all-great and all glorious Lord King Stefan. Built in eight years. And the church is finally completed in the year 6843.*

According to the Byzantine manner of reckoning time, this would be between 1 September 1334 and 31 August 1335. As the construction season ended in autumn and not in the summer, it is natural to assume that the inscription was engraved in 1334. The work on building the church which lasted for eight years began most likely in 1327 and was continued and completed during the time of King Stefan Dušan (1331–1355).

In his inscription Fr. Vita mentions both benefactors of the great church, but alongside Dušan's name lists appellations which unpresumptuously but clearly express changes at the head of the country—as a faithful subject the Master builder from Cattaro paid special respect to the King who had in the interim taken reign. Behind all of this lies hidden the deeper tragedy of the first ruler who, because of his great endowment remained the most in memory and even received the name: Stefan Dečanski, whose eyesight was taken in his youth, who was imprisoned in Zvečan, and afterwards put to death in circumstances yet unclear. This most unfortunate member of the Nemanjić, however, received a special place as a martyr in the cult, particularly in his own monastery, and for centuries would be glorified in literature and rendition.

The decision of its founder to be buried in the monastery decisively influenced the character of this greatest memorial of Serbian medieval architecture, as it did in Banjska. That understood taking into account the Church of the Theotokos in Studenica Monastery to where the bodily remains of the founder of the dynasty, Stefan Nemanja, were transferred and interred; and expressed itself in its own way in the iconography scheme distinctive for shrines of the Raška school and, especially, in the exterior adaptations in the spirit of western architecture.

The church in Dečani, of enormous dimensions—36 meters long, 29 meters wide and high—is a basilica with 5 naves, a dome of a rectangular bed and a narthex with 3 naves. In the interior, the central part with a wide and spacious area was divided by massive columns of intricate profiles, with tall arches supporting the dome. On the eastern side, spanning the width of the appropriate naves, is a monumental altar area with semi-circular apses—a large one behind the altar table and lesser ones on the sides. Opposite the prothesis, open by means of an arch of great dimension toward the center and altar table, the diaconicon is totally separated by a full wall with a low entrance in order to house the monastery treasury in safety.

The end naves of the naos make up chapels dedicated to Saint Demetrius on the north, and Saint Nicholas on the south side, with separate altar areas, apses and iconostases. By their placement and function they have repeated the role of side chapels which at one time, in the Raška school, were built separately. Here they are separated from the central part of the unique basilican area only by colonnades and marble columns connected by arches.

Signature of Stefan Dečanski on the Founding Charter of Dečani Monastery, 1330

Holy King Stefan Dečanski, fresco in the naos, adjacent to the iconostasis. The King's reliquary coffin was originally placed below this fresco, ca. 1343

From the exterior the three central naves are brought under a common, tow-sloped roofing, while the ones at the end have their own sloped roofs. In that way, the main part of the church, with hidden differences in height, gives an impression of a wide building with three naves. The central naves are also visible from the outside, over the eastern part and the narthex, raised in relation to those on the sides so that each of them has a special roof structure.

The spacious interior of the narthex is separated by four slender columns into sections. From the exterior it repeats the appearance of the eastern, somewhat lower, part of the church by means of which a definite balance is achieved in the interrelation of the architectural masses. On the other hand, the central part of the church—the highest and, at the same time, widest retreats by degree in elevation to its focal point and over the cubic bed ends with a dome with circular drum. Even though of massive dimensions, the entirety is thus to a certain extent divided and lightened.

In the well-lit interior, the lucidity of the area whose size is strongly experienced especially in the area under the dome, is kept in the heights. At the height of the faithful, however, the single space of the basilican area, characteristic for western architecture, is partitioned by parapetic blocks which have adapted it not only to the Orthodox ritual but also to the tradition of Raška architecture. That is to say, railings have partitioned the central nave of the church with its field under the dome and the sections of the neighboring naves on the north and south side, which agrees with the layout of Raška structures (with one nave, a dome and transepts for singers). This type of appearance in the 14th century was also repeated in Banjska as we have seen, due to its purpose as a mausoleum.

The building language of the masters of Dečani, led by Fr. Vita, reveals a high aptitude for stone cutting, fostered in Cattaro, which from the end of the 12th century was not only a center of special importance for the economic life of the Serbian state, but also a valuable connection with the cultures of other regions, especially Italy. Special regal privileges which Cattaro enjoyed within its borders prompted the builder of "the church of the Pantocrator" to call it in his inscription the "city of kings."

By its entire appearance and relationship, the great church of Dečani above all reminds one of the monumental cathedrals built in the spirit of mature Romanesque in the cities of the Adriatic region, but a number of its forms and structural solutions are distinctive of the Gothic style: excepting the prothesis and diaconicon which have been semi-formed, the entire complex has ribbed vaultings and end side naves, in keeping with the lower and lesser and their double in number sections.

As with other shrines of this region, the church of Dečani is roofed with lead plating which most securely protected the interior from moisture and precipitation in the long winter months. They are not, however, in the tradition of Byzantine construction—arranged directly over the vaultings, whose form they repeated—but rather over a wood construction which, as in Gothic monuments, could hide the true height or character of a section.

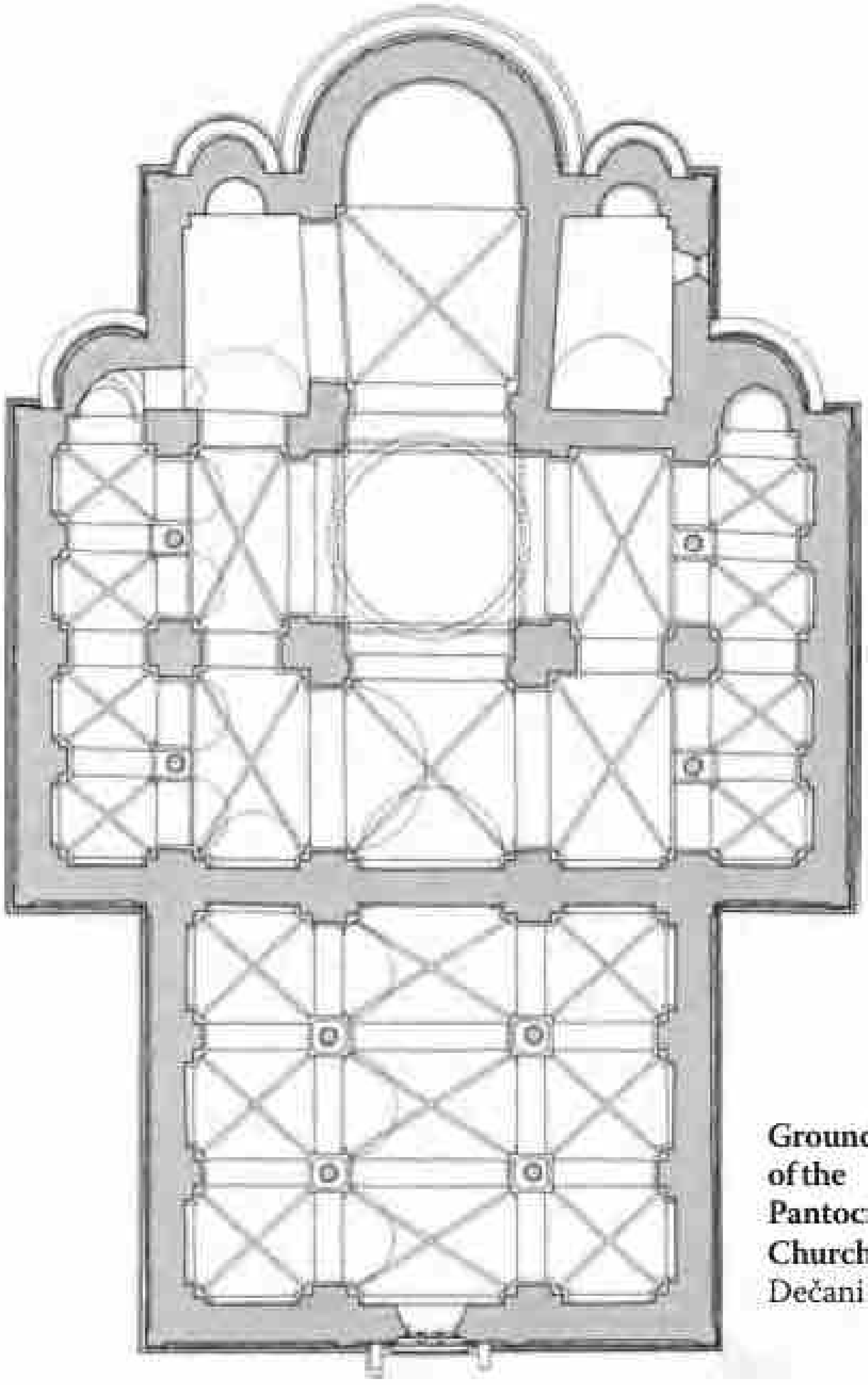
Panoramic view of Dečani Monastery, 1930

Certain damaged areas of painted decoration also allow the method of construction to be examined in the interior. The vaultings are made with bricks, as were the ribbings which in some places have parts of crystalline calcium carbonate, while the arches are regularly made by altering these materials. The walls themselves are, on the other hand, built with straight-cut or only chiselled blocks of stone, mortar and rows of bricks, so that during the three to four years—at least as long as the fresco painters had to wait to allow the building to settle—the interior appeared colorful. After the completion of masonry work, the church was consecrated according to tradition, and thus divine services were conducted in it without wall paintings.

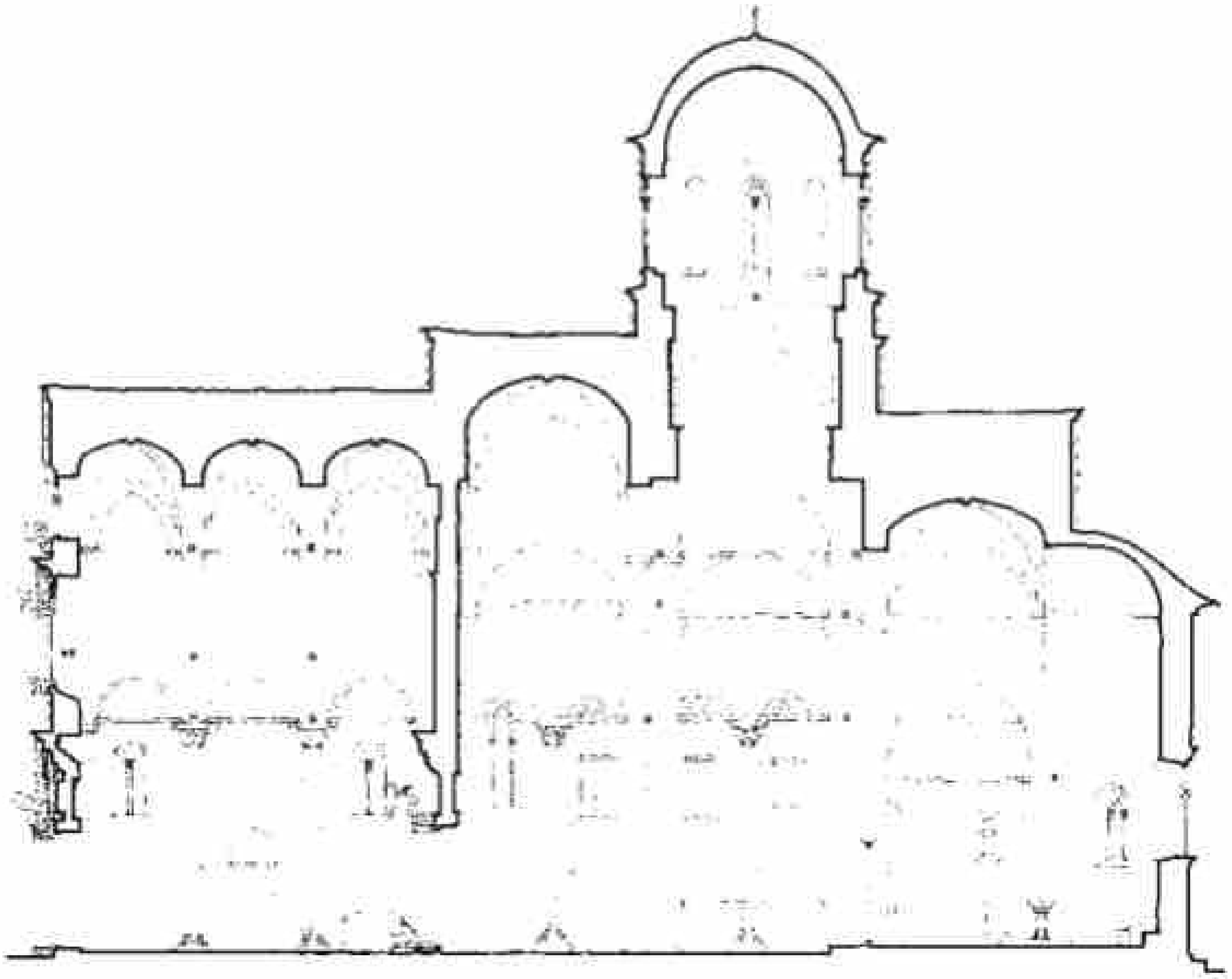
The exterior face of the building is built of rows of perfectly cut golden-white and red quader. Here also Grigorije Camblak, describing the beauty of Dečani, expressed wonder at the skill with which its façade was cut and all *fitted together... so that it appears that the entire face of this church is one stone, so miraculously combined with skill that it is as though it has grown into one... thus appearing in unutterable beauty*.

The great smooth façade is framed with shallow lezens, and completed beneath the roof by a row of small, blind arcades resting on relief-inscribed consoles. Their clean planes have only openings, spaced in a measured and logical rhythm. On all sides of the narthex the only entrances into the church are marble portals, and alongside them, as well as on the areas of the naos and the altar area, single and double windows with semi-circular or interrupted arches and characteristic Gothic profiles. Of large dimensions and well placed, all the openings are enough of a source of light for the interior; in the central area of the naos, light comes in through the dome, and from the western and eastern ends—over the great portal and on the apse of the sanctuary—through wide three-light mullioned windows.

View of the eastern part and the Iconostasis of the Pantocrator Church, Dečani



Ground plan of the Pantocrator Church, Dečani



Longitudinal section through the Pantocrator Church, Dečani

The fundamental idea of the area, the exterior appearance, structural elements, relief designs and the building material itself moved researchers to look for an analogy among churches, on the Adriatic coast and in Italy, but also in Serbia itself, where masters of western building culture left their works.

The similarity of the endowment Dečani to some five-naved churches in the West has long been noticed, especially to Portonuovo near Ancona. The spatial organization, however, particularly in the upper zones, is quite different. It appears that there were certain similarities with the earlier Cathedral of Dubrovnik, which is poorly known, a three-nave basilica with a dome, damaged in the great earthquake of 1667. On the other hand, comparison to the layout of Saint Stephen's in Banjska shows in essence not only the same order or area elements, but also literal repetition of their forms and measures. At first sight, this is not obvious because on the older church all forms are clear, defined by full walls, while in the younger thus only marked by parapet slabs—i. e., in Dečani Monastery in the upper levels of the main naves they are immersed within the unique basilical area. The plans of the two churches when placed one over the other, assuredly show an unusual similarity, and so it is possible that at least one of the masters took part in the construction of both of these churches.

No less interesting is the similarity with the Cathedral of Saint Tryphon in Cattaro, for which, in consideration of the origins of the builder of Dečani, should first be considered as serving as an example. Fr. Vita, however, remembered a somewhat different appearance of the church. Certain parts of it had to be changed after a number of quakes hit not only the region of Dubrovnik but also of Cattaro. Valuable information is therefore offered by recent excavations of its foundations where, in the northern nave, parts of walls and supports were found whose order and mutual relationships in great measure match those of Dečani. This is not a question, it should be understood, of the limited experience of local builders, but rather the respect for an example and the fostering of a defined method of work. This is confirmed also by the fact that the width of Dečani and main church of Cattaro are almost identical, even up to the number of units of measure which the masters made use of in planning.

Further research into the origins of certain structural elements, e. g., the vaultings with ribbings of brick, point to Lombardy from which they could expand to the southern parts of the Apennine Peninsula and the eastern Adriatic coast. Besides others, Dečani with its façade also reminds one of the churches of northern Italy, and especially of those of Tuscany built of interchanging rows of red and white cut stone.

Of special interest for the knowledge of builders' conditions is the person of master builder Vita himself, a member of the order of Friars Minor, who, according to the order of the Monarch, here entirely appropriate to the ritual need of the Orthodox flock, left a work of beauty. The efforts of experts to recognize Fr. Vita among the citizens of Cattaro of that time have offered certain, if probably not

conclusive, results. In the city archives in much of the plentiful material which dates from exactly the time when Dečani was being built, one person of this name is often mentioned. His activity is well-known—he was a priest in the Franciscan church of Saint Mary and guardian of the well-known Monastery of Saint Francis nearby, which was, according to tradition, built by Queen Helen, wife of Uroš I, outside the city walls (*extra muros*). There is not, however, any factual information which would bear witness that the Vita mentioned, a proven member of the Franciscan community, was also a builder.

Indirect witness to the extent of the engagement of masters from Cattaro in the construction of Dečani Monastery is given by documents of the period. This city, which had many stonecutters, was left without them during the construction season: in its notary books they are mentioned only in the winter months when they returned from the great construction sites in the interior of the country and took care of the jobs awaiting them at home.

The artists also brought to the façade of the "Church of the Pantocrator" experience which they gathered cutting relief decorations in their home regions. Portals and windows with their profiles and reliefs broke up the peaceful outer surfaces, and with a specialized artistic language added to the design which, in any case, richly interpreted the wall-paintings in the interior. Sculpturing in the southern regions of the Adriatic basin was different from the developed and especially rich complexes in the West in the extent of scenes and personages. Iconographically more humble and simple, the compositions in Dečani were limited mostly by the lunettes of the portals and windows. On the archivolts and frames of the entrances, the consoles and capitals, however, a world of mythological creatures and symbols lived, illustrating for the faithful in its own way beliefs, warnings and promises of protection.

On the festive western portal, in a semi-circular field, Christ is on a throne with lions and beside him are angels, iconographically unusual—on his left one praying with folded arms, and the one on the right blowing a trumpet. The figure of the patron himself, traditionally over the main entrance into the church, is not, however, named by an inscription which would iconographically more definitely determine him. In harmony with the Apocalypse, not only on the cutfronts of western cathedrals but also on the painted surfaces of Byzantine churches, custom showed angels blowing trumpets as one of the basic iconographical motifs of the Last Judgment. With reason therefore, experts have seen in the relief of Dečani the central part of the eschatological vision of Saint John the Theologian. On the other hand, the church of Christ the Pantocrator celebrated the Day of His Ascension into Heaven where, along with others, he was awaited by angels with trumpets. Thematically, the design of the portal, as well as other decorated surfaces, must have been established in agreement with spiritual counselors, first of all with Archbishop Danilo II, who had a great part in the building and decoration of Dečani; the iconography of this relief itself was the work of a local artist from Cattaro.

The strong and rough lined, thickset figures of Christ and the angels are models in the tradition of Romanesque relief on the Coast, but the drapery of Christ's cloak finishes with broken lines characteristic of Gothic; pointing also to this are the trefoil arches at the foot of Christ's throne, whose contour is also seen at the ends of some two-light mullioned windows.

The presence side by side of two styles, in a special local symbiosis here also marked the life both of sculpting and of architecture, noticeable on the eastern shore of the Adriatic as well as on the Apennine Peninsula. Totally in the Romanesque spirit there were also vines on the archivolts and door frames intertwined with scenes of centaurs, horseback riders with spears, lions, dragons, warriors with Phrygian headwear, a wolf with a lamb in its jaws, cherubim, birds which are biting grapes, et al. Many of them, together with the figures on the consoles, by themselves or fighting amongst themselves, personified the forces of good and evil. Great in number, these representations had an apotropeic meaning known to people of the Middle Ages, and in Serbia are found already in Studenica Monastery in the 12th century; near the openings of doors and windows they protected the interior of the church. It is, however, difficult

Capitel of the column in the narthex, detail: griffin, Dečani

South portal of the Church of Christ Pantocrator, with inscription of master builder Fra Vita from Kotor (Cattaro) on the lintel

Three-light altar apse window,
Church of Christ Pantocrator, Dečani

to determine a sense of the entire decoration, and efforts at foretelling certain meanings and solving messages in all these representations in the belief of respected authorities of iconography and literary sources, are doomed to failure.

The southern, lesser portal has in a lunette a relief of the Baptism, connected with the appropriate rites on this side. The composition itself, both iconographically and artistically concentrated only on the main participants makes a true apposition to the representations on this theme in the wall-paintings, with a great number of figures, details and dynamic action.

On the northern side, the field above the entrance is filled with a geometrical carefully carved and balanced cross and full-leaved branches, with a vine rising from its step-like base. In exactly this shape it is, almost regularly, painted on the sides of entrances, where it blocked the entrance of evil powers in the interior of a church. At the same time, it also expressed hope in resurrection, for which reason it was carved on the upper sides of the stone tombs, for instance, of the heads of the Serbian Church who lie at rest in Peć.

In the interior, better protected under the roof, the reliefs on the portal in front of the naos have preserved, among other things, excellent figures of griffins and lions on the upper consoles, with a sharply-cut motif of an acanthus on the archivolts, and at the base a strong lion's body on which free-standing columns rest. Both one and the other, the personification of evil, hold in their claws animal and human heads.

A special place in the entire relief decoration is taken by excellently proportioned Romanesque three-light windows, with narrow mullions, richly sculpted archivolts, and frames alongside which were free-standing columns and consoles. On the western façade, in the lunette of the three-part window, scene of Saint George killing the dragon is brought into direct connection with the vow which Stefan Dečanski himself gave to this Holy Warrior, calling upon his aid before going into battle of Velbužd. The appropriate opening on the eastern side, in the main apse, has, however, almost the exact likeness as that in the Church of the Theotokos in Studenica. It has already been said that this three-light mullioned windows was an example for the stonecutters when they worked on the reliefs on the façade on the later mausoleum-type church in Banjska where it found its replica. The sources themselves, in all truth, do not mention that the benefactor of Dečani also attempted to follow the pattern of Nemanja's endowment, but the coincidence with its representative window confirms that also on this occasion the stonecutter remembered the church in Studenica and repeated certain of its forms.

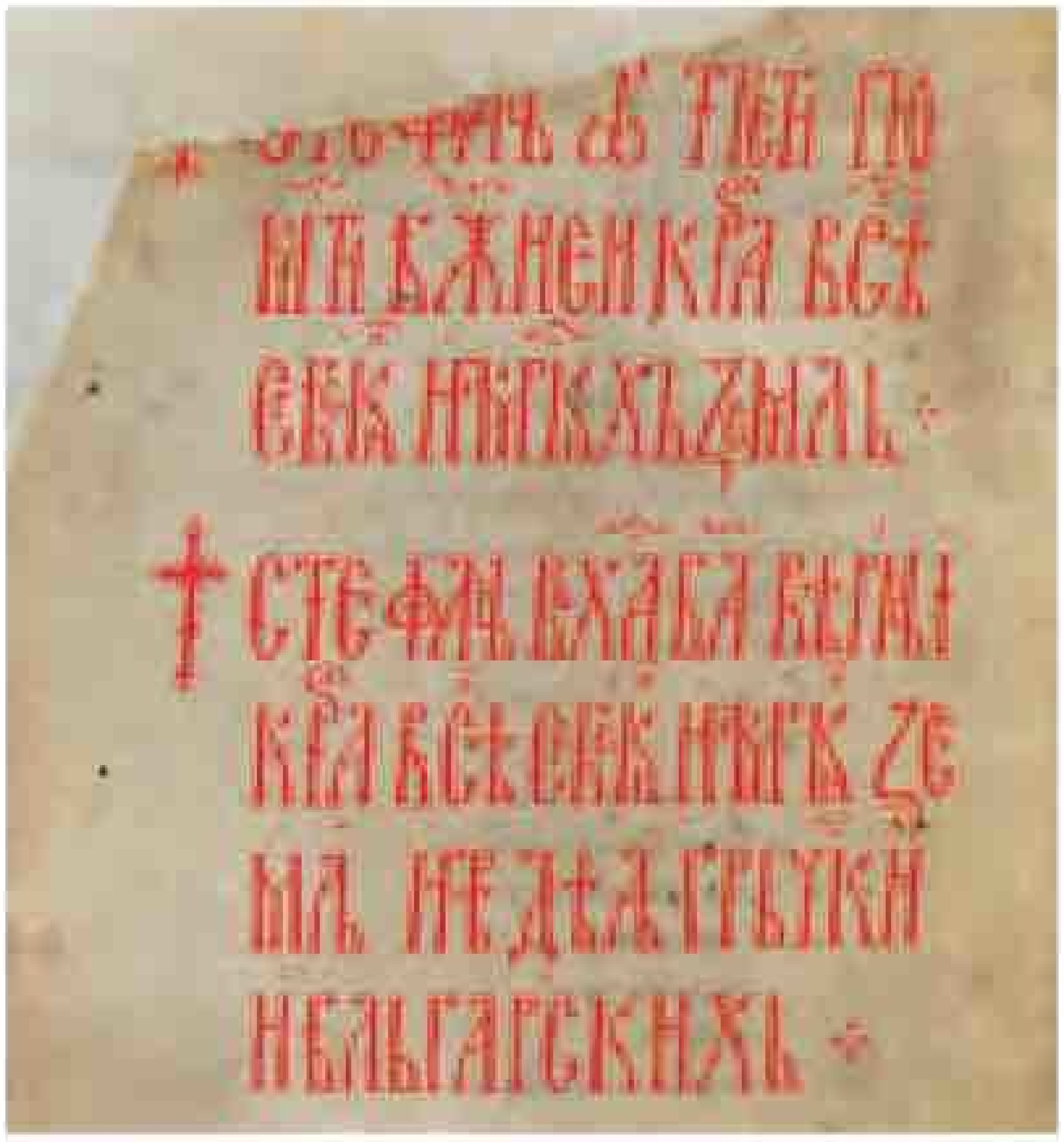
At the same time, the interior has a marble iconostasis with relief decorations and a throne on which—the founding Charter expressly warns—only the King had the right to sit. Also, carefully fashioned marble sarcophagi under which lie the bodies of Stefan Dečanski and his wife Maria Palaeologina in the southwestern part of the naos belong to the same cycle. Sometime later, after rumors of miracles which occurred at the grave and the proclamation of his sainthood, most probably in 1343, the relics of the benefactor were moved to a pre-prepared wooden coffin, a masterpiece of wood carving, placed in front of the iconostasis itself, south of the royal doors.

The most spacious church in early Serbian architecture also claims the largest assemblage of painted decorations in the world of Byzantine art. On the surfaces of the tall walls, vaultings and arches there are hundreds of scenes and thousands of people in greater and lesser thematic sequences, in which the Divine Order of the universe is presented to the faithful, the Incarnation of the Son is shown, the history of the Christian Church is displayed and her dogma is interpreted. The twenty cycles of which the Calendar had 365 illustrated days, and Genesis 46 scenes, as well as hundreds of individual figures and busts, contain often rare and sometimes unique images.

Even though more numerous than in other churches, the scenes in the Dečani church are not in general of small dimensions—its interior was not dissected nor were walls divided as they were in Gračanica Monastery, so the available surfaces also allowed the representation of monumental scenes. On the other hand, neither were all the scenes "readable," especially the Menologion, whose individual days without designation are difficult to differentiate. The faithful, therefore, were faced with difficulties attempting to understand the language of frescos; along with this, but

The Founders inscription on the completion of the painting of the church, naos, west wall, Dečani, 1347/48

Opening lines of the Third Charter of the Dečani Monastery, 1343–45, Archive of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

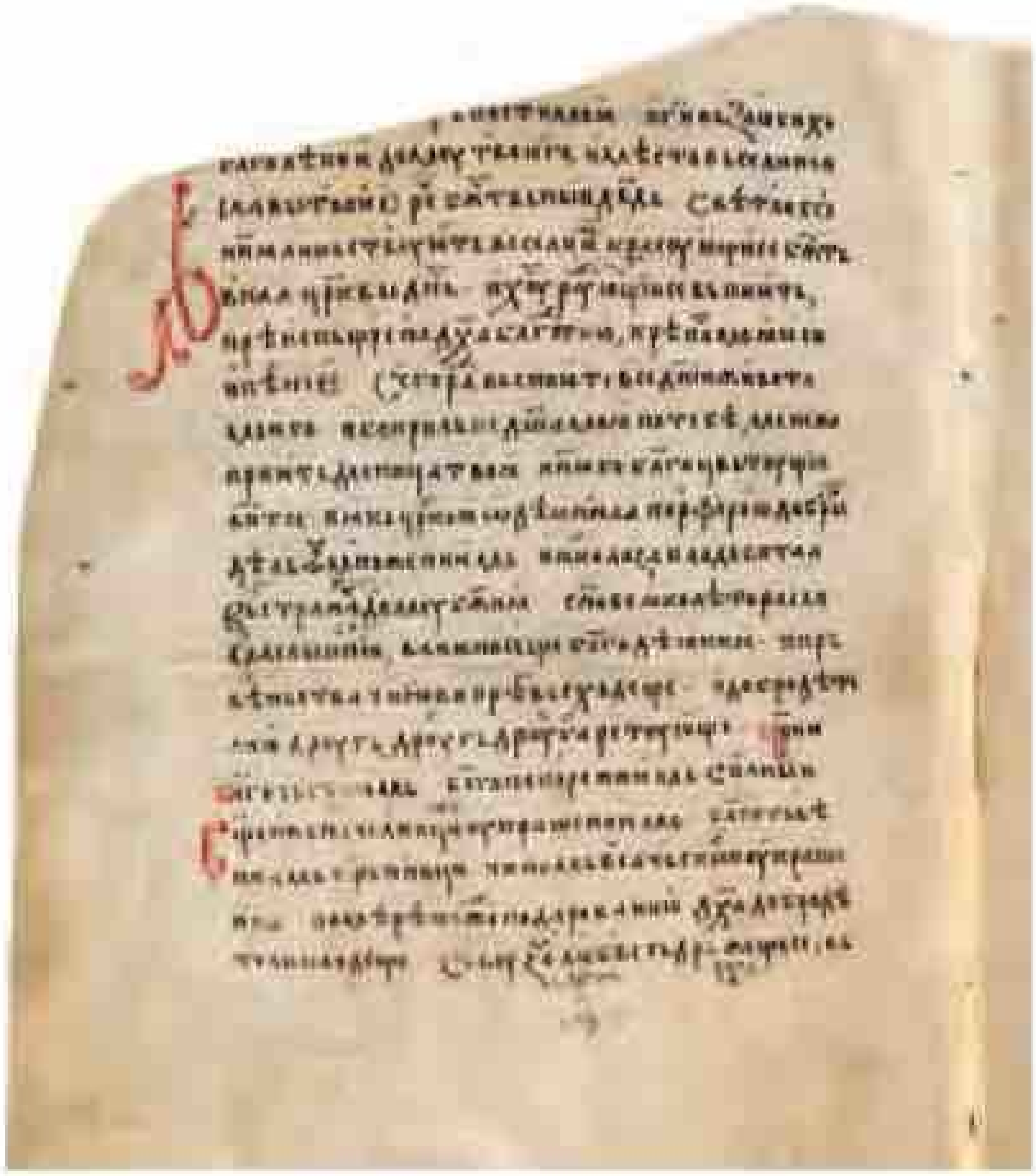


Signatures of Kings Stefan Uroš III and Stefan Dušan in the Third Charter of the Dečani Monastery

also because they were at a great distance from the observer or were placed in fields where the person who had ordered them and the painter knew full well that no one would be able to see them. The act of painting was, therefore, similar to the discreetly written signatures and prayers of zoographers (painters), an act of a higher order, realized for viewing from the other side, as if the scenes were not meant only for eartly eyes: certain truths had to be stated regardless of whether they would be understood by anyone.

The painting of frescos lasted ten years. The earliest inscription including a year was written on one crossbeam of the northern nave, 1338/9, and the latest, over the entrance to the naos, 1347/8. But as the season for fresco-painting in the interior on still wet mortar ended usually in autumn, the work was most probably finished in September or October of 1347.

It is difficult today to conjecture the magnitude of work in which, considering the size, only one group of master painters did not take part. Undoubtedly, firstly an order was made of the entire thematics on drawings with well measured relationships of the surface, and then the work was divided and carried out at the same time on different sides. The frescoing would usually run from east to west and from the highest, first of the spherical surfaces, downwards. In Dečani one of the artists with his co-workers might have begun work also in the Chapel of Saint Demetrius, where he in the inscription wrote down the name of Abbot Arsenije. According to a unique idea, realized in a scope which is difficult to comprehend in the manner in



Opening lines of the Charter of Princesse Milica for Dečani Monastery, 1397, Archive of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

Family Tree of the Nemanjić Dynasty, Dečani, 1347

From the bottom to the top, and from the left to the right: St. Sava, son of Stefan Nemanja, the First Archbishop of the Serbian Church; St. Simeon monk, previously the Great Župan Stefan Nemanja; Stefan Prvovenčani, son of Stefan Nemanja, the First Crowned Serbian King; Stefan, son of Vukan, Prince; Vukan, son of Stefan Nemanja, Prince and King of Zeta; St. Sava II, son of Stefan Prvovenčani, the Third Archbishop of the Serbian Church; Stefan Dragutin, son of King Uroš I, the King of Serbia; Vladislav, son of King Dragutin; Stefan Uroš II Milutin, son of King Uroš I, the King of Serbia; Stefan Radoslav, son of Stefan Prvovenčani, the King of Serbia; Stefan Uroš I, son of Stefan Prvovenčani, the King of Serbia; Stefan Vladislav, son of Stefan Prvovenčani, the King of Serbia; Urošić, son of King Dragutin; Carica, daughter of King Milutin; Brnjača, daughter of King Uroš I; Dušan, son of Stefan Dečanski; Todora, daughter of Stefan Dečanski; Jelena, daughter of Stefan Dečanski; Stefan Uroš V, son of Emperor Dušan, the King of Serbia; Stefan Uroš IV Dušan, son of Stefan Dečanski, the First Serbian Emperor; Simeon Siniša, son of Stefan Dečanski; Stefan Uroš III Dečanski, son of King Milutin, the King of Serbia; two angels; Christ Emmanuel.

Queen Jelena, Young King Uroš and Simeon Siniša, west wall, Chapel of Saint Nicholas, Dečani, ca. 1343

Donor portraits of Kings Stefan Uroš III Dečanski and Stefan Dušan, south wall, Chapel of Saint Nicholas, Dečani, ca. 1343

Kings Stefan Dušan, Young King Uroš and Queen Jelena, apse of Chapel of Saint Nicholas, Dečani, ca. 1343

Saints Simeon Nemanja and Sava, south wall, Chapel of Saint Nicholas, Dečani, ca. 1343

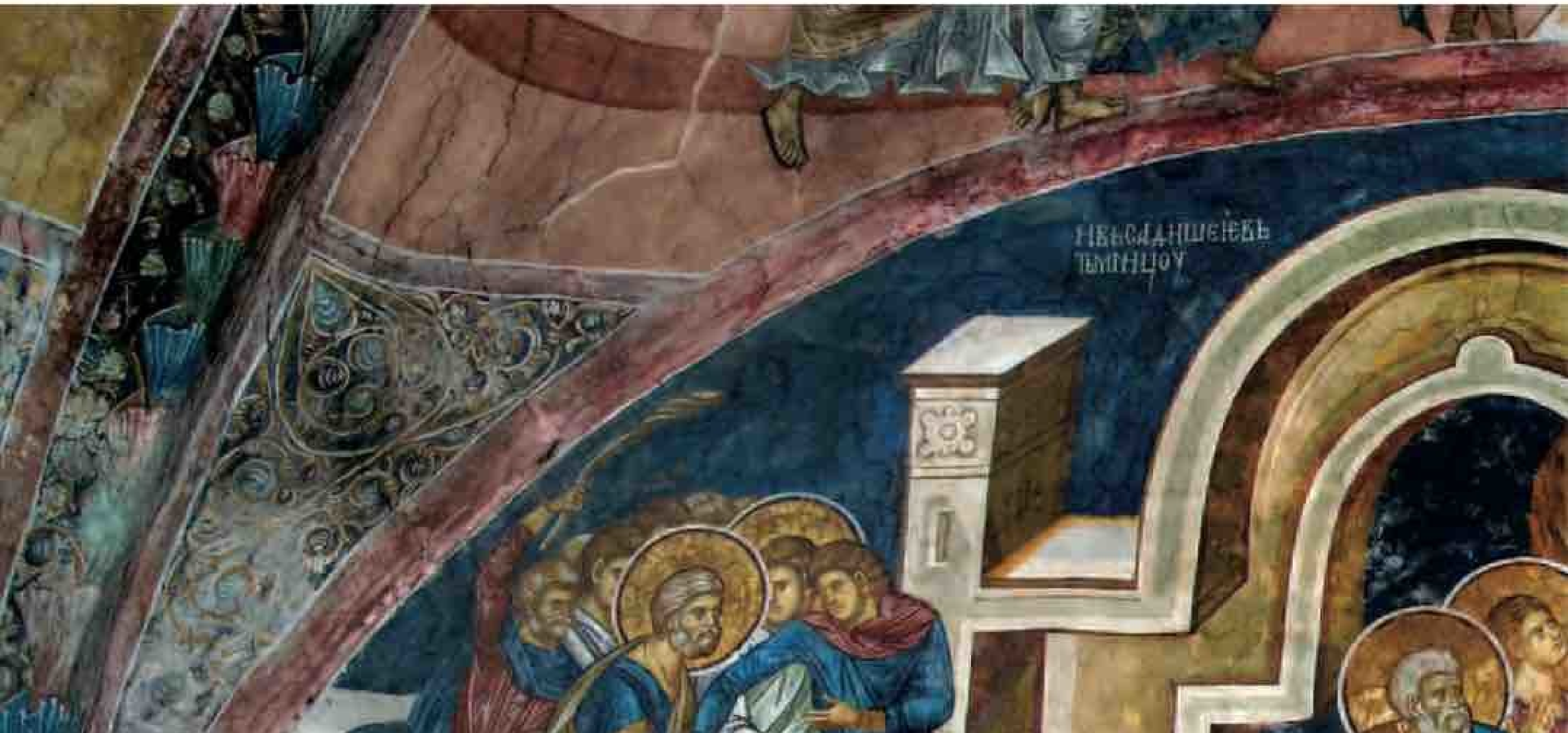
Previous pages
above: **Three Young Man in the Fiery Furnace and Daniel in the Lion's Dan;**
below: **Christ is Talking to Peter and John,** southwest bay of the naos, south wall, Dečani

The Akathistos Hymn, the eighth and ninth strophe (5th kontakion and 5th oikos), south choir, south wall, Dečani

There is no sweeter name to the lips of Orthodox Christians than that of the Panagia (the All-Holy Mother of God). Orthodox people's tender love for her, which nourishes them, is so deeply rooted that we are compelled to wonder why such extraordinary honor is afforded her. The first and most significant reason is that the Panagia is the person within whom was revealed all the love of God, and the salvation of world was accomplished.

Baptism of Christ,
detail, subdomicial area, west side, Dečani, ca. 1339

Crucifixion of Christ,
detail, subdomicial area, west side, Dečani, ca. 1339



Acts of the Apostles, detail: Arrest of Peter and John, An Angel Appeares to Peter and John in Prison, and Release Apostles from Prison, northwest bay of the naos, north wall, Dečani

which it was done in other, smaller churches, the frescos are placed in harmony with the general feel of a church, with the meanings of certain of its parts and functions of the services. As in Gračanica, the correlation of area elements in the upper zones did not prevent a view of the surfaces which, strictly speaking, belonged to parts of the Church with serving purposes. Due to this, not even certain thematical wholes limited themselves to appropriate segments of space—they passed onto the walls and vaultings of neighboring aisles, and in that way made it easier for the faithful to follow certain ideas. It is understood that for the painter himself this was an indispensable condition for realizing the complicated task which, in the spirit of the time, was expected of them. Also in the tall dome at the top is Christ the Pantocrator, and beneath him the Divine Liturgy being served by the Heavenly Powers, while prophets are between the windows. In the pendentives the evangelists are represented in a wide plane.

The area below the dome and neighboring sections on the sides received, alongside the Great Feasts, a multitude of pictures connected with Christ's Life—scenes of his miracles, parables which he made use of in his sermons and public acts, and especially his suffering. Alongside these, on the southern side is a part of the verses from the Akathist to the Theotokos, hymns during which when sung at services one could not sit.

Part of the miracles of Christ, his activities and, especially, his appearance after the Resurrection passed, as it has been said, into the sanctuary. In them, the basic theme, as is understood, was made up of scenes with a liturgical content: the Communion of the Apostles with Christ adorned in a rich episcopal sakkos, the Theotokos with archangels representing the Incarnation of the Logos and the Service of the Hierarchs alongside which is connected a greater number of Fathers of the Church, placed on the adjoining surfaces.

On the wide arch toward the prothesis there are, among others, scenes from the Old Testament which, in harmony with the character of the area, have a eucharistic meaning; they, however, represent a prefiguration of the Theotokos whose cycle, together with liturgical and other Old Testament scenes, has a place in the prothesis. On the underside of the arch toward the naos part of the scenes of Christ's parables, miracles and his activities, have expanded also, and of living historical persons, Arsenije, the deserving first abbot of the Dečani brotherhood, received his portrait.

In the western parts of the naos the Acts of the Apostles and Last Judgment are shown in detail, presented in 33 scenes. The Dormition, as is custom above the entrance, has special episodes and makes up a small totality in itself, as with the scenes of the sermon of Saint John the Forerunner and his conversation with Christ about the Baptism. Special also are the Old Testament scenes in individual groups, making up the Wisdom Sayings of Solomon and episodes from the Book of the Prophet Daniel, having many levels according to dogmatic meaning. Finally, on a greatly lengthened surface of the western wall, in the southern part of the naos is the largest and most complicated scene of the Tree of Jesse—the tree of Christ's ancestors with His Countenance at the top, with the fundamental genealogical line, having a number of parallel rows in which there are many numerous scenes, not only from the history of the Old but also the New Testament, to which the spoken prophesies applied.

Stefan Dečanski's chandelier medallion in Dečani

In the southern chapel are scenes from the life of patron Saint Nicholas, and then the second part of the illustration of the Akathist to the Theotokos and other scenes from the activities of Christ, his miracles and parables. It is similar also to the farthest northern nave, dedicated to Saint Demetrius: alongside scenes of the life and sufferings of the famous Thessalonican Martyr, in segment of the vaulted surfaces and under them is presented an exceptional cycle of Genesis.

In the narthex the greater surface in the upper zones is taken up by the Calendar. All the feasts and personalities celebrated by the Church are shown in a manner adapted to the area not only by choice but also by the character of its scenes—entire compositions when important events are illustrated, simplified scenes of suffering, or only "portraits" of persons, who have found themselves a place in the great Christian community. Their order starts from 1 September with which the year began according to the Byzantine manner of reckoning time, and goes from left to right, clockwise, the sequence in the zones and in the frame-

View of the east wall of the narthex, Dečani

work of certain parts of the building in greatest measure attempting to make the following of this great cycle in painting in general easier.

Individual scenes represent the history of the Christian Church through the Ecumenical Councils, which confirm her dogmatic foundation, all together six (without the Seventh, dedicated to the condemnation of iconoclasm), each having two compositions: one with portraits of the Emperor and leading Hierarchs and the Council, and the second with the opposing bishops.

The Tree of Jesse,
detail: Destruction of Sodom, west wall,
Chapel of Saint Nicholas, Dečani, ca. 1343

The cycle of Saint George, with scenes from his life and suffering, makes a special appearance in the northeastern aisle of the narthex. Its surfaces are, in fact—one can see from the scene of the Service of the Hierarchs in the lowest belt—divided up by the special cultic part dedicated to this saint. The chapel was in any case constructed according to the desire of landowner Djordje Ostouša Pećpal who participated here through his donation. As in western art, where certain parts of the church or altar were furnished by respected individuals, in the Orthodox Church there were rare cases when, during their construction or later, other benefactors also joined in with their own means. In Dečani the area also had a sepulchral intent: tomb-markers bear witness that members of the Pećpal family where also buried here.

Alongside the abundance of pictures of sacral content, Dečani has preserved a multitude of historical portraits, in the first place of its benefactors. The ruler's ideology and its expression in art already in the time of King Milutin appeared in a number of iconographical variants, and sometimes made up exceptional totalities. In the great church of Dečani rare solutions also appeared, thought up or adapted to the conditions which were changing at the exact time it was painted. The period of military campaigns and the amassing Byzantine regions, especially after 1342, influenced the state-judicial understanding in the Serbian milieu and found an immediate expression in rulers' titles, so that changes could also be very clearly followed in the inscriptions near their countenances. Due to this, certain parts of the wall decorations can be more exactly chronologically determined, especially in the lower zones where the majority of portraits are located.

Interesting changes were also brought about by events connected to the cult of the founder of the monastery, Stefan Dečanski. His oldest portrait, on the southern wall, following respected older members of the dynasty (Saint Simeon Nemanja, Archbishop Sava, and King Milutin) was painted only somewhat later, together with the figure of his wife Maria Palaeologina. On a newer layer, Stefan Dečanski is with his son, the other benefactor of the church, with whom he holds its model, while from a beam of light Christ blesses them with both hands. At the same time, the family picture of Stefan Dušan on the western wall also has been altered where in the new compositional scheme Empress Helen has received the place between the heir to the throne, young Uroš, on one side and most probably Dušan's half-brother. The later Emperor of Thessaly Simeon, on the other. All of these changes on the portraits near the sarcophagus of Stefan Dečanski were made, it appears, after his canonization. Dating also from that time is his excellent countenance on the pilasters in front of the iconostasis where, as we have seen, his remains where moved to at that time. And here with a model of the church which he offers up, the Sainted Benefactor bowing slightly, mouths his long prayer to Christ.

In all cases, the countenances of the rulers and members of his family show that they continued the tradition of dress in example of the Byzantine emperors, whose etiquette and royal ceremonies they faithfully followed. To a great extent this can be seen in the aristocratic portraits of the time. The differences in their clothing allow, however, the possibility that elements of costumes of another origin can be found—especially with those people who did not belong to the highest circle of social hierarchy, so neither did their titles agree with those of Byzantium. Thus Djordje Pećpal is shown as a humble landowner of unknown rank and status in a short tunic with flower ornamentations, a belt around his middle and a decorated cape, whom Saint George, holding him as a protector, leads to Christ on His throne.

In humility the kings Stefan and Dušan also bow to the glory of Christ the Pantocrator in the large bust above the entrance into the naos, receiving from cherubim a scroll with the Divine Word. Even though they, as benefactors, are illustrated here in the known tradition of representation "over the doorstep," their countenances, here in an individual thematic context, reveal complicated ideas: on the book held by Christ is written the metaphor of the gates and salvation of those who enter, in connection with the mission which has been entrusted to them, while at the sides are figures of David and Solomon, also father and son with whose appearance the Serbian rulers are also compared in local literature.

As with Byzantine emperors, humble before God whose servants they are as are all others, and glorious in their power on earth, the Serbian kings also clearly express this two-

Services of the Hierarchs, detail:
Saint Nicholas and Saint Gregory the Theologian,
altar apse, north side, Dečani, ca. 1339

Services of the Hierarchs, detail:
Saint Athanasius and Saint Gregory of Nyssa,
altar apse, south side, Dečani, ca. 1339

fold rank with the portraits in Dečani. Thus, alongside the northern entrance to the narthex, Stefan Dušan once more is shown in an official way, between his wife and son-heir, but this time with a rank which reveals changes that have in the meantime taken place. After conquering Serres, an important city on the old road from Thessalonika to Costantinople, Dušan at the end of 1345, maybe on Christmas, there proclaimed himself, and in April of next year, on Easter, in Skoplje, was crowned, Emperor of the Serbs and Greeks. His portrait in Dečani with the Emperor's title, as is understood, did not also show the changes in appearance, because, as has already been said, Serbian rulers even before, as Kings, copied the dress of Byzantine emperors. The picture of the royal family makes up, on the one hand, a totality with the portraits of spiritual figures on the neighboring surface of the western wall—the abbot of Dečani Arsenije, once more Saint Sava, as the founder of the Serbian Church, and Joanikije, her patriarch at that time. Rather, the last of these in the inscription is still described as archbishop, which tells one that the first part of the scene in the northwestern corner of the narthex was painted in autumn of 1345 before the changes in which he gained a new title, and the second painted later: i. e., before the one-time great logothet of the king and a person of trust, Archbishop Joanikije, before the crowning of Dušan as Emperor was consecrated as patriarch.

As also in Gračanica, finally a place was ordained for a group portrait of the dynasty in the form of a tree which grows from the roots of Stefan Nemanja. It stands on the same wall on which, on the other side, in the naos, is the Tree of Jesse—a scene whose iconography suggested the same manner for royal origins of the family of Serbian rulers.

Rich in their scope, the frescos of Dečani are often mentioned as an example of so-called encylopedism, in whose spirit generations of painters created in the decade around the middle of the 14th century. In its iconographical abundance—even though not in the same scope nor collected together in one place—the wall paintings of this character were already known in churches built and decorated during the time of King Milutin. Besides this, the frescos of Dečani were not, even though this is sometimes stated or at least hinted at, an expression of dried-up academism which left behind the original freshness of meaning. It holds true that artistic reforming of examples chosen from art history characteristic for churches of the first quarter of the century lost rhythm and creative charge; but the scenes

Saint Theodor Tyro, naos, north choir, Dečani

looked at in their entirety and mutual relationships still showed a lively and clever control of ideas which lends them a different and complicated meaning. It might be said that a passion for the showing of dense compositions with innumerous episodes and facts was missing, whose most obvious representatives were—keeping only to local ones and not the wider region of the Byzantine style of this time—in the King's Church in Studenica, Saint Nicetas, Staro Nagoričino and Gračanica. In Dečani this compressed exhibition of content is often represented in numerous scenes and sometimes made into entire small cycles. Its narrative was different, but in no way larger than in shrines which received wall paintings two or three decades earlier.

The decoration of the expansive interior was also a great challenge for the master painters and for artist-counselors, since they had never had the occasion to create such a sophisticated composition, with the responsibility that its parts, in the spirit of the constantly developing interpretation of pictures and ideas which they express, be mutually connected. On the other hand, the great worksite brought together a number of groups of painters, of whom it was expected that they would coordinate their method of work. Behind the desired oneness, especially successful in the general gamma, one can nonetheless recognize artistic individuality and talent. Of the names of the master painters who participated, only one is known however, written down in color on the capital near the place where he painted: Srdj the sinner. The character of this name leads one to think that he was one of the artists of Cattaro who had come as did Fr. Vita at the invitation of the ruler. Sources in Cattaro mention, of the other hand, so-called Greek painters (*pictores graeci*) masters who in the coastal cities in the 14th century worked for Orthodox clients. For this reason, it is often thought that they also joined with their knowledge in the great work in Dečani. Nothing more is known, however, about their method of work nor of their true capabilities in decorating such a large interior. On the other hand, frescos in a number of local churches show a similarity in style to such an extent that there is no doubt that they originate from one artistic climate and that the master painters of Dečani, with appropriate experience, should be sought within the country itself, in the regions in which the Serbian state existed, while they continued to employ Greek artisans who, painting in the same spirit, closely cooperated with local painters over a number of decades.

Better preserved than other large churches, Dečani also has on its marble altar railing icons from the time the walls were decorated, even in the same style, surely the work of the masters who painted the frescos here, who, as was often the case, did the icons at the same time. The Royal Pictures of Christ and the Theotokos, on one and the other side of the royal doors, and Saint Nicholas and Saint John the Forerunner next to them, today make up a very rarely preserved totality of an iconostasis in the entire Byzantine world, as does the great collection of ancient works representing one of the greatest treasuries of Serbian art from the time of political independence but also from the centuries of Ottoman rule. In its own right, the monastery's library preserved excellent collections of ecclesiastical manuscripts and literary works, one part of which was written in Dečani itself.

The Sacred Land: Art of Kosovo,
New York: The Monacelli Press 1997, pp. 177–197.

Saint John the Baptist,
west bay of the naos, west wall, Dečani, 1348

Saint Nicholas *Quick Helper*,
west bay of the naos, west wall, Dečani, 1348

Last Judgement, detail: Deisis, west bay of the naos, west wall, Dečani, 1347–1348

Last Judgement, detail: Righteous Archbishops and Hermits, west bay of the naos, west wall, Dečani, 1347–1348

Last Judgement, detail: Rigteous Emperors and Noblemen, west bay of the naos, west wall, Dečani, 1347–1348

Memorial Book,
written and illuminated by Aleksije Lazović, Dečani, ca. 1818

ІС ХС

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Book of Four Gospels, Opening Page of the Gospel of Luke, Manuscript No 6, ca. 1400

Memorial Book of Dečani monastery, written and decorated by Dimitrije Daskal, 1595

Books are a special and precious part of the Monastery of Dečani treasury. About 160 manuscripts and 17 old printed books, which were part of the former monastery library, have been preserved to the present time, making it a Serbian collection second only to the one in the monastery of Hilandar. The manuscripts are written on parchment and on paper and almost all of them are in medieval Serbian. Judging from their contents, they were mostly intended for liturgical use: Tetraevangelia, Apostola (Epistle Lectionaries), Hieratica, Menaia, Horologia. There are also works of patristic and ascetic literature, a few of the oldest Serbian verse Prologues, as well as manuscripts directly associated with the cult of the Holy King Stefan of Dečani. Of special importance is the collection of charters and other documents bearing witness to the long and exciting history of the monastery.

Octoechos from Crnojević Printing House, 1494

Printed Festal Menaion of Božidar Vuković, 1536-1538

Epistle Lectionary, 1350–1360, manuscript № 25, Dečani

The Mother of God with Christ Child,
mid 14th century, despotic icon on the iconostasis, Dečani

Archangel Gabriel,
mid 14th century, despotic icon on the iconostasis, Dečani

Mother of God Pelagonitissa, icon,
second half of the 16th century, the Treasury of the Dečani

Hagiographic Icon of Saint Nicholas,
icon, second half of the 16th century,
the Treasury of the Dečani

Saint Anthony the Great,
icon painted by Longin, 1572, the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery

Reliquary Crosses of Emperor Dušan (left)
and King Stephen Dečanski (right),
the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery

Cup with a griffin,
16th century, the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery

Cup ornamented with hunting motives,
16th century, the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery

Cup donated by Hieromonk Sergije to Dečani Monastery,
1608, National Museum Belgrade

Chalice,
1567/68, donated by Radivoj to Dečani Monastery

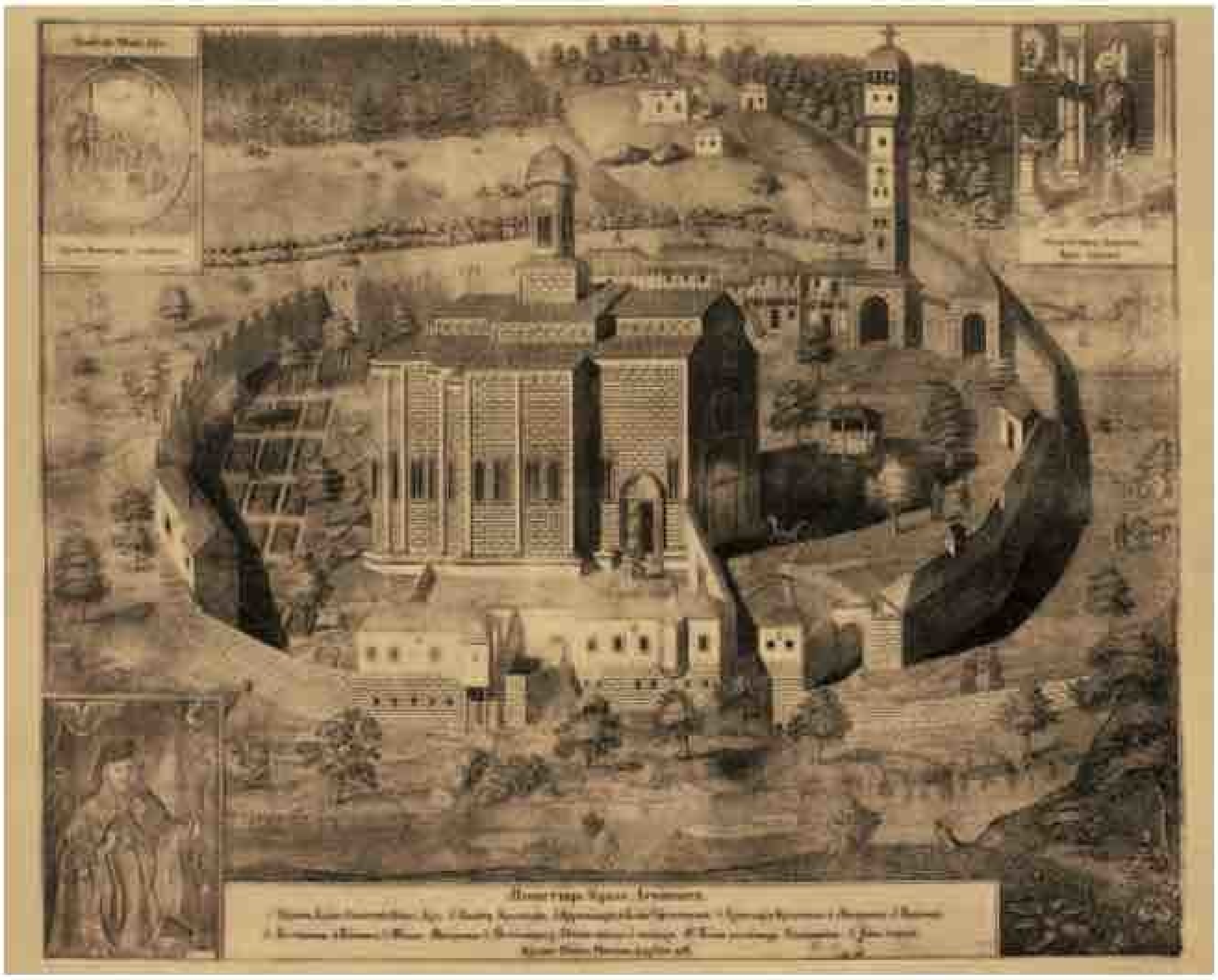
Ripidion made by Kondo Vuk,
1569/70, donated by Radivoj to Dečani Monastery

Contemporary to Longin's icons, and only twenty or so years earlier than the painted cross on the iconostasis, these ripidia act as evidence that creative vigor had not vanished by the end of the 16th century and that the fraternity of Dečani persistently kept to high standards in adorning their church with icons and liturgical vessels.

Panagiarion, 15th century, the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery

The panagiarion made of bone and set into a silver filigree casing is perhaps the oldest liturgical vessel in the Dečani collection.

Iconostasis Cross, Dečani, 1593/94



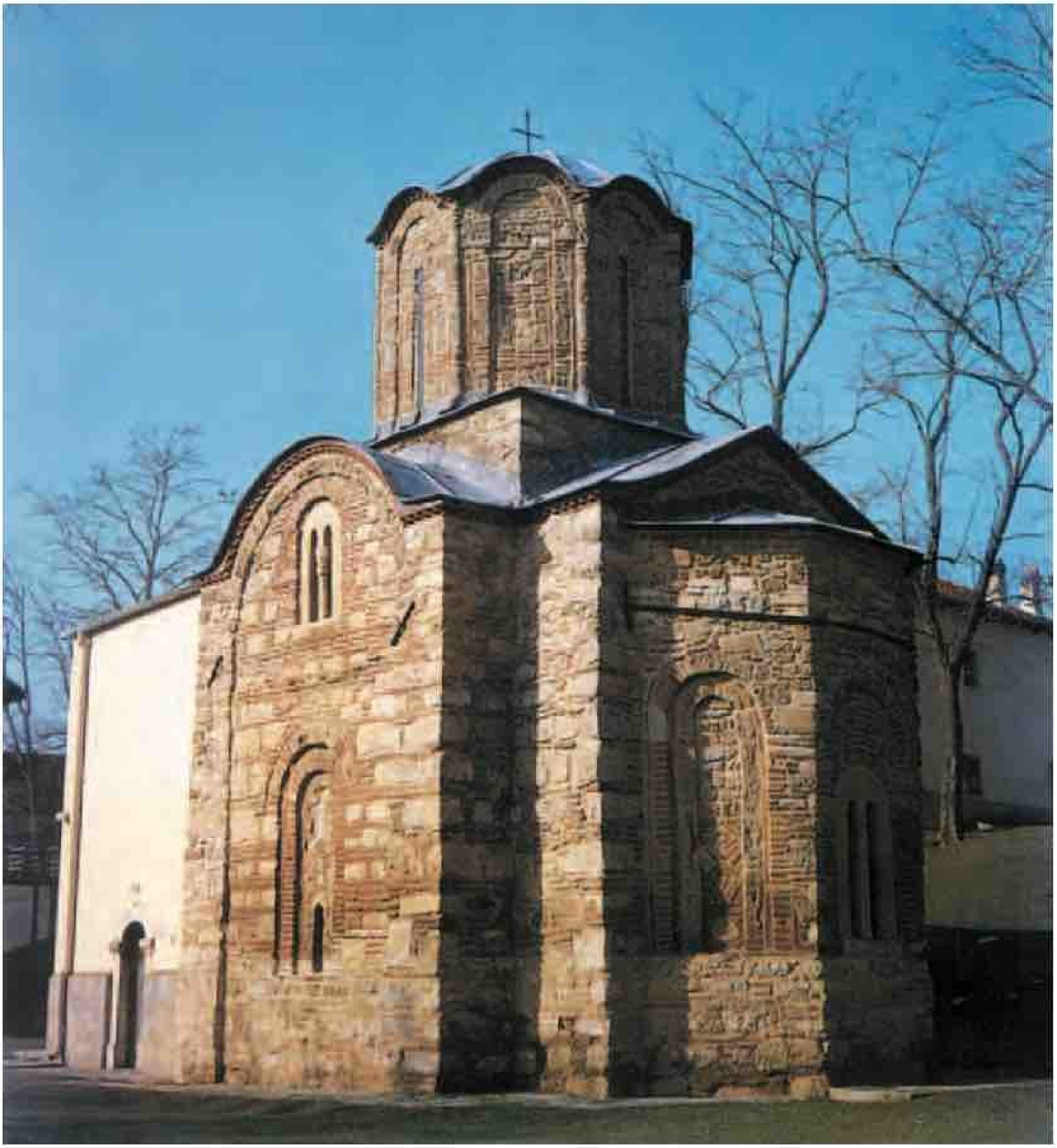
Engraving of Dečani Monastery, G. Stojanović-G.A. Miler, 1746

Firman (edict) of Sultan Bayezid II (left), 1506

Firman (edict) of Sultan Mustafa IV (right), 1808

Divine service, Dečani Monastery

People participating in Divine service, Dečani Monastery



Church of the Transfiguration of Christ, Budisavci Monastery

The Church of Budisavci

Patriarch Makarije Sokolović,
Serbian founder and renovator, Budisavci, 16th century

The Church of Christ's Transfiguration near the village of Budisavci, is located 10,5 miles east of the Peć is known as Monastery of Budisavci. The church was built in the 14th century but it is not known whether it was the endowment of a local Serbian aristocrat or its founder was King Stefan Milutin (1282–1321), as could be assumed due to the partially preserved inscription on a stone tablet built in the eastern side of the apse. Tradition even relates the foundation of this Christian shrine to the sister of King's Milutin's daughter and the sister of King Stefan Dečanski (1321–1331).

The edifice of the church has exceptionally harmonious proportions, with the foundation in the shape of equally-legged cross with the apse three-sided from outside: the dome and the narthex which, originally was lower than the existing one from the 19th century. The church dedicated to the Christ's Transfiguration was built by alternating stone and brick arranged in some parts in a decorative manner. The original fresco paintings were completely destroyed and the church was partially ruined during the Ottoman conquest in 15th century. The monastery was renewed in 1568 by the Serbian patriarch Makarije Sokolović of Peć.

Frescos dating from this period are preserved: they are characterized by the skillful drawing and rich colors, while the portrait of the patriarch Makarije is considered to be one of the most beautiful portraits in the 16th century Serbian art. During the following centuries, various interventions were carried out on the church of Budisavci, which remained to be a *metochion* of the Patriarchate of Peć.

While the most of churches and monasteries within Kosovo and Metohija are under the jurisdiction of the Raška-Prizren diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Patriarchate of Peć and the monastery of Budisavci are under direct jurisdiction of the Serbian patriarch. The most venerated icon of the patron saint of the Budisavci church from late 14th and early 15th century is the jewel of the Budisavci treasury.

Frescos on the south wall of south arm of the cross, Budisavci

Bishop Jovan of Lipljan serving Liturgy in Budisavci

Christ as the New Wine, icon, Budisavci

East wall and iconostasis in Budisavci

Transfiguration of Christ,
icon, Budisavci, 15th century

Church of the Ascension of Christ (Holy Savior), Prizren, north view

The Church of the Holy Savior

The Church of the Holy Savior (the Church of the Ascension) is a Serbian Orthodox church located in Prizren. The endowment of landowner Mladen Vladojević with his parents, at the time of Stefan Dušan's rule, it was built around 1330 and in 1348 given as a gift to the nearby monastery of Holy Archangels. The medieval church is of small dimensions, with the foundation in the shape of the shortened cross with octagonal dome and the apse three-sided from outside. It was decoratively built with neat alternate layers of limestone and brick and with ceramoplastic ornaments.

The frescos were painted in two phases: firstly, in the altar, around 1335, where the paintings are of poorer quality, and then in the rest of the church until 1348, when a part of the altar area was repainted. The original paintings on the altar were painted by one painter, a member of the workshop which also painted the church of St. Nicholas, endowment of Dragoslav Tutić. Small dimensioned frescos from the second phase were painted by local painters educated by the good traditions of the Byzantine art who had a sure and prominent drawing. A third painter painted Christ and the Mother of God Chapel in exonarthex, most probably after 1348. The paintings were greatly damaged and a fire in the 19th century changed their palette. Conservation works on architecture and frescos were carried out in the 1953–1963 period.

The church was declared a Monument of Culture of Exceptional Importance in 1990, and it is protected by the Republic of Serbia. Nevertheless, it was heavily damaged by a Kosovo Albanian mob during the 2004 unrest in Kosovo and Metohija.

Church of the Ascension of Christ (Holy Savior), Prizren, northeast view

Church of the Ascension of Christ (Holy Savior), Prizren, altar apse, eastern view

Church of the Ascension of Christ (Holy Savior), Prizren, northeast view

Descent into Hades, altar, north wall, Church of the Holy Savior, , until 1348

Angel, conch of the altar apse,
Church of the Holy Savior, until 1348

Nativity of Christ, detail: Joseph, altar vault, south half,
Church of the Holy Savior, until 1348

Communion of the Apostles, detail, north side of the altar apse,
Church of the Holy Savior, ca. 1335

The Church of Zočište

Rebuilt Church of the Holy Healers (Anargyroi) Cosmas and Damian, view from the southwest, Zočište

The monastery of the Holy Healers (Anargyroi) Cosmas and Damian at Zočište, located in the vicinity of Orahovac, is considered to be an endowment of a Serbian feudal lord in early 14th century, although this tradition was not confirmed by available historical evidence. The monastery was first mentioned in 1327 during the reign of King Stefan Dečanski (1321–1331), and it was partially damaged after the 1389 Battle of Kosovo. It was additionally vandalized by the Muslim Albanians who used the stones of the original building to construct a mosque in Prizren. The monastery was rebuilt in the late 16th century following the reinstatement of the Serbian Patriarchate under the name of Patriarchate of Peć. In the late 17th century, it was mentioned by Nikola Bošković, a Serb merchant from Dubrovnik, a benefactor of many Serbian Orthodox churches and a father of the famous Serb mathematician and astronomer Rudjer Bošković (1711–1787).

The Church edifice has been rebuilt on the existing and consolidated foundations using original building material from the ruins of the old church. The monastery is famous for the relics of the Saints Cosmas and Damian. The shrine at the monastery was said to provide a miraculous cure for eye diseases and mental and psychosomatic disorders. It is said to be "one of the most important cultural places for Serbian and Christian settlements in the Metohija area." The Zočište monastery was designated as Cultural Heritage of Serbia in 1954. Completely destroyed by the Albanian extremists from the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army in 1999, the Zočište monastery was successfully rebuilt after 2004 and the church interior was painted in traditional fresco technique by Miloš Raški.

Zočište, south wall, fresco wall-painting, Miloš Raški, 2014

An icon from Zočište

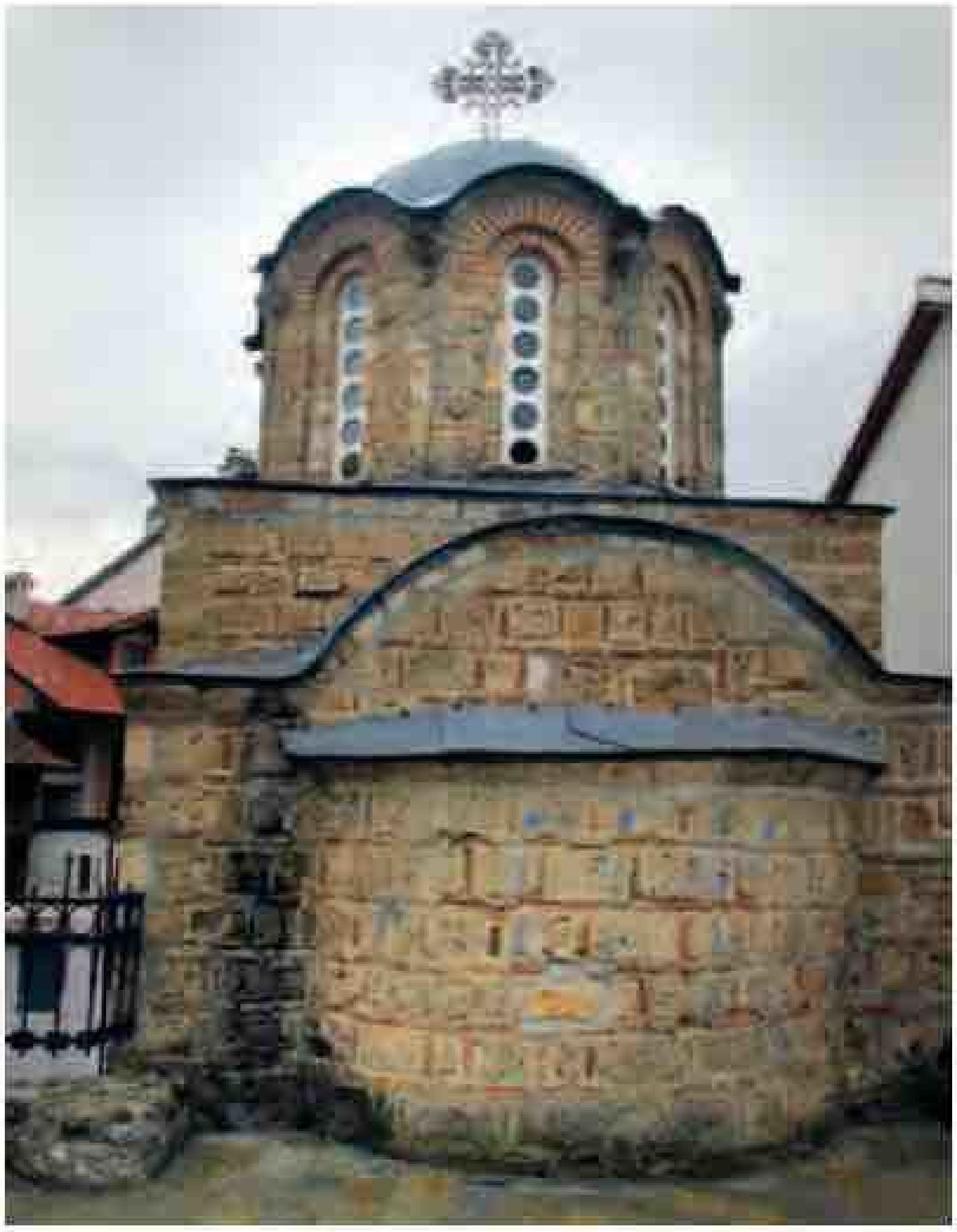
Nacre Icon, Zočište, 16th century

Proskynetarion with icon of Holy Healers (Anargyroi)
Cosmas and Damian (19th century)
and Coffin with their Relics, Zočište

The Other Medieval Churches of Prizren

The small church of landlord Dragoslav Tutić (Nicholas as monk) and his wife Bela is located in the center of the present-day Prizren. According to the stone inscription, preserved only in fragments but of known contents on the basis of the transcript from the 19th century, it was built in 1331/1332 and most probably painted immediately after that. Subsequently, it became a metochion of the Dečani Monastery. The one-nave church is of small dimensions, surpassed by the dome of octangular tambour with windows. A semi-circular apse with two semi-circular niches for prothesis and diaconicon is on the eastern side. It was built simply with stone and brick. Not many paintings are preserved. According to the subjects, arrangement and style, fresco paintings are related to those from the first phase of the church of the Holy Savior and in the church of St. George at Rečani, so that it is considered that one workshop painted all three shrines. The same painters are considered to have painted two icons—the Mother of God Hodegetria from the iconostasis of Ljeviška Cathedral church in Prizren, and the dual Ljubižda icon with the Annunciation and the Meeting between Joachim and Anna (in the National Museum in Belgrade).

Remains of the fresco decoration, Church of Saint Nicholas (Tutić), Prizren, 1331–1332



Church of Saint Nicholas (Tutić), view from the east and southwest, Prizren, 1331–1332

Inscription of King Marko,
Church of Saint Kyriake,
originally dedicated to the
Presentation of the Mother
of God), Prizren, 1371

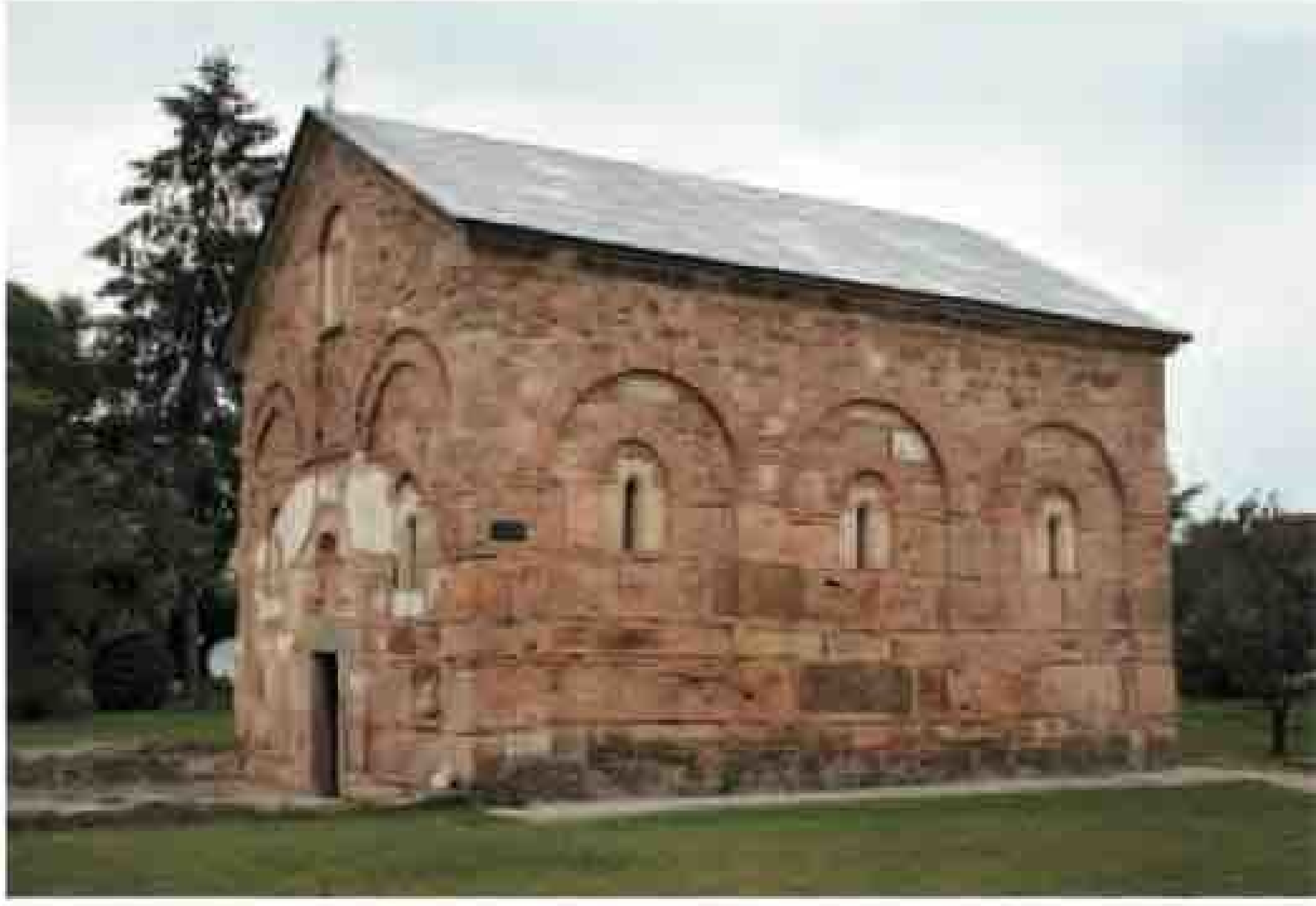
Church of Saint George (Runović), Endowement of Serbian Family Runović, Prizren, 14–16th century

Crucifixion of Christ,
Church of Saint George (Runović), Prizren, 16th century

Church of Saint Kyriake, Prizren

Church of Saint Nicholas (Rajko's Church), Endowemenet of Serbian Landlord Rajko Kirizmić from first half of the 14th century. By the charter of Emperor Stefan Dušan this church was donated in 1348 to the Monastery of Holy Archangels near Prizren. The church was burned and robbed in 1795. Renovated in 1857. Burned by the Albanian extremists in 1999.

The Church of Lipljan



Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God, southwest view, Lipljan, 14th century

Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God in Lipljan was probably built in the second or third decade of the 14th century. The church is a one nave edifice covered with a semi-oval dome, with the apse three-sided from the outside and semi-circular inside. It was built in alternation of stone and brick, while the façades were decorated with shallow sculpted ornaments and blind arcades.

The iconostasis was subsequently erected during the renewal of the church in the 16th century. Another partition dividing the interior of the church from the altar area, the naos and the narthex was also built in the 16th century in its western part; the ruined upper parts of the church were restored. The original frescos were partially preserved before being damaged in a fire. The founder of the church, an unknown Serbian nobleman from the area, is painted on the northern wall of the naos. After the restoration of the church in the 16th century, new frescos were painted in the church and this process lasted, with several interruptions, until 1621. The composition with Eucharist symbols in the altar were renewed, individual figures of the saints and scenes from the cycle of Great Feast and Christ's miracles were painted in the higher zone of the iconostasis and the naos, while the Last Judgment, individual saints and the healing of the blinded Stefan Dečanski were illustrated in the narthex. Conservation works on the architecture and frescos were carried out by Serbian experts between 1955 and 1959.

Annunciation, detail: Archangel Gabriel, altar, east wall, Lipljan, mid-14th century

Service of the Hierarchs, detail: Saint Amphilochius and Saint Gregory the Theologian, altar, east wall, Lipljan, mid-14th century

Built Iconostasis, detail, Lipljan

View of the altar area, Lipljan

Saint Nicholas Restores the Sight of Stefan Dečanski, southwest pillar, Lipljan, late 16th century

Last Judgment, detail, narthex, east wall, Lipljan, late 16th century

Remains of the Holy Archangels Monastery, Prizren

The Holy Archangels Near Prizren

Holy Archangels Monastery was built on the site of an older church during the period from 1343 to 1352 as the pious endowment of Emperor Dušan. As one might expect of the monumental endowment of the most powerful Balkan ruler of the age, it housed no less than 200 monks and its first abbot, the blessed Metropolitan Jacob, who was responsible for the construction of the monastery. The monastery estate stretched from Mt. Šara to the Adriatic Sea. In his Founding Charter the Emperor gave Holy Archangels 93 villages, an iron mine in Toplica, fertile land and vineyards. The revenue from the rich Prizren market belonged to the Monastery. Cooking oil arrived from Bar and fish from Lake Scutari and Lake Plav. Among the craftsmen also given to the Monastery by the Charter were master builders Petros, Vojislav, Srdan, Nos and Vojina, who are believed to have participated in its construction.

Emperor Dušan was interred in the main monastery church. The reconciliation of the Serbian Church and the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which took place in the Monastery, is the most important event after Dušan's death. The historian Constantine Jireček wrote that in 1375, after the reconciliation of the Serbian and Greek Churches, representatives of both Churches served a Divine Liturgy at the tomb of Emperor Dušan and on that occasion the Greek representatives removed the anathema from Dušan, Emperor Uroš, and Patriarchs Joanikije and Sava. At one time the Monastery was the residence of St. Jefrem, the Serbian Patriarch in the time of the Battle of Kosovo.

There is very little information about the life of the monastery in the period following the arrival of the Turks in the Balkans. After the fall of Prizren in 1455, the monastery was occupied and damaged. Sparse historical sources and archeological excavations give evidence of the decline of the entire monastery complex and in the second half of the 16th century its total destruction began. The church was completely destroyed by Sinan Pasha and the material from the destroyed monastery was used by him in 1615 for the construction of his mosque in Prizren. Abandoned, leveled to the ground and flooded by the river, the holy shrine remained in this condition for three centuries. During all this time the people never forgot it. Even in those troubled times Serbs gathered at its ruins twice a year, for the summer and fall feasts of the Holy Archangels, keeping alive the medieval tradition of church assemblies in Prizren which continued to be held in the Monastery.

The ruins of the once prosperous monastery: the bridge, entrance gate, living quarters, church in the middle, Saint Nicholas church in the background and a cross-shaped refectory to the right,
Holy Archangels Monastery, Prizren

In 1927 prof. Radoslav Grujić conducted extensive research and archeological excavations of the Monastery and he transferred the artefacts found to the present-day Archeological Museum in Skoplje. After the Second World War, in the 1970's, extensive conservation and restoration work was done in order to protect the foundations and remaining walls.

Architecture

Having inherited the rich building tradition of his predecessors, Dušan's demands with respect to the architecture and richness of the Monastery were great. He probably wanted the pious endowment in which his earthly remains were to be interred to be a symbol of the power and greatness of the state which he ruled.

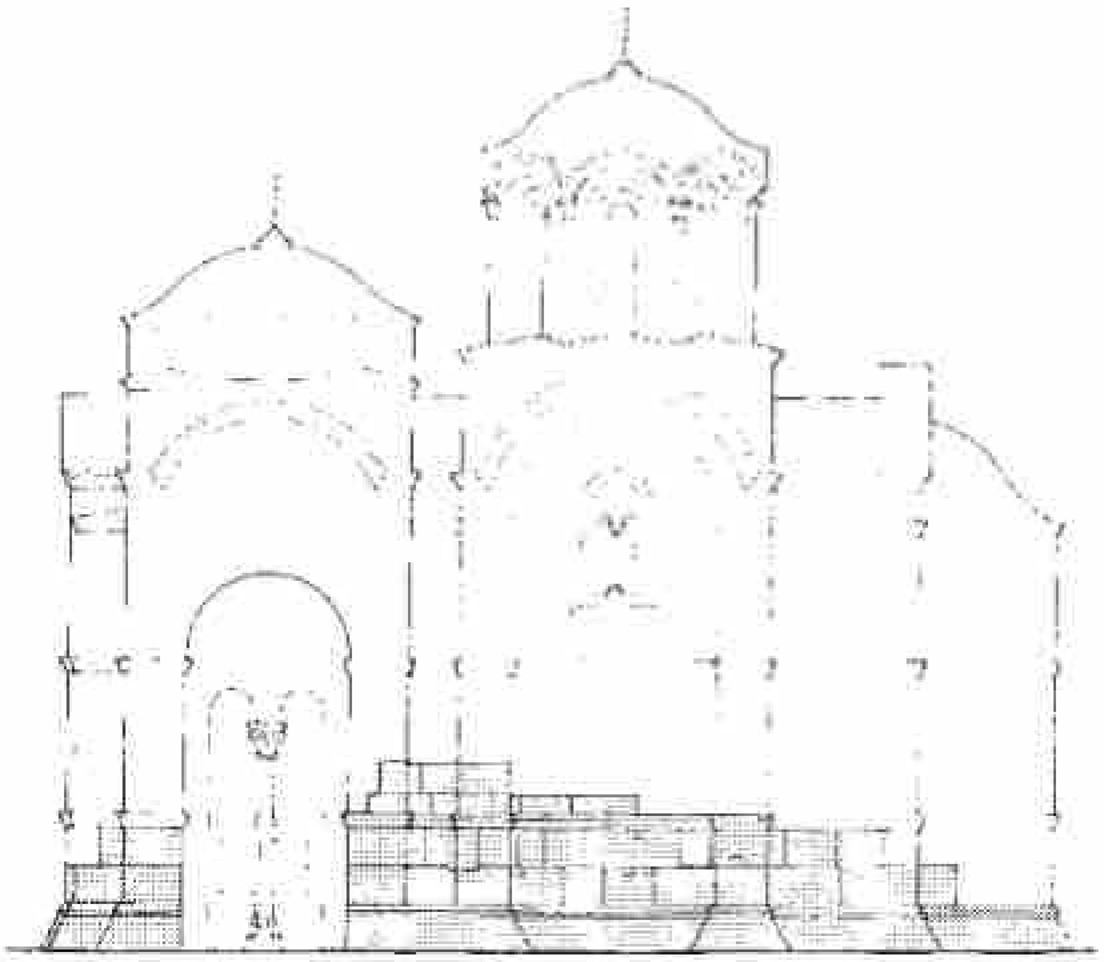
Holy Archangels is a monastery complex encompassing an area of approximately 6,500 square meters with an exceptionally strategic location in the gorge of the Bistrica River, some three kilometers from Prizren. It was encircled by massive walls and connected to the fortress of Višegrad, added to the Monastery for defensive purposes in times of

war. In addition to the large Church of the Holy Archangels, residential quarters, library and other buildings, within the Monastery there was another, smaller church, the Chapel of St. Nicholas. In the Monastery Charter one can read that a separate building within the complex was designated as the infirmary. The monumental refectory was cross-shaped with an apse on the eastern side. A bridge across the Bistrica River connected the Monastery with Dušan's castle at Ribnik and the royal palace in Prizren.

Holy Archangels was a great imperial pious endowment, lavishly decorated with rich materials. Although the name and origin of the main architect are unknown, it is almost certain that a building of such harmonious proportion and shape and such exquisite workmanship could only have been the work of an architect who had fully mastered the experience of the architects of Constantinople architects in spatial exposition and wedded it to the Mediterranean, Romanesque-Gothic sensibility in the use of stone. In Holy Archangels we appear to have the full flowering of the long-awaited synthesis of religious art forms of the European East and West which matured in the Raška school, on the one hand, and in the monuments of Kosovo-Metohija and Macedonia, on the other.

Monastery Churches

The main church, dedicated to the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel, was a monumental structure (28.5 meters x 16.75 meters) with a foundation in shape of an inscribed cross but with somewhat narrower lateral naves, which was not typical in churches of this kind. On the eastern side were three apses: the middle one was wider and externally in the shape of a pentagon and the lateral ones were smaller and externally in the shape of a triangle. A large dodecagonal dome 6.4 meters in diameter rested on four arches supported by four pillars. On the western side there was a narthex with five vaults partially closed by parapet plates and architecturally decorated. The façades were covered with white and red marble and divided in three levels by decorated stone wreaths. Inside the church stood a marble iconostasis and a lavish floor quite famous throughout medieval Europe; in the narthex, it was of white and blue tiles and in the nave of stone reliefs with mosaic tiles inserted between them. In addition to complex geometric motives, mythical animals, griffons, lions, birds and fish were depicted on these floor mosaics. The interior of the church was painted with frescos and the capitals, portals, windows and church furniture were richly decorated with plastic art sculptures. The area around the Emperor's tomb



Reconstruction of the small Saint Nicholas Church, which existed within the Holy Archangels Monastery

Remnants of the Saint Nicholas church, Holy Archangels Monastery, Prizren

was architecturally decorated with a series of small arcades connected in a unique fashion with now destroyed frescos.

The Church of St. Nicholas was considerably smaller in size (13.2 meters x 7 meters) but it was built and decorated in the same way. It was a single-nave edifice with an apse in the east and an open narthex on the west side. The dome rested on the wall to the west and on two pillars in the sanctuary. There was also another dome above the narthex.

Sculpture and Iconography

Both churches were decorated by lavish sculpture. So far around 1,700 sculpture fragments (angels and saints, human heads, animal and floral ornaments) have been found which once decorated the two imperial shrines.

The transitional period of Serbian medieval art is also apparent in the sculptures of Holy Archangels. Even though its iconography and program are not known, in many of the preserved fragments one can easily discern stylistic characteristics closely linked with sculpture which was transmitted from the coastal workshops of Cattaro, Cavtat, and Dubrovnik to the Serbian interior and the architecture of Studenica, Banjska and Dečani Monasteries. The motifs are the same; the manner of stone cutting is similar; novelties appear in two cases only. The first is if a rather damaged head figure is accepted as the likeness of Emperor Dušan, which would make it the first and only likeness in Serbian medieval sculpture. The other novelty is more formal, sculptural and expressed in some of the fragments with floral ornamentation in which sculptural workmanship is replaced by bas-relief and the stylization is so strong that the ornament is transformed into the geometric double-border which would later be developed in the sculpture of the Morava school. The same process observed in architecture is true with regard to sculpture and we can say that Holy Archangels concludes one great sculptural and spatial tradition, while at the same time announcing a new art form.

Preserved fresco fragments in the Church of Holy Archangels bear witness to the beauty and monumental character of the frescos. The Church of St. Nicholas was also painted with frescos as evidenced by the fresco fragments in the niche of the south wall by the altar, as well as by fragments on the north wall of the parvis.

Fresco fragments with representations of heads, The Holy Archangels, Prizren, ca. 1351

Holy Archangels in Art

Because of its strong association with Prizren and Emperor Dušan, as well as its unfortunate fate, the Holy Archangels Monastery was a frequent motif in Serbian art. Chroniclers from the 14th century who had the opportunity to see the building in its full splendor claimed that nothing under the sun was equal to it. Enumerating the important and beautiful attributes of each monastery, the writer of Karlovac Generation Book mentions first "the floor of the Prizren church." Other references are relatively scarce and the continuator of Archbishop Daniel II in his *Biography of Emperor Dušan* does not even mention this great masterpiece. The absence of written historical records has been compensated by folklore with numerous stories and legends about the monastery. One of them says that on the top of the cross on the dome was a precious stone which emanated a light so strong that one could travel by night as far as the Švanjski Bridge, 20 miles north of the Monastery, as if by day. There are also stories about the suffering and punishment which befell Sinan Pasha for destroying the Monastery.

The Romanticist renewal of national consciousness in the 19th century idealized the Serbian medieval state and rejuvenated some important places and characters from its past in a new way. It was as if the scarce testimonies about Dušan's glorious pious endowment became the inspiration which turned the monastery into a symbol of "the tarnished Serbian empire and dignity." One of the most important, if not the most important, spot during this period belongs to Prizren and the other symbols closely associated to it. The fact that the greatest Serbian ruler was interred in the Monastery has never been forgotten.

After the great wars of liberation at the beginning of the 20th century, artists continued to reconstruct in their works that which was slated for reconstruction after bondage under the Turks but never was.

In recent times the Monastery has become a favorite theme of poets with a decided apocalyptic bend, both in the historical and in the present day contexts.

Details from the floor mosaic at Archangels are frequently used both in secular and religious architecture. The floor of the recently completed New Gračanica near Trebinje in Hercegovina is decorated with scenes from this mosaic. Recent works of art produced in the Monastery itself in recent years are attracting much attention in the world of art.

During the March Pogrom (March 17–18, 2004), Holy Archangels Monastery was looted and burned in the presence of German soldiers who failed to protect it.

http://kosovo.net/default1.html. Used by kind permission of Abbot of Dečani Monastery, Fr Sava (Janjić).

The Head of Emperor Dušan (?), Sculpture from the Royal Graveyard, Holy Archangels Monastery, Prizren

Tombstone inscription of Stracimir Balšić (who took monastic vows and received the name Sava), from the Monastery of the Holy Archangels Prizren, around 1373

The Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria in Mušutište

Church and the living quarters of
the Holy Trinity Monastery in Mušutište,
destroyed by Albanian extremists in 1999

The church of the Mother of God Hodegetria was built as a foundation by kaznac Dragoslav, the chief court governor, and his family, in 1315, in Mušutište, about 6,5 miles to the south-east of Suva Reka. The founder's inscription above the entrance was one of the oldest and most beautiful Serbian epigraphic texts of its kind. It was an edifice with a semi-dome, had an inscribed cross in the ground plan and a semi-round apse. The wall was built of alternating rows of bricks and stone cubes.

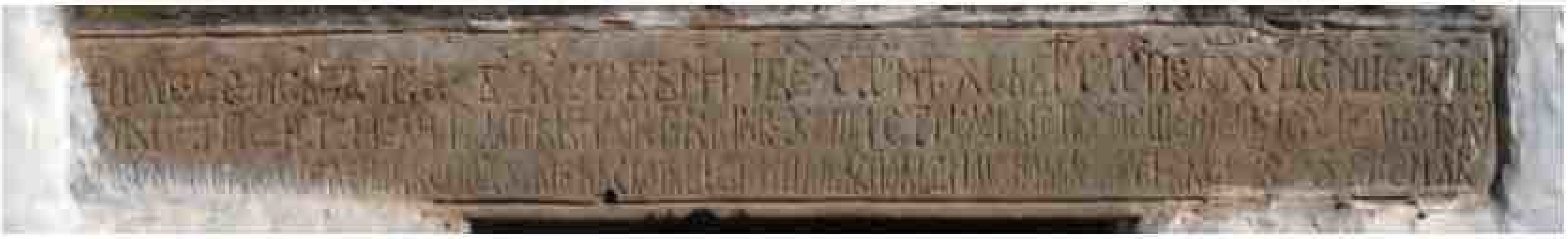
The frescos of the Mušutište School, painted between 1316 and 1320 and famed for their plasticity and the saints' typology, were known as the best examples of Serbian art. That earned them a place in the company of other mature artistic works of the Palaeologan era from the first quarter of the 14th century. In the altar area there was a unique portrait of the South-Slav educator, St. Clement of Ohrid. In the north-western corner of the naos there were figures of holy women, the warriors Sts Theodore Tyro and Theodore Stratelates, angels, and St. Panteleimon. Two throne icons of Christ and The Mother of God dated back to the year 1603. The monastery was destroyed in 1999 by the Albanian extremists.

The monastery of Holy Trinity in Mušutište was mentioned for the first time in 1465. It was abandoned in 1829, only to be renewed in 1837 by distinguished Serb craftsmen from Prizren. During its long history Holy Trinity monks developed artistic workshops—the icons were painted and the manuscripts were produced in the monastery. Up to the present day the monastery treasures a collection of manuscript books and icons dating between 14th and 19th century. The monastery was destroyed by the Albanian extremists in 1999.

Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, Mušutište

The Mother of God, fresco from the Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, Mušutište

Unidentified Saint, fresco from the Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, Mušutište



Founder's inscription of the court governor (kaznac) Jovan Dragoslav, Mušutište, 1315.
The inscription at the entrance of the church was considered one of the oldest and most accomplished Serbian epigraphic texts of its kind.

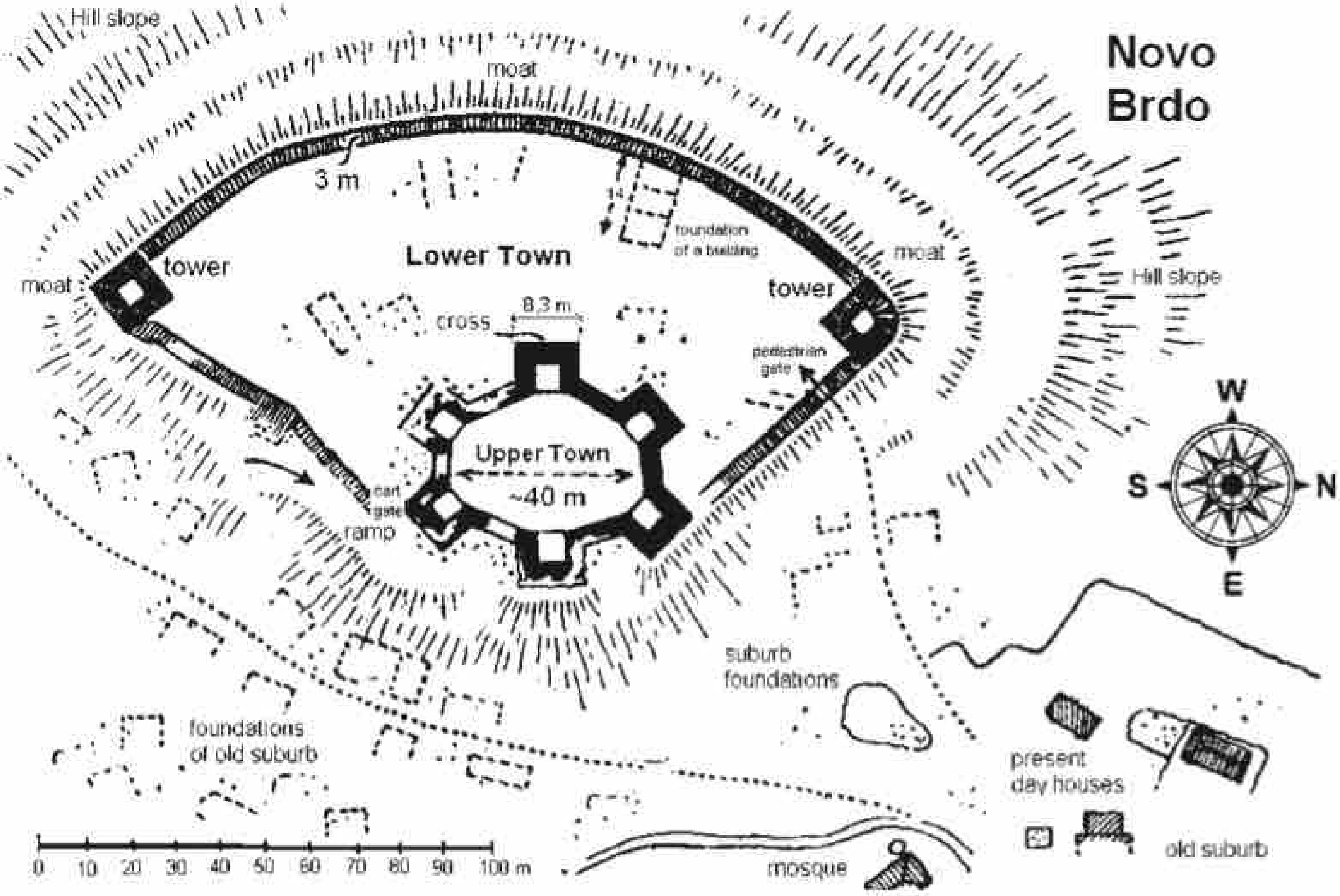
Saint Theodore Tyro and Saint Theodore Stratelates,
fresco from the Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, Mušutište

Saint Clement, Unidentified Holy Bishop and Saint Panteleimon,
frescos from the Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, Mušutište

Novo Brdo: The Largest City in Medieval Serbia

The medieval city of Novo Brdo is situated on the top of the Mala Planina north of Gnjilane. The fortified town and the settlement date back to the early 14th century. From the mid-14th century Novo Brdo (in Western sources often referred as Nuovo Monte) became the largest mining place in the whole of Serbia and her most important urban centre with roughly 7,000 inhabitants. In the immediate vicinity of Novo Brdo, in the suburb of Prilepac, Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović, the martyred hero of the battle of Kosovo was born. Novo Brdo is also a birthplace of famous Serbian writer and poet Vladislav Gramatik, born in the early 15th century.

Silver that was exploited in the mines of Novo Brdo also had a small content of gold. Apart from majority Serbian population, Novo Brdo had various working-related minorities, such as merchants from Ragusa (Dubrovnik), Saxons from Transylvania, mostly miners, as well as Greeks and Albanians. During the reign of the Emperor Stefan Dušan, there was a mint and coins with the name of the city started to be minted in 1349. Novo Brdo silver is known by its argentum glame (an alloy of silver with 1/6–1/3 gold). In 1450 the mines of Novo Brdo were producing about 6,000 kg of silver per year. The city remained to be prosperous during the post-Kosovo period in the Despotate of Serbia, under Despot Stefan Lazarević and his nephew Djuradj Branković in the first half of the 15th century. Despot Stefan, son of Prince Lazar, issued a famous Mining Code (Rudarski zakonik) in Novo Brdo in 1412, regulating economic and administrative rule in the city. The Ottomans eventually conquered the city in 1455, enslaved its inhabitants, and transferred them to Constantinople. The conquest is described by Konstantin Mihailović from Ostrovica near Novo Brdo in his *Memoirs of a Janissary*. Konstantin Mihailović was taken by the Ottomans along with some 300 other Serbian boys to be converted to Islam and trained at the janissary corps of the Ottoman army. The high ranking Serbian officials were immediately executed after the fortress fell in June 1455, while some 700 young



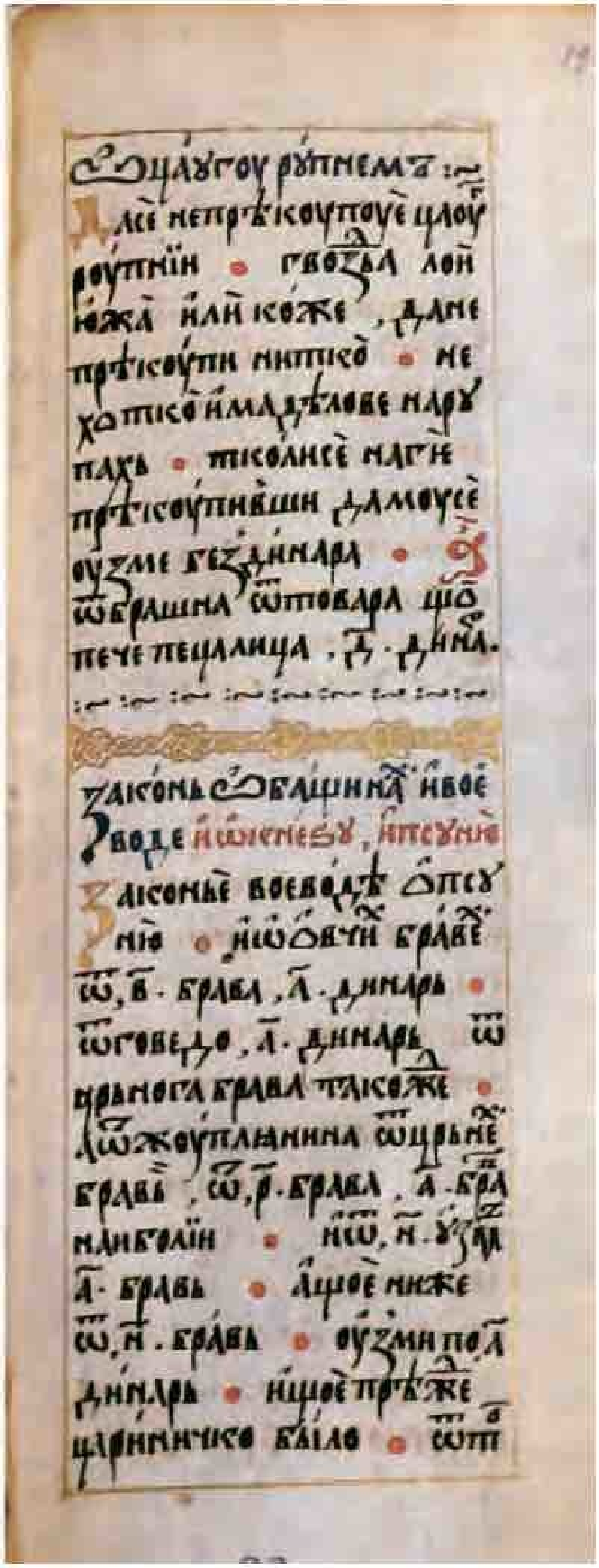
Remnants of Church of the Mother of God, Novo Brdo

Fortress of Novo Brdo

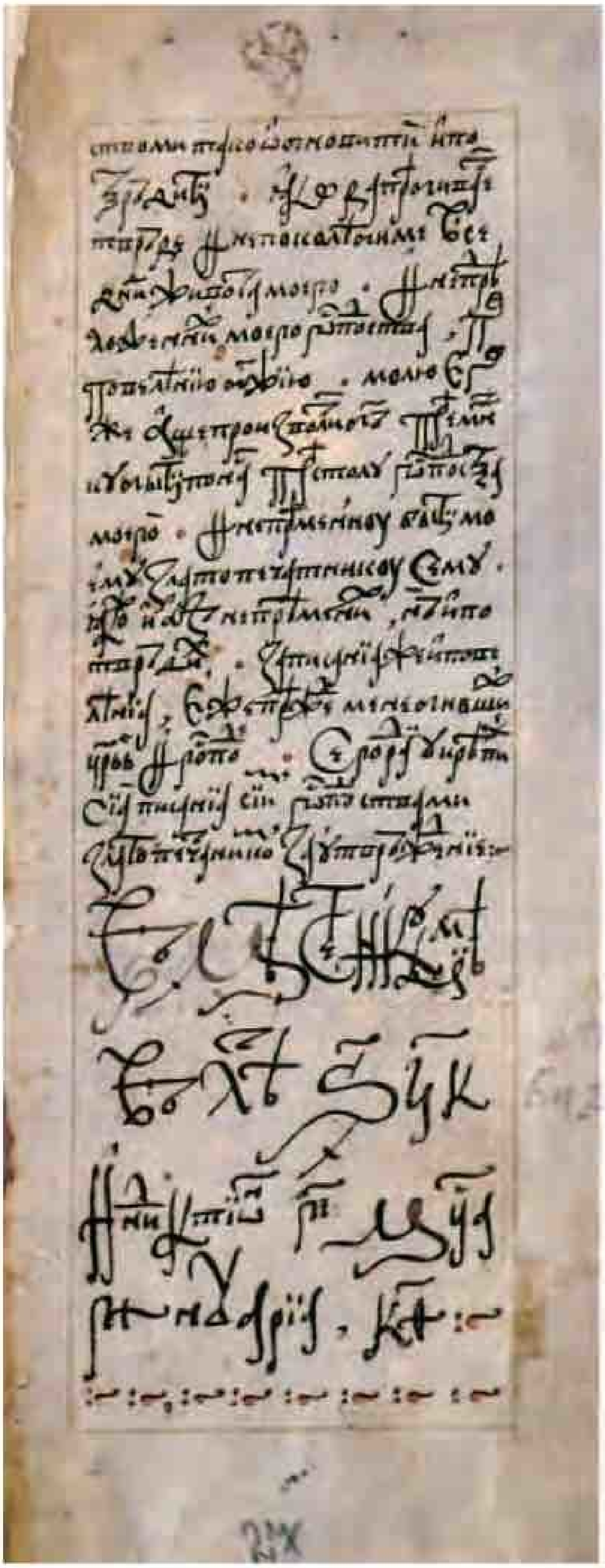
Serbian women and girls were taken to become concubines to the Ottoman commanders. The decline of the once prosperous city, marked by the Ottoman conquest was finalized in the early 17th century when the mines were closed and the city eventually completely abandoned.

The fortress of Novo Brdo is composed of the dominant Upper Town of polygonal shape with six massive rectangular towers. It was built of trimmed broken stone in almost regular layers. The rampart of the Lower Town with two towers stretches towards the west following the configuration of the terrain. The urban settlement with the main city church of St. Nicholas was within the Lower Town and on a wider space east of the fortress. Roughly 900 graves and tombs, built on carved in the rock were discovered in the Saint Nicholas church and its yard. The remnants of the Saxon church, built by the Roman Catholic Saxons and Ragusans were discovered in the eastern portion of the city. Archaeological excavations and parallel conservation works in the complex of the fortified town, urban settlement and the church at Novo Brdo were carried out in several waves by the Belgrade experts between 1952 and 1969.

Novo Brdo (Photo E. Zečević, 2005)



The Mining Code of Despot Stefan Lazarević, Archive of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade



The Mining Code by Despot Stefan Lazarević was preserved as a transcript in a book dated back to 16th century, written on paper column. The front page portrays citizens sitting on wide benches in four rows. Judging by their rich costume and tall caps, usually worn by nobles of 14th century, and canes they were leaning on, it seemed they were respectable mine owners. Such portraits of citizens are extremely rare in the history of Serbian art, which adds value to this Code with the illustration, as an interesting document of times gone by.

Jewelry from Novo Brdo: Ring with incised coat of arms of Lazarević family, gilded silver, mid-15th century; **Carneol ring**, end of 14th–beginning of 15th century; **Golden earrings**, end of 14th–mid-15th century

Wood-carved icon,
14th century Novo Brdo

These objects from archaeological site of Novo Brdo belong to the Archaeological collection of the late middle ages, National Museum, Belgrade. Photos: E. Zečević

Ceramic bowl, 14th–15th century, Novo Brdo

Glass cup, 14th century, Novo Brdo

Velika Hoča

The Church of Saint John the Baptist,
Velika Hoča, 14th–16th century

The village of Velika Hoča is located in the picturesque hilly area full of vineyards south of Orahovac in Metohija. Hoča was well known in the historical sources already at the end of the 12th century by its cultivated vineyards and wines. In 1198 Stephen Nemanja donated it to the Hilandar Monastery, emphasizing that he himself established two vineyards. Nemanja's descendants, Serbian kings, confirmed his gift to Hilandar and, at the same time, enlarged the Hoča lands. In the middle age, Velika Hoča developed into a strong economic and important spiritual center. The sources mention its 12 churches: St. Nicholas from the 14th century, St. John from the 14th century, St. Stephen from the 14th century renewed in the 16th and 19th centuries, St. Kyriake renewed in the 19th century, St. Paraskeve rebuilt in the 20th century, St. Anne rebuilt in 1912, ruins of the church of St. Luke from the 16th century renewed in 1985; the following churches are preserved in ruins: Holy Archangels from the 16th century, St. Peter from the 16th century, Mother of God the Most Pure (*Prečista*), St. Eliah; a church at Dugi Rid is also mentioned in the folk tradition. The monumental wine cellar of the Dečani Monastery, with its vineyards in Hoča ever since the time of Emperor Dušan, is in the Dečani quarter in the center of village. The ground floor of this exceptional achievement of the folk architecture contains cellars with barrels which are 5 m high and 4 m wide. The upper floor with a long wooden trench has rooms for the rest of winegrowers.

Church of Saint John

The church of Saint John is located on the elevation near the eastern entrance in Velika Hoča. It was probably built in the 14th century which is confirmed only by fragments of frescos from that time. Architecturally unusual, the church has the shape of tetrakonhos with square narthex. Lateral apses are lower than the ones on the east and west. Naos and narthex are covered with semi-oval vault. The apses are polygonal from outside and semi-circular inside. In the 1580s, the church was repainted. The altar area has the paintings of Mother of God, Liturgy of Archpriests, Communion of apostles and Annunciation, while in the first zone standing saints are painted and in the narrow column above them there are down-to-the-waist representations. The cycles of Great Feasts, Passion of Christ and Akathist Hymn are painted in higher zones of the temple. Iconographic contents of the paintings in narthex, with the interesting choice of scenes, emphasizes the message of prayers to Christ. On the eastern wall of narthex in the Deisis composition, Virgin Mary and St. John the Baptist address prayers of the human race to Christ to be a mild judge on the Last Judgment painted on the western wall. The portrait of St. John is painted in the niche above the entrance in naos, while the scenes from his life are illustrated in higher zones of narthex. Conservation works on the paintings were carried out in 1975.

View of the south and the west wall of the naos,
Church of Saint John, Velika Hoča

Akatistos Hymn, detail: 1st and 2nd oikos, south wall, Church of Saint John, Velika Hoča, 16th century

Communion of the Apostles, detail, altar apse, Church of Saint John, Velika Hoča, 16th century

Saint Artemius, north conch, Church of Saint John, Velika Hoča, 16th century

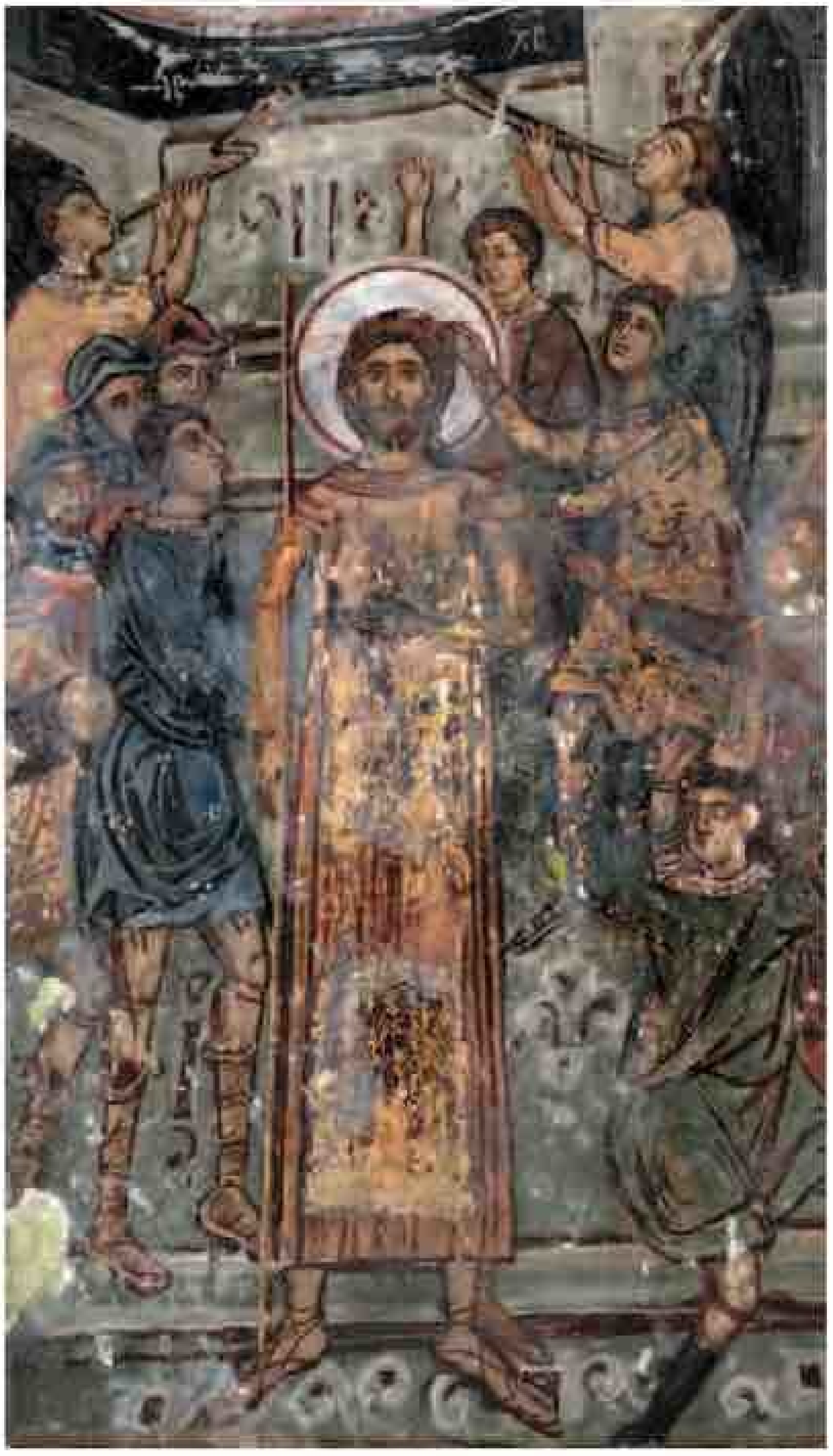
Church of Saint Nicholas

The church of Saint Nicholas, at the graveyard above the village, was built and painted by 1345. In that year, nun Marta was buried in that church, mother of landowner Gradislav Sušenica, which is inscribed on her tombstone. It is supposed that the temple was built by the parents of landowner Gradislav in the second quarter of the 14th century. The church is an one-nave building covered with semi-oval vault, with the apse three-sided from outside and semi-circular inside. The wall between narthex and naos was removed. Part of the original wall paintings is preserved only on the western wall which, by its style, belongs to the time of King Dušan. It is supposed that the paintings were commissioned by Gradislav Sušenica himself. The scenes of the cycle of St. Nicholas include, inter alia, the composition of St. Sava and St. Simeon Nemanja bowing to the icon of Virgin Mary with Christ. After the renewal in the 16th century, the church was repainted. Above the zone of standing saints, there are busts in medallions and the cycles of Great Feasts, Passion of Christ and St. Nicholas, while the Akathist Hymn, Christ's miracles and parables and the Last Judgment are illustrated in narthex. Conservation works on the paintings were carried out in the 1970–1975 period.

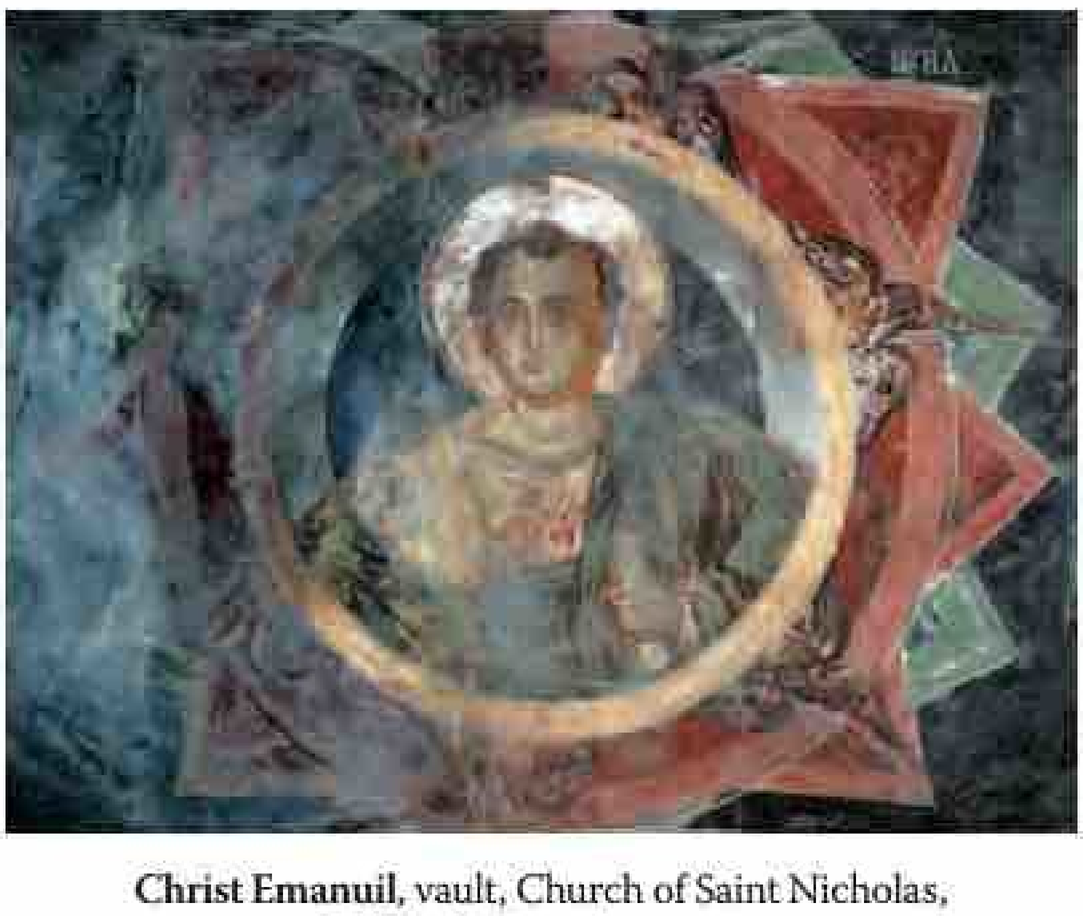
Church of Saint Nicholas, Velika Hoča, 14th–16th century

Cycle of Saint Nicholas, remains of 14th century fresco painting, west wall, Church of Saint Nicholas, Velika Hoča

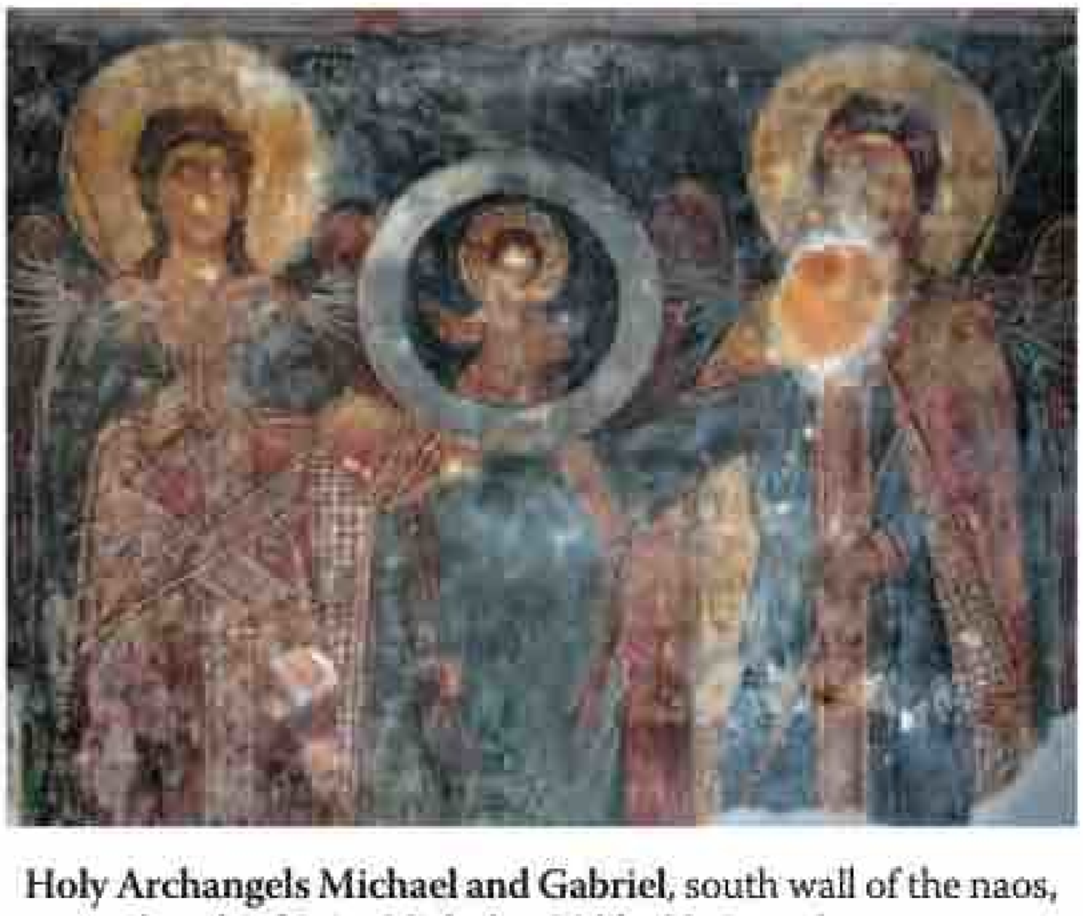
Saint Nicholas, icon painted by Longin, ca. 1557,
Church of Saint Nicholas, Velika Hoča



The Mocking of Christ, north wall of the naos,
Church of Saint Nicholas, Velika Hoča, 16th century



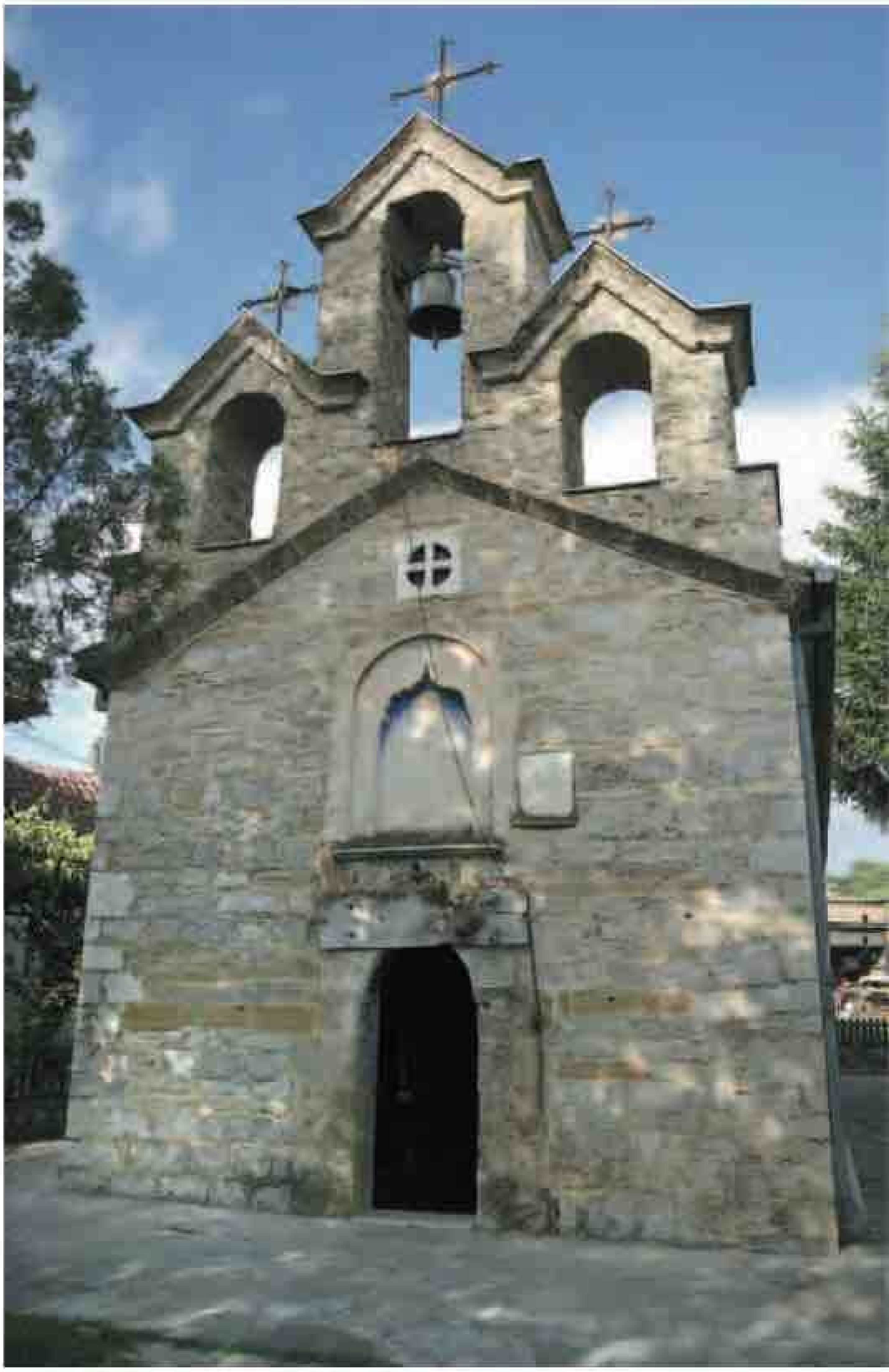
Christ Emanuil, vault, Church of Saint Nicholas,
Velika Hoča, 16th century



Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel, south wall of the naos,
Church of Saint Nicholas, Velika Hoča, 16th century

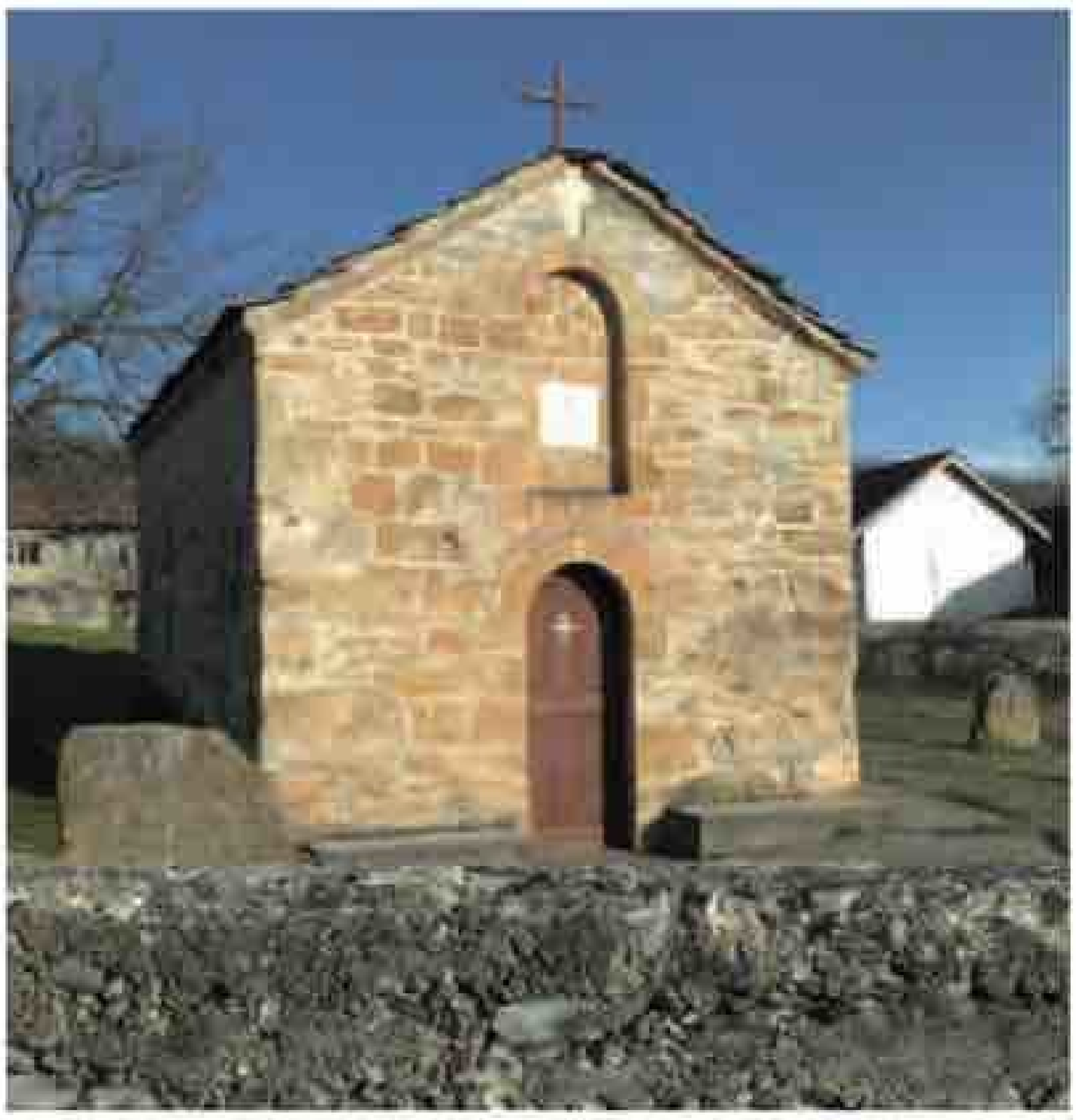
Inscription about building and painting the Church of Saint Stephen, from 1864, Church of Saint Stephen, Velika Hoča

Holy King Stephen Dečanski, west wall of the naos, Church of Saint Stephen, Velika Hoča, 1863–1864



Church of Saint Stephen, Velika Hoča

Mother of God with Christ Child,
icon from Church of Saint Triphon, Velika Hoča



Church of Saint Luke, Velika Hoča

Festive Celebration at the Church of Saint John the Baptist, Velika Hoča

Kosovo Polje—Gazimestan
Memorial Complex of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo

The historical area of the Kosovo Battle which took place in 1389, i.e. the central place of clash between the Serbian and Ottoman armies, is a unique whole consisting of the monument to the Kosovo heroes in the shape of medieval tower, built in 1953 and designed by Aleksandar Deroko, Murat's turbeh and Gazimestan turbeh (Barjaktar's [flag bearer] turbeh). The area of the Gazimestan, Plandište, Tresevina and Lazarevo memorial complex is bordering, on the north, with the Bakšija area; on the north--east with the Brnjica river, on the east with the town of Donja Brnjica and the Ravnište area; on the south with the Orlović area and town; and on the west with the Široko Polje and Mazgit areas with the town of Gornji Mazgit. The road to Priština on the western side is partially bordering with and partially passing through the area. The central place is the tower, 25 m high, whose interior is inscribed by the verses of the Kosovo poem cycle. There is a platform on the top of the tower overlooking the area of the Kosovo Battle. On the occasion of the celebration of the sixth century from the Kosovo Battle, art applications in cast bronze symbolizing the jubilee years were made around the tower. A white monolith marble column with the text by Despot Stefan Lazarević was erected in the vicinity of the monument.

Inscription from the epic ballad on Kosovo on the monument to Kosovo heroes at Kosovo Field

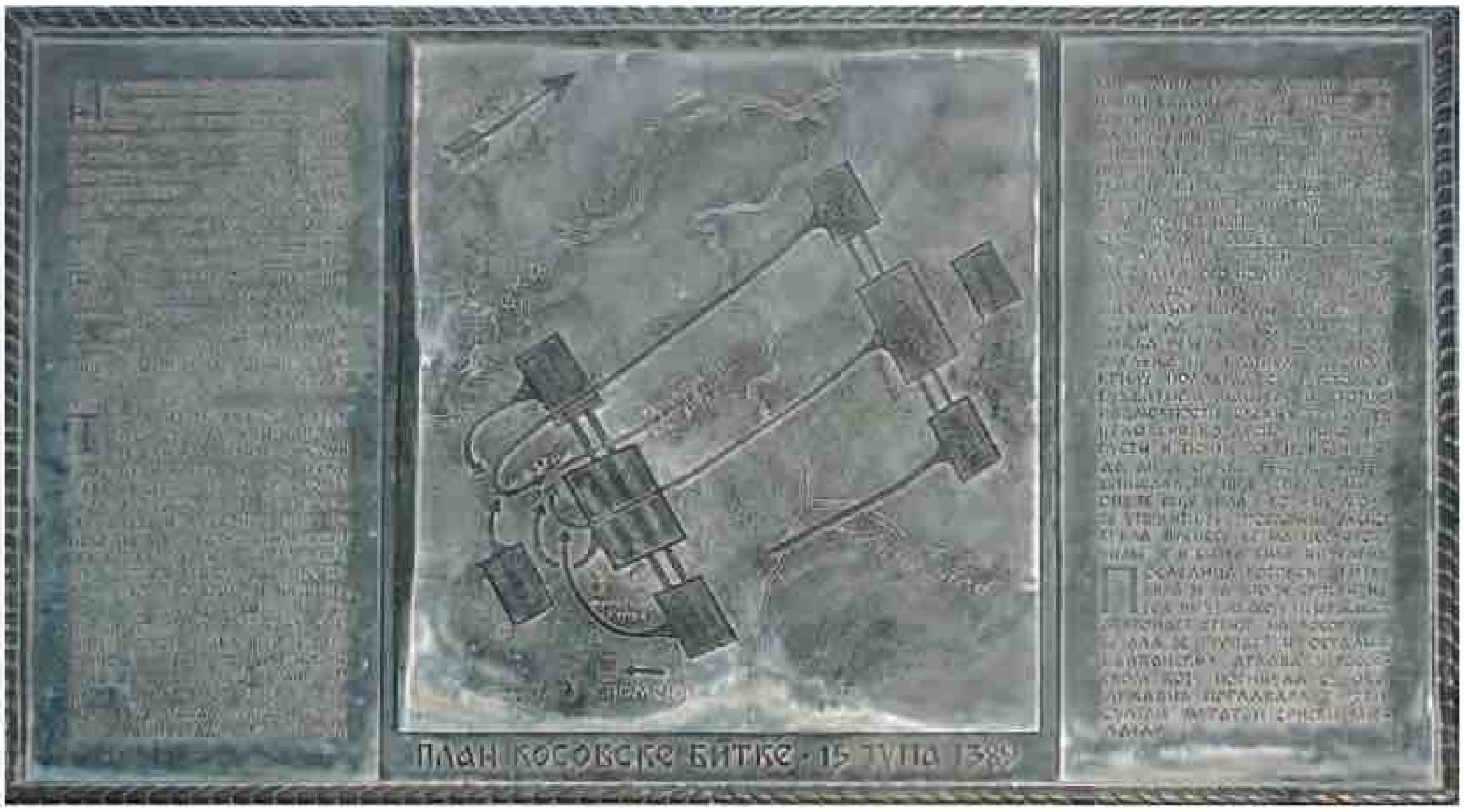
Whoever is a Serb, of Serbian blood,
Whoever shares with me this heritage,
And he comes not to fight at Kosovo,
May he never have the progeny
His heart desires, neither son nor daughter;
Beneath his hand let nothing decent grow—
Neither purple grapes nor wholesome wheat;
Let him rust away like dripping iron
Until his name shall be extinguished!

Tomb of Sultan Murat, Gazimestan at Kosovo Field

Entrance to the monument build in 1953

Monument to Kosovo heroes at Kosovo Field

The plan of the Battle of Kosovo 1389



The Splendor of the Serbian Empire

Steven Runciman

Indeed, none of Byzantium's god-children were allowed to reach maturity in peace. Bulgaria and Serbia revived in the late twelfth century, and each founded Empires, the first to last nearly two centuries till it fell before the Turk, the latter to linger a century longer till the field of Kosovo reduced it to a vassaldom that soon became slavery. Both developed their Byzantine civilization. The history of Bulgaria under the Asen dynasty is obscure; of its literature little has survived, and external records are scrappy and confused. More than once the Tsars threate-ned Constantinople during the Latin Empire. But the Paleologan recovery and the rival growth of Serbia overshadowed the Bulgars. Influential Byzantine-born or Serbian Tsaritsas weakened their independence. Neverheless they produced an art, illustrated in the churches of Trnovo and the frescos of Bojana, Byzantine basically but in simplicity of form and warmth of coloring acquiring a character of its own.

The Serbian Empire was more splendid. Indeed, in the 14th century the Tsar Stephen Dušan was probably the most powerful monarch in Europe; and Constantinople seemed indubitably within his grasp. The disciplined Bulgar system of government lent itself easily to Imperialization. Serbia, however, had a native system that might almost be called feudal; the Serbian monarch was by no means absolute over his vassals. Thus Serbia was never so Byzantine. But there was a constant stream of Byzantine influence. Several Byzantine princesses made Serbian marriages, many Byzantine embassies travelled to the Serbian Court-which princesses and ambassadors alike represented as fiendishly uncomfortable and austere. When Stephen Dušan issued a code of laws, though the basis was largely Serbian feudalism, the bulk of it was certainly culled from the law-books of Byzantium. Serbian pictorial art was very Byzantine; Serbian architecture developed national characteristics. The proximity of Dalmatia and a Helena of Anjou descent, wife of of Stephen Uroš I, gave it in the thirteenth century an Italo-Gothic tinge. In the Fourteenth, the golden age of Serbia, Byzantine ideals and Byzantine queens dominated again; but Serbian architects kept certain ideas of their own. But, like Russia, neither Bulgaria nor Serbia was given time to pursue its career to full maturity. The Turks reduced them too soon to slavery and their civilization crumbled—save what the Church, struggling humbly against innumerable difficulties, managed by tenacity to preserve.

It is therefore unfair to judge Byzantine mission-work on the present state of the Balkan countries. For the Balkan countries have only recently emerged from four centuries' black night. Rather we should compare them as they were before the Ottoman conquest with the 14th century West--compare Salisbury Cathedral with the great Serbian Church of Gračanica. The former may soar grace-fully heavenward; the latter with the simplicity of its design, the comprehensive economy of its balance and its stresses and the rich restrained decoration of its interior, is the work of a people no less spiritual but far more sophisticated and cultured.

Steven Runciman,
Byzantine Civilization, Plume 1969.

Emperor Stefan Dušan,
north wall of the narthex, Dečani, 1346

Coronation of Emperor Dušan, oil on canvas by Paja Jovanović

Marriage of Emperor Dušan, oil on canvas by Paja Jovanović

The coronation of the Serbian Emperor Stefan Dušan,
from the Cycle, *The Slavonic Epic*, No 6, Alphonse Mucha, 1926

Next pages:
Jesus and the Samaritan Woman, The Healing of the Man Born Blind and Jesus and the Woman Taken in Adultery,
vault of the narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1565

ХС БЕСЕДУЕТЬ ЖЕНЕ САМАРАНЦИ
ПРИВОДЕТЬ ИЮДЕИ КЬ ХОУ ЖЕНУ ПРЕЛЮБОДЕИЦУ · ХС ВЬСКЛОНСЕ ДОЛУ ПИСАШЕ ПЕРСТО
ІС ХС

Service of the Hierarchs, narthex, Chapel of the Saint George, east wall, Dečani

The Trial and the Death of Saint George, Chapel of the Saint George, east wall, Dečani

Previous page:
The Trial of the Apostles Peter and John before the High priests, vault of the southwest bay, Dečani

II

THE KOSOVO COVENANT
AND
SERBIA'S HISTORIC DESTINY

The Kosovo Maiden,
Uroš Predić, 1917, Belgrade City Museum

The Battle of Kosovo in Its Epic Mosaic

Svetozar Koljević

Much European Folklore is indeed "fakelore" by American standards. The interplay of the oral and the written traditions, often marked by the merging of pagan, Christian and feudal concepts, has been a two-way traffic in Europe at least since the Middle Ages. Behind the literary culture of the monks or the scribes to whom we owe *Beowulf*, the *Chanson de Roland*, or the *Nibelingenlied* there were centuries of oral traditions. The Romantics resurrected these "fakelore" products as lofty, if abstruse, symbols of national identity, which soon became a form of *wissenschaftlich* rather than popular or courtly entertainment. At the same time some "small" nations, often at the European cultural "periphery," were discovering their own folklore as a living spiritual expression of their national life. As a result of foreign rule and cultural domination, they were denied the natural literary links with their medieval heritage, the flourishing literature of the Renaissance, and the grand delusions of the Age of Enlightenment; thus they cultivated folklore which for centuries absorbed almost all the available national talent and performed the basic functions of "literary" expression. Such discoveries as the *Kaleval* or the Irish or Serbo-Croat folk traditions had enormous appeal, not least perhaps because of the historical and cultural context of national revivals and struggles for political independence.

In this sense Vuk Stefanović Karadžić the greatest collector of Serbo-Croat folk traditions, was born under a lucky star. His family had come from Herzegovina, the cradle of Serbo-Croat heroic singing. Here the migratory, largely Orthodox population had long and bitter memories of lost national grandeur, memories which were daily revived in new blood-baths. Furthermore, Karadžić himself happened to live at the moment when this tradition was experiencing its swan-song. The First Serbian Uprising, which brought together many fragments of long epic memory, gave its historical perspective to the whole heroic landscape and attracted some of the greatest living singers—Filip Višnjić, Tešan Podrugović, Old Milija and others—into a common epic orbit.

Karadžić was also a unique collector in so far as he "combined in his own person both the lite rate and non-literate cultures."[1] What other European collector could write down genuine heroic songs from his own memory? Moreover, when he came to live as an exile in Vienna (1813–14), after the failure of the First Serbian Uprising and the national cause he had personally served, his memory was not only a storehouse of heroic songs. As Ivo Andrić observed, Karadžić's memory was "an enormous inventory of Serbian reality and everything that was connected with that distant reality," not "a mere mnemotechnical phenomenon but at the same time the fruit and the measure" of his "intimate ties with his people and its destiny." [2] In short, as he "grew up where heroic poems were sung and recited (as in the middle of Herzegovina)," he "knew many, many of them from his childhood and understood them just as ordinary folk understand them."[3] His father's house was the winter abode of many singers who came from Herzegovina and, as in the good old times, "all winter long sang and recited poems."[4] His grandfather and his uncle were singers; and even his father, who as "a pious and serious-minded man" cared little for songs,[5] inadvertently remembered such masterworks as "Pieces from Various Kosovo Poems." And can one imagine a more exciting time or a better place for listening to heroic songs than Loznica in 1807, where Karadžić worked as a scribe for Jakov Nenadović, an Orthodox priest and a famous military commander who liked heroic songs so much that he could hardly eat his lunch or dinner without them? And when Karadžić lived in Srem from the end of 1814 to the middle of 1815, he had already been encouraged in his work as a collector by Jernej Kopitar, a great Slavic scholar and the imperial censor of Slavic books in

1 M. P. Coote, "Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs," Heroic Epic and Saga, edited by Felix J. Oinas (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1978), p. 260.

2 Ivo Andrić, "Vukov primer," *Umetnik i njegovo delo, Eseji II*, Sabrana dela, XIII (Belgrade, 1975), p. 116.

3 Vuk Stef. Karadžić, "Pravi uzrok i podetak skupljanja našijeh narodnijeh pjesama," *O srpskoj narodnoj poeziji*, edited by Borivoje Marinković (Belgrade, 1964), p. 184.

4 Vuk Stef. Karadžić, "Predgovor," *Srpske narodne pjesme*, edited by Vladan Nedić, 4 vols. (Belgrade, 1969) IV, p. 380. This edition will henceforth be referred to as *Karadžić*.

5 *Karadžić*, IV, p. 374.

Vienna. Karadžić devoted himself wholeheartedly to one of the greatest tasks of his life—writing down over two hundred "women's songs" and several dozen heroic poems, many of them from his greatest poets, such as Filip Višnjić, Tešan Podrugović, blind Živana and others. In fact, while Karadžić was staying at the Monastery of Šišatovac, his host, the learned Abbot Lukijan Mušicki, brought Filip Višnjić to the monastery and thus enabled Karadžić to write down fifteen poems.

What Karadžić gave his singers was his absolute trust in their art, his unparalleled understanding of it, his perseverance in looking for the best songs, and his critical genius in discerning them. His editing was negligible;[6] and his arrangement was simple, straightforward, and basically chronological, with poems grouped round certain heroes and historical events. Unlike earlier and many later collectors who wrote down and published whatever they could find, Karadžić aimed at giving a complete picture of the epic awareness of history as embodied in the greatest songs. For instance, he refused to publish any of the several versions of "The Wedding of King Vukašin" until he managed to get hold of an excellent variant sung to him by Stojan the Outlaw, a man who was serving sentence in jail for having killed a witch who had "eaten" his child.[7] It is also to his perseverance, zest, and fastidious tastes that we owe "Banović Strahinja," the longest and perhaps the greatest of all the Kosovo poems in the language. For this effort Karadžić needed to get hold of Old Milija. He finally reached him in Kragujevac in 1822, but only after the Serbian Prince Miloš, illiterate himself, had given strict orders to his head clerk "to have Milija brought in alive or dead."[8] The recording of these poems from a singer who could not tell them without sipping *slivovitz* was a great ordeal. It came to an abrupt and disappointing end when some loitering yokels managed to persuade Old Milija that his harvest would go to the dogs if he went on wasting his time with such a madman as Karadžić who obviously cared only for songs.

All this explains why the four volumes of his definitive Viennese edition of folk songs are such a splendid monument to his hard work, fine taste, and great insight.[9] The three volumes containing heroic songs (II-IV) are the richest imaginative reflection of the history of his people and of the various spiritual and moral possibilities of that history's understanding and interpretation. At the heart of this epic landscape are the poems about the Serbian knights dying on the cross of honor in the Battle of Kosovo (1389). While these are often seen in the light of high medieval Christian symbols, they are also represented in terms of the later dramas of the Serbian peasant's patriarchal life. All that precedes this great historical watershed in Karadžić's heroic songs— the picture of the grandeur and corruption of the medieval Serbian state, of the greatness and folly of its feudal lords—is seen in terms of the approaching disaster. Most of what follows is the aftermath of the great catastrophe: the desperate and hopeless but honorable defense of the remaining fortified cities; the attempts of the Ottoman vassal Marko Kraljević to provide some sort of piecemeal justice to the individual victims of the Ottoman terror; and the efforts of the outlaws to carry on the banner of high idealism in the terrifying circumstances of tyranny, plunder, and torture. Finally, the First Serbian Uprising is seen as an imaginative settling of the Kosovo accounts: the cursing of the prospective traitors echoes Prince Lazar's words on the eve of the Battle of Kosovo;[10] and the new protagonists—"the poor rayah," the non-Moslem plebs—"grow like grass out of the earth"[11] and "tie a red flame into the sky."[12] In this sense the whole epic landscape is illuminated by the light of the heroic singing about the Battle of Kosovo.

The heroic songs about this great battle fed on the rich soil of historical memories, myths, and legends from which high feudal concepts were sifted for centuries until they were deeply absorbed and transformed in the folk imagination. Apart from the earliest sporadic and fragmentary references to the Battle of Kosovo in different sources,[13] the first "unfermented" but suggestive elements of the legend are found in the work of the Christian monk, Constantine the Philosopher, who wrote the biography of his patron, Prince Lazar's son Stefan Lazarević, about forty years after the battle. He notes that Miloš Obilić, the central figure and the greatest hero of the later Kosovo poems, was "a very noble man" whom "the envious slan-

6 According to V. Nedić, Vuk Karadžić respected "the authenticity" of his singers "more than any of his contemporaries" ("Karadžićeva zbirka narodnih pesama," *Karadžić*, IV, p. 391). This view is confirmed by John M. Foley: "In general, the emendations introduced by Vuk into the texts of the songs that he published seem on the basis of the evidence available, to be infrequent and slight; more importantly for our purposes, they seem also to have been insignificant with respect to the larger question of aesthetics." In "Literary Art and Oral Tradition in Old English and Serbian Poetry," *Anglo-Saxon England*, XII (1983, 92–94).

7 See "Predgovor," *Karadžić*, IV, p. 380, fn. 2.

8 "Predgovor," *Karadžić*, IV, p. 368.

9 This edition was published under the title *Srpske narodne pjesme* in four volumes in Vienna, in 1841, 1845, 1846 and 1862 respectively. The best modern edition, closely following Karadžić's test and orthography, correcting only misprints, is *Karadžić*, I-IV.

10 Compare, for instance, the cursing of the traitors in "Pieces from Various Kosovo Poems" ("Whoever will not fight at Kosovo, / May nothing grow that his hand sows: / Neither the white wheat in his field, / Nor the vine of grapes on his mountain!"— Karadžić, II, № 50, 11. 3–6) and the call for the battle in "The Battle of Loznica" ("Who betrays us, may summer betray him! / May he have no harvest of white grain! / May his old mother never look on him! / May his dear sister never swear by him!"— *Karadžić*, IV, № 33, 11. 421–24.

11 "The Beginning of the Revolt Against the Dahijas," *Karadžić*, IV, № 24, 11. 145, 569.

12 "The Battle of Loznica," *Karadžić*, IV, № 33, 1. 546.

13 Very detailed and scholarly discussions of the development of legends concerning the Battle of Kosovo and Prince Lazar can be found in the studies of Jelka Redjep, *Priča o boju kosovskom* (Zrenjanin, 1976) and Rade Milhaljčić, *Lazar Hrebeljanović* (Belgrade, 1984).

dered to their master and accused of treason,"[14] and that he proved his courage and loyalty by killing the Ottoman sultan Murad. This is the germ of the epic drama of loyalty to the sovereign despite slanders and suspicions, a drama which assumes the characteristic medieval concept that the sovereign embodies something much greater and more significant than his own person. Constantine also claims that the Ottomans won the battle "because God allowed it," and in his story Prince Lazar dies crowned with "a martyr's laurel" while his knights eagerly plead "to be killed before him so that they should not witness his death."[15] This chivalric and Christian commitment to the "heavenly kingdom" contains the first suggestions of some elements which will later be found in the greatest moral landscape of Serbian heroic songs.

At the end of the fifteenth century after several later versions of the same story, Konstantin Mihailović of Ostrovica suggests that discord and treachery are to blame for the defeat at Kosovo. In the heroic songs these motifs eventually grew into the image of medieval feudal factions as a major epic explanation for the defeat in the Battle of Kosovo. Of course, Konstantin of Ostrovica was writing with the expertise of a Serbian soldier who became a Turkish janissary before he fled back to Christendom; and he was, above all, anxious to instruct the Poles and other Christians that they could resist the Ottoman invasion only if they attained a strong alliance. "Wherever there is no concord, no good can come about in any way," he says and then proceeds to describe the course of the Battle of Kosovo: "The noblemen who were well-disposed toward Lazar fought bravely and loyally by his side, but others—looking through their fingers— watched the battle, and because of this disloyalty and discord (and the envy of bad and dishonest men), the battle was lost."[16] This introduces a major dramatic element into the legend: the defeat in the Battle of Kosovo is a deserved punishment for discord; but the punishment falls on the head of the innocent Prince Lazar, and he becomes a Christ figure, a heroic martyr expiating other men's sins.

Deeply rooted in folk and biblical traditions, Konstantin of Ostrovica describes in the same legendary spirit Lazar's courage in facing death. Lazar refuses to answer Bajazid's questions, and he ignores Duke Krajmir's warning to refrain from defying his enemy because "the head is not like the stump of a willow tree to sprout a second time."[17] It is worth noting that several centuries later Filip Višnjić, the great blind bard, makes use of the same image when Captain Čurćija points out in "The Battle of Čokešina" that he is not sufficiently foolhardy to fight against the overwhelming Turkish forces; for he is well aware that he is not a willow tree: "When they cut me down I sprout no more."[18] Of course, this image echoes the biblical example: "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease, but man dieth and wasteth away: yes, man giveth up the ghost, and where *is* he?"[19] But whereas in the biblical context the image is a metaphysical assessment of human destiny, in Višnjić's poetic utterance we cannot be quite sure whether it suggests that cowardice is the only possible form of common sense or, perhaps considering the overall context of the First Serbian Uprising, that common sense itself is the greatest folly at such a decisive historical moment.

Similarly Karadžić's singers did not repeat, but they *used* various motifs of the version of the Kosovo legend, which a Slovene traveller Benedikt Kuripešić recorded in his description of a journey through the Slavonic regions of the Balkans in 1530. Kuripešić notes that the heroic deeds of Miloš Obilić (or Kobilović, as he calls him[20]) were sung in all areas from old Serbia to western Bosnia and Croatia. In this version Miloš again appears as Lazar's bravest knight who remains loyal to his master in spite of the fact that he has been slandered and insulted even by Lazar himself. Kuripešić's story also contains a description of Lazar's banquet with his knights on the eve of the battle, which was in fact a historical custom described in Byzantine military protocols.[21] It also reappeared as an important motif in the great poem, "The Prince's Supper," which Karadžić wrote down about three hundred years later. Kuripešić tells his story in the feudal social setting of his times, but Karadžić's poem echoes the biblical story of the Last Supper and suspected betrayal, and his heroes speak in the much rougher voice of the later leaders of the Serbian peasantry.

From these and similar elements—which can be followed in many versions of the legend and have been described in great detail in recent scholarship[22]—singers of many different times and social settings inherited the basic themes and motifs of their poems about the Battle of Kosovo. Of course, in poetry, the way a subject is treated, a narrative is told, or an image is used, changes the substance of the story. The first recorded "Song of the Battle of Kosovo" was written down by a learned and conscientious poet in the middle of the eighteenth century in the vicinity of Dubrovnik. In spite of deceptive parallels, it is very different in spirit and body from the corresponding

14 Konstantin Filozof, "Život despota Stefana Lazarevića," in G. Camblak, Konstantin Filozof, Pajsije Patrijarh, *Stare srpske biografije XVI–XVII veka*. III, trans. by L. Mirković (Belgrade, 1936), p. 59.

15 Konstantin Filozof, p. 60.

16 Konstantin Mihailović iz Ostrovice, *Janičarove uspomene*, edited by Djordje Živanović (Belgrade, 1986), p. 98.

17 Mihailović, *Janičarove uspomene*, p. 99.

18 "The Battle of Čokešina," *Karadžić*, IV, № 26, ll. 100, 104.

19 Job 14:7.

20 See Benedikt Kuripešić, *Putopis kroz Bosnu, Srbiju, Bugarsku i Rumeliju 1530* (Sarajevo, 1950), pp. 33–34.

21 See Svetozar Radojčić, "Kosovka djevojka," *Uzori i dela starih srpskih umetnika* (Belgrade, 1975), p. 240. See also J. L. Vieillefond, "Les pratiques religieuses dans l'armee byzantine d'apres les traits militaires," *Revue des etudes anciennes*, XXXVII (1935): 322–30.

22 See above, fn. 13.

poems in Karadžić's collections. At first glance one might be tempted to claim that it contains everything, or almost everything, that is found in the later decasyllabic poems: the preparation of Musić Stjepan for the battle, Milica's desire to have one of her brothers left behind, the exchange of toasts on the eve of the battle, the slander of Miloš Obilić, the treason of Vuk Branković, and Miloš's heroic exploit and death.[23]

However, the "Song of the Battle of Kosovo" is long-winded not only because it is composed as a *bugarštica* (in lines varying usually from fourteen to sixteen syllables), but also because it has few, if any, intellectual and moral surprises. In this poem for instance, one of the knights, Musić Stjepan, with his servant Oliver (who seems to have walked out of a French romance), shows his loyalty to Prince Lazar by disregarding the ominous dream of his wife and turning up in time for the battle. In the corresponding decasyllabic version, we are not witnessing such a chivalric, rational moral gesture. Musić Stefan, as he comes to be called in this version, knows that he will be late for the battle but that it is never too late to die a heroic death. Rational support and a possibly favorable outcome are no longer real issues; instead, the poet sings about irrational ideals in the context of an approaching disaster, and he thus reflects a sense of history characteristic of Serbian patriarchal communities under Ottoman rule. In this respect Musić's recollection of the prince's curse on those who do not come to fight is revealing:

Of Serbians by nation and by birth.
And by their blood and by their ancestry,
Whoever does not fight at Kosovo,
May he have no dear children born to him,
May neither boy nor girl be born to him!
May nothing bear fruit that his hand sows,
Neither the white wheat nor the red wine!
His blight rot all his brood while it endures![24]

Why does this medieval knight, like so many other heroes in the decasyllabic poems of the Kosovo cycle, speak in the voice of the Serbian patriarchal peasantry? It is this voice that connects the legends of Kosovo with the epic landscape of the preceding medieval times— with Jug-Bogdan's dark forebodings of "the last times" when "the sheep and the wheat shall vanish away,"[25] and with the all-pervading presentiment of universal natural and historical catastrophe as a deserved punishment of humanity. This was powerfully evoked in "The Saints Divide the Treasure " when Elijah the Thunderer seals up the clouds so that:

No rain will fall from the clouds,
No streaming rain, no quiet dew,
And no bright shining of the moon,
No rain will fall for three years of seasons,
No wheat will grow, no wine will flourish.[26]

Of course, this image cluster is undoubtedly as old as man's sense of his dependence on earth and sky; but here it provides a cosmic framework for the approaching Kosovo disaster. In short, in their long and complex growth, the Kosovo legends fed on the echoes of historical realities, on numerous motifs of the medieval Serbian literature, on biblical references, and on the absorption of diverse elements and beliefs into folk agrarian culture. At the time of the First Serbian Uprising this rich heritage was given the final imaginative imprint of the fears and expectations of Serbian village communities, which were haunted by forebodings of their approaching total eradication and, at the same time, by dreams of the triumph of their greatest political, moral, and spiritual ideals.

It is within this broad historical and imaginative context that Lazar's choice of "the heavenly," as opposed to "the earthly kingdom" can be partly understood, enigmatic as it is in "The Downfall of the Serbian Empire."[27] This phrase is perhaps the best-known summing up of the whole Kosovo myth; and Lazar's choice is, of course, "a repetition and periphrasis of similar points made in Serbian historical literature in the Middle Ages."[28] But what it means in the poem in which it occurs is not clear because at the end of this story, on the threshold of the disaster, the singer suddenly changes her mind and suggests that it is not so much Lazar's choice as it is the treason of Vuk Branković which is the main reason for catastrophe:

Lazar would have overcome the Turks,—
God be the death of Vuk Branković![29]

This *volte-face* in the denouement of the epic story illustrates a typical difficulty of the singers who had to merge the often-incompatible elements of their legends and stories. However, the meaning and significance of Lazar's choice of "the heavenly kingdom" in the Kosovo myth can be much better understood in the context of the "Pieces from Various Kosovo Poems," which Karadžić wrote down from his father. In this poem Sultan Murad sends the message to Prince Lazar, forcing him to choose between living as a Ottoman vassal and dying as a hero:

We cannot both of us be ruler,
Send every key to me and every tax,
The keys of gold that unlock the cities,
And the taxes on heads for seven years,
And if you will not send these things to me,
Then come down to Kosovo meadow,
We shall divide up this land with our swords![30]

23 See "The Song of the Battle of Kosovo" ("Popijevka o kosovskom boju,") in Miroslav Pantić (ed.) *Narodne pesme u zapisima XV-XVIII veka* [Belgrade, 1964], pp. 118–24).

24 "Musić Stefan," *Karadžić*, II, № 47, 11.21–28.

25 "Ženidba kneza Lazara," *Karadžić*, II, № 32, 11. 107–8.

26 "Sveci blago dijele," *Karadžić*, II, № 1, 11. 44–48.

27 *Karadžić*, II, № 46, 11. 13–14.

28 S. Matić, "Beleške i objašnjenja" in Vuk Stef. Karadžić, *Srpske narodne pjesme, II*, edited by Radomir Aleksić (Belgrade, 1958), p. 712.

29 *Karadžić*, II, № 46, 11. 85–86.

30 *Karadžić*, II, № 50 (I), 11. 9–15.

Serbian Bard, playing songs of Kosovo Battle on gusle (one string violin), Paja Jovanović, 1944

As Lazar knows that he will have to fight against hopeless odds—or at least the later Serbian patriarchal communities under Ottoman rule know it—he weeps as he reads "the book."[31] His tears mirror the inevitability of his honorable choice; and it is only against this tragic background that "The Downfall of the Serbian Empire" reveals its full pathos, shown in the scenes where Lazar makes his men take Holy Communion before leading them to fight a lost battle to its bitter end. In short, the choice of "the heavenly kingdom" is the choice of honorable death as opposed to the acceptance of dishonorable vassalage; it reflects the desperate hope of a threatened human community that it can survive in spirit as long as its members keep their cultural and moral identity.

In several of the greatest Kosovo poems in Karadžić's collections this issue is shaped in terms of a family drama of metaphysical significance. Thus, for instance, "Tsar Lazar and Carica Milica"—written down from Tešan Podrugović, an outlaw and a fighter in the Serbian Uprising who had bitter family experiences of Ottoman tax collecting—projects the patriarchal norms of family life in the historically grand setting of the approaching national catastrophe. Podrugović tells the story of the battle as a drama of conflicting feudal and patriarchal concepts of honor; for what is the approaching disaster and the national calamity, compared to the destiny of the helpless sister who sees that she will be left alone, with no "brother to swear by"?[32] How can Boško Jugović disregard the sacred patriarchal call of his sister's love? How can he—and all his brothers—refuse to stay behind with her even after their sovereign, Prince Lazar, absolves them from their feudal pledge to their friends "to spill the blood for the honorable cross"?[33] And why does not a single one of the heroic brothers dare to look up at his sister when she tries to stop him on his way to death?

Finally, in this feudal and patriarchal drama the cross of honor grows into the all-embracing symbol of the choice of "the heavenly kingdom," when Boško Jugović appears with "the flag of the cross covering him,"[34] when he decides that not even his sovereign can absolve him from his pledge, when he tells his sister to go back to her "white tower,"[35] and when he is seen no more on the bat-

[31] *Karadžić*, II, № 50 (I), 1. 17.

[32] *Karadžić*, II, № 45, 1.14.

[33] *Karadžić*, II. № 45, 1. 92.

[34] *Karadžić*, II, № 45, 1. 41.

[35] *Karadžić*, II, № 45, 1. 59.

tlefield while we still watch his lonely "flag with crosses waving over Kosovo."[36] The cross links Boško with all his brothers and with Lazar's whole army, including many of the warriors in other poems. For instance, Musić Stevan, even if late for the battle, comes to die in the field of Kosovo carrying his flag "with twelve crosses on it."[37] By a heroic act a free individual confirms the moral identity of his human community. This tragic confirmation brings serenity—the serenity of a final awareness of and a final commitment to the elementary values of human life. For tragedy is, after all, a more serene vision of human nature and its possibilities than is comedy. The latter spells out its philosophy of life and history on the assumption of human weaknesses.

Renunciation of life in an act of devotion to its values is also at the heart of "The Prince's Supper," one of the best known Kosovo "pieces," which Karadžić wrote down from his father. The poem owes its tragic serenity, as well as some of its narrative threads, to the biblical story of the Last Supper. The meal on the eve of the battle was part of military protocol,[38] and Kuripešić's version of the folk traditions describes the humiliation of the old knight Miloš Obilić, or Kobilović, whom Prince Lazar left "standing by the table."[39] The biblical association gives the epic story a high mythic status; but within this framework the imagination of the folk singer freely shapes its poetic world. Lazar—as Christ before him—knows that he will be betrayed, and in this epic tale he suspects that the betrayer will be his most faithful knight, Miloš Obilić. The tragic irony of this situation comes out fully when Lazar, in his pathetic generosity and innocence, proposes a toast to Miloš and is ready to forgive him his "sin":

Health to Miloš, the faithful traitor,
First faithful, then a traitor!
At Kosovo tomorrow you will desert me,
You will run to Murad, the Emperor!
Health to you, drink this toast,
Drink this wine, and this cup is yours![40]

Within the ironic framework of his delusion Lazar shows his generosity: in a world in which everything is soon to be lost, he attempts to sustain at least some remnant of spiritual values. Therefore, he forgives in advance Miloš's treason and presents him with the cup. Miloš thanks Lazar for his toast and the gift, if not for the undeserved suspicion; but there is no bitterness in his answer, for Lazar is only an intermediary of his loyalty to a higher idea. He gives his pledge that the battle will show-who is faithful [and] who is the traitor," and he promises that he will "stab Murad, Tsar of Turkey."[41] This is also a commitment to "the heavenly kingdom." It will not change the outcome of the battle—"the feathers" will not "carry away" the flesh[42]—but the inner freedom of this heroic act triumphs over real history and becomes a tragic symbol of spiritual survival. As in many great tragedies, the free choice of death here is the ultimate and final confirmation of the values of life, a monument to the freedom of the human spirit.

In such and similar poems the Battle of Kosovo is a heroic challenge which offers possibilities of free, if tragic, choices. However, in many other poems in which this epic landscape is further reduced to family drama, human beings are seen as helpless objects of a cruel fate. In poems such as "Carica Milica and Duke Vladeta," The Kosovo Maiden," and "The Death of the Mother of the Jugovići," the heroines are imprisoned in the catastrophe which has already taken place. This is why they lack epic serenity. Either they do not tell a story or the story comes post factum, reflected in a situation radiating human misery and suffering. Instead of the crosses on the flags, we find ravens as the messengers of calamity and death.

In this respect "Carica Milica and Duke Vladeta," which Karadžić recorded from a blind woman singer in Srem, is highly characteristic. The tale—in so far as there is any—revolves around a cluster of tokens, signs, and images. Duke Vladeta—historically Duke Vlatko Vuković, the commander of the Bosnian army in the Battle of Kosovo— appears on a horse "dressed in white foam" and conveys his tragic message to Carica Milica in imagery which is an expression of the loneliness and pointlessness of her suffering. Thus the death of Prince Lazar is seen in the image of his riderless horse:

I did not see the honorable Prince,
But I saw the Prince's dapple,
Driven all over Kosovo by the Turks.[43]

Similarly the Jugovići are seen as facing their doom with exhausted arms, blood-stained to the shoulders; and Miloš Obilić appears leaning on his broken battle-lance. This imagery mirrors the loneliness and destitution of Milica's predicament. As there is no story, there is no expectation; there is only a retrospect of the tragic emblems of misery and misfortune. Her tragedy offers no options and no possibilities of acting. The poignancy of her fate springs only from the dumb and implicit awareness, present in every human heart and eye, of the destroyed human and natural order of things. If we did not assume such an order, her fate would not move us; but, of course, a tragic expression is constituted as an imaginative revolt against what it seems to suggest.

In these poems language is exposed to such an enormous pressure of tragic realities that descriptions grow into metaphors. As Duke Vladeta's riderless horse describes not only what has happened to Prince Lazar but also suggests Milica's spiritual fate, so many details in "The

36 *Karadžić*, II, № 45, 1. 185.
37 "Musić Stefan," *Karadžić*, II, № 47, 1. 45.
38 See fn. 21.
39 Kuripešić, *Putopis*, p. 34.
40 *Karadžić*, II, № 50 (III), 11.31–36.
41 *Karadžić*, II, № 50 (III), 11.53.
42 *Karadžić*, II, № 50 (IV), 1. 43.
43 *Karadžić*, II, № 49, 11. 18–20.

Kosovo Maiden" and "The Death of the Mother of the Jugovići" hover between history and daydreaming. In "The Kosovo Maiden" it is quite clear, from the beginning, that we are faced with a retrospective evocation of death. The tragic utterance makes its impact owing to the implicit, natural resistance to and rebellion against what it seems to convey. For what is the nature of life and history which dooms a young girl to walk around the battlefield turning over one bleeding hero after the other? In this vision of youth and girlhood all the emblems of glamour and greatness are described in order to express what she has lost on the threshold of her life. Here are the gifts which she received on the eve of the battle from Miloš Obilić, Kosančić Ivan, and her fiancé Toplica Milan—"the gown with circular ornamentation," "the gilded ring," and "the veil of gold."[44] These emblems of splendor and love function as omens of deprivation and devastation and express a tragic order of things in which the inner imaginative instincts rebel against the logic of triumphant cruelty. As the poem expresses the devastation of the life of a girl who has hardly started to live, the simplest and the most innocent line is perhaps the most disarming summing up of her fate: "And the three warrior Lords went away."[45] We are reminded of Isidora Sekulić's remarks on Lady Macbeth's words after the resolution to kill Duncan: "The ultimate statements, the climaxes in poetry must be expressed in a spoken phrase, a natural phrase, so to say: a human phrase."[46]

This is why such a simple line reflects so richly the connection of a personal fate with the total epic landscape of Kosovo. The Kosovo maiden has no possibility of choice or of a commitment proportionate to the approaching disaster; for her everything ends before anything begins, and the poem comes to rest in the two final simple lines:

Unhappy, if I were to grasp a green pine.
Even the green pine would wither.[47]

In the most moving decasyllabic songs about patriarchal family life and relations ("God Leaves No Debt Unpaid," "Momir the Foundling," and others) the moral horizons of human life and death are outlined against a background of natural imagery of "slim-topped firs" and "green pines," "the immortelle and the basil," "the thorns and the nettles,"[48] "leaves of vine" and "withered firs."[49] In a similar way in "The Kosovo Maiden" a major feature of the legend is established by the identification of an unfulfilled love with an historical catastrophe, by the devastation of natural order. The vision of frustrated love in the image of a withered pine expresses an unnatural absurdity and horror; and, as usual in a tragic climax (as, for instance, when Macbeth tells us that "life is a story told by an idiot"[50]), an outcry of utter despair implies a protest against what the outcry states or declares. For if it happens that an evergreen withers under the touch of a girl's hand, then this is against all the laws of nature and against all the expectations of humanity. But even when all human consciousness is reduced to a sense of misery and damnation, the expression of such an awareness of personal and national fate implies again a tragic serenity, a brighter assumption of what life and history could and should be.

"The Kosovo Maiden" is significant because it moves toward its symbolic abyss with innocent epic structures which correspond to the heroine's naiveté. However, "The Death of the Mother of the Jugovići," although composed in the same mythic setting of national and personal calamity, is different in its poetic composition. To begin with it is the clearest example of tragic structure in Karadžić's collections of heroic songs because it has absolutely no story, because nothing happens in it until the very end, and because everything has already happened before it starts. It embodies a pure symbolic drama of consciousness, given in an interplay of retrospective and dark forebodings. It takes place in a world in which human thought fights its lonely battles. This is a world in which there are no points of outer support, so that it puts greater strain on the heroic spirit than any real battlefield. The mother wages her lonely and final battle after all the other battles have been fought and lost; and her devotion and love for her husband and her nine sons are her ultimate enemy which will eventually, literally and metaphorically, break her heart.

Moreover, this battle, in which victory could bring only a greater human disaster, is described with biblical, apocalyptic simplicity: everything is unfathomable, but nothing is strange. The poem opens with the mother's prayer for a pair of "hawk's eyes" and a pair of "swan's white wings,"[51] which is at the same time a reaching after the impossible and an expression of an elementary outcry for any kind of news about her husband and her sons. The simple way in which the prayer is granted and the miracle takes place corresponds to the fantastic form of this basic human need:

God granted her prayer,
God gave her the eyes of a hawk
And the white wings of a swan.[52]

Of course, there is nothing strange in the mother's care for her husband and her children, or in the mercy of God which reveals the scene of death and which is analogous to Duke Vladeta's description of the Battle of Kosovo to Carica Milica. Here again are riderless horses and hawks and battle-lances without their masters. The sounds are deafening:

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44 *Karadžić*, II, № 51, ll. 83, 104.

45 *Karadžić*, II, № 51, l. 117.

46 Isidora Sekulić, "O prevodjenju, o zbirci partizanskih pesama, o prevodu Anice Savić Rebac tih pesama na engleski jezik," *Govor i jezik—Mir i Nemir*, Sabrana dela, X, edited by Živorad Stojković (Belgrade, 1977), 53.

47 *Karadžić*, II, № 51, ll. 135–36.

48 *Karadžić*, II, № 5, ll. 2, 33, 88, 119.

49 *Karadžić*, II, № 30, ll. 14, 380.

50 *Macbeth*, V, 5.

51 *Karadžić*, II, № 48, ll.6.7.

52 *Karadžić*, II, № 48, ll. 11–13.

The nine good horses are whinnying,
The nine wild lions are roaring.
The nine hawks are screaming.[53]

But the mother is speechless and "strong-hearted"—she lets "fall no tear from her heart."[54] Unlike Miloš's heroic act, which carries us away into a thrilling epic landscape, the mother's inarticulate suffering makes even the poetic word go dumb. It is not described but only reflected in the appearance of a raven bringing the youngest son's hand— in a miraculous scene which we take for granted. And when the mother addresses the hand, Damjan's death seems to retreat into the background before the more terrifying tenderness of her gestures and words:

The mother takes Damjan's hand.
She turns it around and over,
She is whispering to the hand:
"My hand, O green apple,
Where did you grow from, where were you tom away?
You grew on my lap,
You were tom away on flat Kosovo!"[55]

At this tragic moment a personal destiny is identified with a historical disaster, and a total disruption of the normal course of things is embodied in the image of the mother seeing the hand of her dead son as a "green apple." This seems to mesmerize the mother's mind into the petrified calm of tender words, more formidable than any tears could be. The breakdown of the patriarchal and the natural order is embodied in the language, which is again horrified by what it conveys; and a t this tragic climax the mother's death—when her heart breaks with pain—comes as a relief, as a miraculous illumination from "the heavenly kingdom." "God took mercy on her," as a popular saying puts it. It is difficult to imagine a context in which this utterance would achieve more pathos. The mother's sense of loss leads her to the fate which has been the privilege only of heroes in action.

The dilemma between "the heavenly" and "the earthly kingdom"—which lies a t the heart of the Kosovo poems and, indeed, illuminates the whole epic landscape in Karadžić's collections— is above all an epic choice between vassalage and chivalric death. It is also a dilemma between any form of dishonorable survival and honorable death. Only in this broad and metaphorical sense is it true that the Kosovo songs "represent the closest approach in Serbian to the medieval European model in which knightly deeds were celebrated by singers maintained at the courts of aristocratic patrons."[56]

For the ideal of "the heavenly kingdom" embodies not only the dramas of human history and psychology, but also attempts to push beyond them. The Serbian patriarchal communities were on the verge of eradication under Ottoman rule. Their Christian heritage was mostly transformed into a cult of family ties as the only means of physical and moral survival. They were faced with such overwhelming and horrifying historical realities that they had to oppose them by moral dreams and visions. This is why the singer sees the Serbian Empire on the eve of Kosovo in terms of "the last times" in "The Wedding of Prince Lazar."[57] It also explains the pictures of extreme corruption and high idealism in such songs as "The Wedding of King Vukašin," "Uroš and the Mrnjavčevići" and "Banović Strahinja." It is by cunning and treason that King Vukašin wins over Duke Momčilo's wife; but at his dying moment Momčilo advises his assassin to take his "loving sister" Jevrosima instead of treacherous Vidosava:

She will be true to you forever,
She will bear you a hero as I was.[58]

Of course, there is no historical moral norm which could explain this generosity; the hero has to push beyond history to realize his human identity. In "Uroš and the Mrnjavčevići" we are faced with factions of Serbian feudal lords translated into a patriarchal family drama: the three brothers fight for succession and are ready to stab each other with their golden daggers. But it is the mother's advice to her son, Marko Kraljević, who is to settle this dispute that provides the moral illumination of this epic story:

Marko, the only son of your mother,
That my milk is not a curse to you.
Do not, my son, speak dishonest words,
Not for your father's sake or your uncles',
But speak the justice of the God of truth!
Do not suffer your soul's loss, my son.
Because it is better to lose your life
Than sin against your soul![59]

The mother's advice mirrors the landscape of "the heavenly kingdom" in suggesting that Marko has to face the task where he must risk his life to save his honor. Finally, there is the whole drama of "Banović Strahinja"—a drama of his rich and disloyal in-laws who refuse to help him bring back his wife from the Ottoman camp, and a drama of his wife's betrayal and her attempt to help a Turk kill her husband. All this takes place in the shadow of the hero's generous gesture in disregarding the social moral code and setting his wife free instead of tying her to the horses' tails.

Cruel realities and moral dreams are also closely interwoven in the Kosovo poems. In this way we can understand Lazar's insults to his most faithful knight and his choice of "the heavenly kingdom"; the treason of Vuk Branković and Miloš's heroic death; the terrible punishments of innocent sisters, mothers and fiancées; and death as the ultimate relief. In short, if even an evergreen with-

53 *Karadžić*, II, № 48, 11. 21–23.
54 *Karadžić*, II, № 48, 11. 56–57.
55 *Karadžić*, II, № 48, 11. 75–81.
56 M. P. Coote, "Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs," p. 262.
57 *Karadžić*, II, № 25, 11. 257–58.
58 *Karadžić*, II, № 32, 1. 107.
59 *Karadžić*, II, № 34, 11. 126–33.

ers under the touch of a girl's hand, this image implies the natural order which has been broken. Finally, the myth of Kosovo illuminates the artistic triumphs of the poems about outlaws—poems abounding in revenge, killing, and plunder. In the best of them, however, the hero appears either as a captured helpless old man—a martyr of his loyalty to his friends ("Old Vujadin")—or as someone on the threshold of death ("The Death of Ivo of Senj"). When he is in action, he is seen as a lonely, desperate fighter. He is a "homeless hero with blood-stained hands" who has "no father" and "no mother"; and he is one who has "never known a faithful love," and who "feeds by sword in the border country as hawk on wing hanging among clouds."[60] His final option, however, is also a moral dream defying all realities; it is vividly outlined when Rosnić Stevan, after the successful ambush and liquidation of the Ottoman tax collectors, comes to divide the booty:

He divided the treasure beautifully
Not by counting or by calculation,
But Captain Limo's helmet for measure;
How justly he divided the treasure,
Evenly among living and dead:
The living took their treasure on their backs,
The treasure of the dead remained in heaps.[61]

After the clash, summed up in the image of "blood-smeared" spruces,[62] Tešan Podrugović, an outlaw himself and the greatest of Karadžić's singers, presents an emblematic moral gesture which reflects the outlaws' thirst for a heavenly kind of justice. This gesture brings "the heavenly kingdom" to earth; it is a triumph of moral imagination over experience even if it must have been inspired by the historical custom which demanded that booty be shared with the families of those killed in action.[63] Similarly, the central image in the poems about the First Serbian Uprising—in which the rebels "tie a red flame into the sky"[64]—suggests not only the scope of the battle but also a moral yearning.

The poems about the Battle of Kosovo illuminate and inspire the whole epic landscape in Karadžić's collections. Their highest moral concepts are of medieval, chivalric and Christian origin; but they have been translated into the issues, situations, and dilemmas of later history. The whole story of the fall and the rise of the Serbian Empire has been read largely as a patriarchal moral drama of family relations and attitudes. The interplay of the medieval written culture and the oral traditions is both a continuation and a new chapter in a long "literary" story, which continued in the changed circumstances of expressive possibilities in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. But the songs of the Battle of Kosovo provide the central chapter in this story for many different reasons. First of all, many monuments to the material and spiritual grandeur of the Serbian medieval state—above all the monasteries and churches—are still situated in Kosovo. Secondly, this reality must have grown in the dreams of the migrating Serbian population, which in heroic songs cultivated memories of home and an ancient tradition in their heroic songs. However, the devastating consequences of the battle changed their awareness of history. Karadžić is probably right in claiming that "the Serbs had ancient heroic songs before Kosovo," but these songs could not reach us because "this change struck the people's mind so vigorously that they forgot everything that happened before and began thenceforth to sing and spin their tales anew."[65] These tales embody all the horrors of Balkan history, but they also push beyond it to a moral awareness of its tragedy. As Petar Petrović Njegoš, the greatest poetic genius of his language, observed, their imaginative flights will remain "an eternal torch in the eternal darkness."[66]

Thomas Emmert/Wayne W.S. Vucinich (eds.), *Kosovo: Legacy of Medieval Battle, Minnesota Mediterranean an East European Monographs*, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN., 1991, pp. 123–139.

Benedikt Kuripešić, Austrian travel writer on Miloš Obilić (1530)

...Some old Serbian knight named Miloš Kobilović (Milosch Khaubilovitz) split him with a knife at that spot, in his tent, where [sultan Murad] attacked the Despot with his army, who at that time was Prince or margrave of Serbia. History records how that occurred... Oh, Kobilović [Miloš Obilić], did not everyone think that you would get revenge on your displeased lord and your jealous ones with their misfortune and that you would surrender them into the arms of the enemy? But you got revenge in a Christian way and turned evil to good. You gave your life for your slanderers and saved your homeland from the enemy's hand. In that you remind us of the two Romans, namely: of Gaius Mucius Scaevola, who burnt his own hand, that in a similar situation he wouldn't carry out his intention, and of Marcus Curtius who, in order to save his country, jumped into a chasm and died. Since that time not one Turkish emperor [Ottoman sultan] allowed anyone to kiss his feet, but his hand. The emperor gave his hand to kiss to the one he would receive, while two pashas would hold his arm beneath his muscle so that no one would be able to do that which was done by Kobilović. All of this, oh Kobilović, is in memory of your chivalry.

60 *Karadžić*, III, № 69, 11. 37–39, 43–44.
61 *Karadžić*, III, № 42, 11. 386–92.
62 *Karadžić*, III, № 42, 1. 361.
63 See Dušan J. Popović, *O hajducima, II*, (Belgrade, 1931), p. 34.
64 *Karadžić*, IV, № 33, 1. 546.
65 "Predgovor," *Karadžić*, I, 539.
66 Peter Petrović Njegoš, *Gorski vijenac*, 1. 610.

Boško Jugović, oil on canvas, Paja Jovanović

The Hymn of the Kosovo Heroes

Serbian folk song

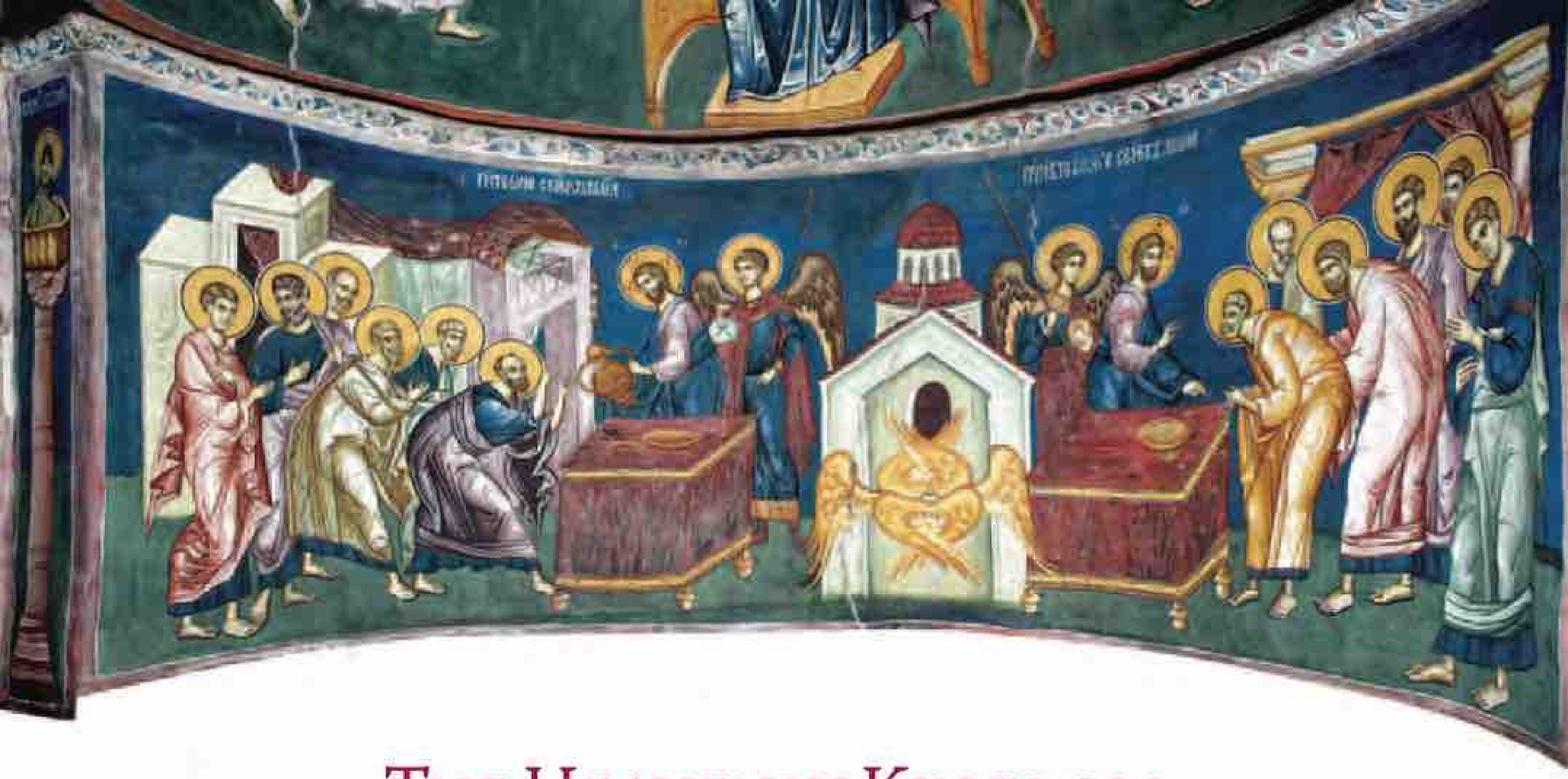
Christ our Lord crucified and holy,
Serbian land is flying through the skies.
It is flying in the heavenly heights,
Its wings are Morava and Drina

Farewell my first, unborn son,
farewell roses, farewell rosemary.
Farewell summers, autumns and winters,
we are leaving to defeat them.
On three holy and three unified,
we are going to Kosovo field.
we are going to our destined place
farewell my mother, farewell my sister
and farewell my bride.

Farewell my first unborn son,
farewell roses, farewell rosemary.
Farewell summers, autumns and winters,
we are leaving to defeat them.

When my darling heard that I'm going,
she put a flower of marigold in my coat.
Farewell my first unborn son,
farewell roses, farewell rosemary.
Farewell summers, autumns and winters,
we are leaving to defeat them.

Jug Bogdan and Nine Jugović brothers, lithograph, Adam Stefanović, 1871, the National Museum, Belgrade



The Heavenly Kingdom in Serbia's Historic Destiny

Bishop Atanasije Jevtić

THE *SERBIAN PEOPLE* began to formulate their spiritual identity during the era of the Holy Brothers Cyril and Methodius (9th century), and their five disciples who followed (10th century). They are considered the first baptizers and enlighteners of the Serbs, as well as the other Slavs. The fruit of their work, harvested for some two centuries from Byzantium and Bulgaria to the Adriatic, included the gradual Christianization of the Serbs both nationally and individually, the appearance of the first ascetics and saints among the Serbs, and the first monuments of Serbia's spiritual and secular cultures.

Starting with the time they accepted Orthodoxy and considering the subsequent history and behavior of the Serbs, it is easy to discern the basic nature of their spiritual identity. This fundamental ethos especially manifested itself from the time of Saint Sava (12th–13th centuries) and was revealed in its fullness at the Battle of Kosovo in the Serbian spiritual and historic decision to choose the Kingdom of Heaven. Mention here is made not only of the complete inner and intangible acceptance, but also of the historically tangible and concrete obedience to Christ's Gospel words:

See ye first the kingdom of Heaven and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well (Mt. 6:33).

This preference for spiritual values became an inseparable part of the Serbian national soul, as well as its lifeblood in the early stages of its history. The first evidence of this appeared among the Serbian saints, who through their asceticism, virtues, and suffering were constructing a spiritual ladder to the Kingdom of Heaven for their people and who exemplified through their lives the manner in which the world, the path of history, and man's deeds within it should be evaluated.

Thanks to the extraordinary personhood of Saint Sava (1175–1235) and his labor among the Serbs, this Orthodox Christian choice became the inherent self-identity of the Serbian people. Saint Sava has been rightfully called the all-Serbian "enlightener, the first enthroned, the Teacher of the Way which leads into the Life"—into the true, spiritual, and eternal life—as expressed by Hilandar's poet and biographer Teodosije in the troparion to Saint Sava. In addition to the opulent spiritual, cultural, and linguistic treasure which he left behind, Saint Sava initiated the organization of the autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church, which contributed in an essential way to the guardianship of Serbia's national independence. In this way the Christian faith and Church united themselves with the people, and the truths

of the Gospel became the ethics of the nation as a whole. This development fatefully marked the course of the nation's history for centuries to come.

In the history of the Serbs religious and national tolerance, as well as broad-mindedness, was well-known and attested to even before Saint Sava during that time in which the Christian Church of East and West was for the most part one. This was especially so in Duklja and the sea coast. The religious tolerance of the Serbian rulers was verified by the interesting fact that their wives and mothers came from the dynasties of other confessions.

The Nemanjić were builders and benefactors of churches and monasteries belonging to other Christian confessions, but they always remained firm in the faith of Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

The spiritual transfiguration of Serbia in the era of Saint Sava and the other members of the Nemanjić dynasty was multifaceted. Because of the creative genius of the Church and state, it was enriched by the inclusion of folk culture (the patron saint's day celebration, Christmas customs, the cult of ancestors, etc…), as well as the organizational culture and art of society at large (communes, Church-people assemblies, communities, etc…). The highest architectural and artistic accomplishments in hundreds of Serbian churches and monasteries, the biographical literature, the liturgic-monastic literature, and the state constitutional literature have made and are making *Svetosavlje* to be understood as the authentic Christian experience of the Serbian nation, or, put another way, as Orthodoxy realized in the historic experience, one nation as a whole. Among the many forces which contributed to the making of the nation's spiritual life were the Serbian hagiographies (*the Lives of Saints*) of the Middle Ages. The first to pen one of the biographies was Saint Sava, who wrote a life of his father, Stefan Nemanja—Saint Simeon the myrrh-flower. At the same time his brother, Stefan "the First Crowned," also wrote about the life of their father Nemanja. Other written works followed. They include the life of Saint Sava by his disciples Domentijan and Teodosije, several biographies of Serbian archbishops and kings, life stories about holy women (St. Anastasia, St. Helen of Anjou, St. Paraskeve, St. Euphemia), the lives of Serbian hermits (St. Prohor, St. Peter of Koriša, Isaija of Hilandar), as well as the lives of Serbian martyrs (St. John Vladimir—as early as the 11th century—St. Lazar of Kosovo, the New Martyrs for Christ, etc…). In all of these hagiographical texts, which are concurrently historical, one finds the common theme of the opting for spiritual freedom and ethical values which transcend the bare historic level of this world and life in it to penetrate metahistory and eschatology. The historic notables are portrayed in a drama with a distinct purpose, the resolution of which is found in the freedom to choose in self-determination. The only true choice is one which, through personal self-denial and sacrifice, aspires to higher, everlasting aims—a choice which aspires to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is in this spirit that Saint Sava was biographically praised foremost for his personal acceptance of spiritual values and for his selfless service to God, neighbor, and nation. The same is true of the Serbian kings and rulers, none of whom were praised in their biographies for warfare and conquest, but primarily for their piety, *beneficial endowments*, and especially for their *zadužbinarstvo*.

It is important to point out that a significant characteristic of Serbian hagiographical literature is that "service to the people of one's homeland" is always understood to equal service to "God's people," a phrase which is not defined by nationality but rather by eschatology and the Bible—i.e. a phrase which focuses on the elevation of a people into a "covenantal" unit which does not strive for conquest and domination in the world, but rather strives for self-denial and lasting spiritual values. This rendered understandable the fact that in the conscience and living tradition of the Serbian people the ideal heroes were holy men, emulated by the rulers themselves.

In this spirit Stefan Nemanja followed his son Saint Sava in forsaking the throne to enter a monastery. They were followed by the entire "Holy Dynasty" of Serbian rulers from the Houses of Nemanjić, Lazarević, and Branković, as well as a multitude of Church leaders—archbishops and patriarchs, many of whom are venerated as saints and some of whom died as martyrs. These holy persons left the Serbs the legacy and historic identity of enduring allegiance to *Svetosavlje*—the already accepted Gospel ethic of justice and Christian character, and the ideals of liberty and love. All of this is corroborated by the entire Serbian folk tradition—both written and oral—folk poetry and stories, proverbs and sayings, customs and heroic deeds, and typically selfless decisions made by individuals and their greater communities, the whole nation, in certain critical moments of their history. These are the distinctive Christian and humane qualities of our people's soul—readiness for self-denial, sacrifice, suffering, endurance, forgiveness, and imprisonment for the sake of justice and freedom.

Another component of the Serbian spiritual identity is *zadužbinarstvo* (the erection of churches and monasteries for the sake of one's own salvation, as well as for the lasting benefit of one's people, a beneficial endowment), which is a further indication of both the direction and the degree of the people's spiritual growth. The origins of *zadužbinarstvo* can be traced to the Serbs even before Saint Sava (the church in Ston, built by Mihailo, king of Zeta, in the 11th century, or the cave-churches of the first Serbian hermits), but it especially developed since the time of Stefan Nemanja, Saint Sava, the other members of Nemanjić family, and their heirs both within the Church and in the state. The *zadužbine* were not only built by the Serbian rulers and archbishops, but also by dukes, priests, monks, and the common people. All of them built churches, monasteries, and other charitable institutions as their own, as well as for the nation—they were works done for both the glory of God and for the

cultural benefit of the world. Nonetheless, these works and the intent behind them outgrew history to meaningfully point to the Heavenly Kingdom's enduring spiritual values.

The Serbian people's spirit of endowment (the spirit of *zadužbinarstvo*) is well-attested to by the great wealth of churches and monasteries preserved throughout the Serbian lands. This holds true for the *zadužbine* from the era of the Nemanjić family and even for those constructed in the later Lazarević and Branković time period (14th-15th centuries), as well as those erected even during the centuries of slavery to the Ottomans and later. An entire cluster of churches and monasteries preserved to the present day in the relatively small area of Serbia—the surviving remnants of a glorious past and historic greatness—vividly evidences that the building of churches and monasteries was understood to be the "only needful thing" (Luke 10:42), to which the Serbs were primarily dedicated. It was well put by the woman writer Isidora Sekulić that we Serbs: "have no castles from our past, but churches and monasteries have been sown all over; the churches and monasteries were like personal homes to everyone—rulers and shepherds, literates and illiterates, heroes and commoners."

The Orthodox spirit of *zadužbinarstvo* explains a recognized characteristic of the Serbian identity: throughout all the centuries of the past, and up until today, the spiritual and historic life of the Serbs has centered around and taken place at and within the churches and monasteries. They were and have remained the centers for national assemblies and gatherings, for self-examinations and validations, and the fundamental epicenters of faith in this great nation's destiny. Without these holy places, the Serbian people would not be what they are—not only within Orthodoxy, but within Christendom overall.

The Serbian people's spiritual choice of Heaven over earth was manifested most fully and evidently in the fateful oral choice made in the historic battle of 1389, at which the Serbs faced the Ottomans on the Field of Kosovo. This choice was made by the soldiers and martyrs, who were led and given an example by the holy Prince Lazar, who himself died a martyr's death. This exalted Christian tragedy was soon written and sung about in the Serbian Church and by folk poets. From it originated the concept of the Kosovo choice. Observes Djordje Trifunović, a renowned student of and an authority on the Kosovo tradition among the Serbs: "Christ's words about the road of suffering which leads to the Kingdom of Heaven reach—through the spiritual self-denials of the first Serbian saints and through the descriptions of the poets—their culmination in the act of the martyr-death of Prince Lazar at Kosovo."

The Serbs, obviously aware of their statistical disadvantage, made the decision to fight. The principle element of this acceptance of an uneven fight is the choice, a free albeit fateful decision to fight rather than surrender. "Kosovo, 1389, was a definite affirmation of the Christian identity of the Serbian people; it was experienced as the triumph of martyrdom and in no way as a defeat. It has been lyricized in the hymns of victory with radiance and joy that the God-blessed Serbian nation was crowned with a martyr's wreath which, from that point on, became its true and indestructible zenith. It signifies the triumph of spirit over body, eternal life over death, justice over injustice, truth over deceit, sacrifice over avarice, love over hate and force. This is what Serbian Kosovo signifies as sung about in the epic folk poetry which was inspired by this monumental, historic event" (Dimitrije Bogdanović). "The Kosovo choice was undoubtedly the selection of freedom in a most difficult and destructive way, but the only sure way" (Zoran Mišić).

> The Serbs did not surrender to the Ottomans in 1389, nor did they accept the status of vassals. They instead chose to fight, since they, as a people, had well-developed spiritual values in all spheres of life—Church, state, culture, and art. Aware of the fact that a man who possesses spiritual values cannot be a slave, they chose to accept self-sacrifice and death, which is not considered a defeat, but the emergence of spiritual idealism—a source of new life and never-broken hope in the final triumph of justice and truth, of those values which belong to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The ethic of Kosovo as the national covenant of Serbian history was even expressed by a contemporary of these events, the Serbian Patriarch Danilo III, when he lauded Prince Lazar and the Kosovo martyrs with these words in 1393: It is better to choose "death with honor and sacrifice, than life in shame," and "let us die that we may live forever." This and other similar liturgical and cult writings about Prince Lazar as a martyr and saint, in which his martyrdom was exalted to both a historic and a metahistoric ideal, soon became the source and inspiration of the well-known Kosovo cycle of epic poetry. This is especially evident in the poem "The Fall of the Serbian Kingdom," in which Kosovo's physical defeat was transformed into a spiritual victory, a Christian philosophy of tragic sacrifice converted into the moral base of the people's mentality. This is what made Kosovo to become and remain, in the minds of the Serbs, the place at which their historic destiny was "determined," that is to say where they were spiritually oriented in the conviction that the resurrection of freedom and a new life can only be achieved through suffering and sacrifice. Kosovo was experienced and again many times reexperienced as our Golgotha, but also as the most certain way to the Resurrection.

What enabled the Serbs to express their spiritual choice and to manifest the high ethic of Kosovo was their being

rooted in the animated tradition and the creative presence of hesychasm, which in truth is the soul of Lazar's Serbia. The Serbian churches and monasteries were the work centers of hesychasm. With this in mind, it can be concluded that the Serbia of the Lazarević was as *zadužbinarska* in spirit as the Serbia of the Nemanjić. In the *zadužbine* (the monasteries) lived those who aspired to hesychasm and their many disciples. They were influential not only with the people, but also at the courts of Serbian noblemen, and especially at the court of Prince Lazar and his heirs, the Serbian despots. In spite of the gradual weakening and political disintegration of the state, hesychasm produced a true spiritual renaissance in culture, art, and religious life.

Hesychasts carried the flag of resistance to adversaries and not passive surrender. This resistance was first in strength of spirit, in the Christian philosophy of life, and in universal spirituality, all of which extraordinarily fortified the Orthodox self-consciousness of the Serbian people, whose values outlast all of the temptations of time. Hesychasm was understanding the world and man's life in it in a way that bridged the transcendental gap between this world and the next; this rendered the hesychast's experience of man's destiny optimistic. It does not overlook the drama of historical living, but it transfigures life by tying it to lasting values, by emphasizing the triumph of a martyr's death for the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus, hesychasm found itself performing the functions of Church and national defense, which was very important for the spiritual endurance of the Serbian people.

It was, thanks to this choice, that the Serbian people in the time of Ottoman enslavement following Kosovo repeatedly relived their fateful Kosovo, the sacrificial choice of embracing the more difficult lot, the dramatic carrying of their cross. Even during those times when historic success could not be envisioned, the Serbs remained faithful to their "destiny," to the Kosovo covenant. In spite of their having lost the battle to the Ottomans at the Field of Kosovo, the Serbs resisted their conqueror for another half a century and for a brief period they achieved their independence. During the rule of Despot Stefan Lazarević and during the era of the Branković (15th century), the Serbian people built several outstanding *zadužbine*—churches and monasteries, showing once again that the erection of these edifices was considered to be their first and most important work. These *zadužbine* cross the Sava and Danube Rivers, where the Serbs gradually migrated and where they brought and perpetuated their culture and the cult of venerating their saints, among which were the martyrs of Kosovo. Following their final fall to the Ottomans (15th century), the Serbian people did not abandon their historic memory and did not lose their spiritual identity, but they resisted mightily Islamization and they, with the faith and hope of martyrs, endured persecution, loss of property, the profaning of their sacred places, and the martyrdom of their patriarchs, priests, monks, and other leaders. What safeguarded the integrity of the Serbian spiritual being during the centuries of slavery were Orthodoxy and the Serbian historic tradition, both of which were concentrated in the Serbian Patriarchate and in Serbian churches and monasteries—the *zadužbine*. The first resurgence of the Serbs came with the renewal of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557, under Patriarch Makarije Sokolović, a former monk from Mileševo Monastery, the resting place of Saint Sava's bodily remains for three centuries by that time, a place of common pilgrimage and a source of both spiritual and national inspiration for Serbs from all over in this time of slavery. The cult of St. Sava, with his incorruptible body lying in Mileševo Monastery, and the cult of St. Lazar of Kosovo, with his incorruptible body in Ravanica Monastery, were the two never-dying sources of both religious and national inspiration—one and the same—throughout the era of enslavement.

The importance of the renovation of the Patriarchate of Peć and the concurrent revival of religious and historic tradition manifested itself in the Serbian uprisings at the end of the 16th century. After the mighty, westward expansion of the Ottoman Empire (under Suleiman the Magnificent, 1520–66)—as soon as the Ottoman Empire began to weaken (especially after its defeat at the Battle of Lepanto, 1571)—the Serbs began to rise up and join the nations of Western Christendom in the war of the cross against the crescent. During the Austro-Turkish War (1593–1606), the Serbs simultaneously rose up in two places: first in Banat (1594) under the leadership of Theodore, Bishop of Vršac, where the Serbs adorned their flags with Saint Sava's icon, and then in Herzegovina under Metropolitan Visarion. Both of these uprisings were quickly and bloodily suppressed. The Turkish reprisals which followed were especially directed against the Serbian *zadužbine*—the monasteries and churches, of which the first was the Mileševo Monastery, which was pillaged on Good Friday, 1594. Here, from the Monastery of Mileševo, by the order of the sultan, carried out by the Grand Vizier Sinan Pasha (an Islamized Albanian), the body of Saint Sava was taken, and, after having been carried throughout Serbia, was burned in Vračar in Belgrade on April 27 (May 10), 1594. But this barbarian act of malevolence—instead of intimidating the enslaved, but unconquered, people—inflamed them with the spirit of Saint Sava and the ethos of Kosovo.

Of the three Serbian patriarchs who ruled the Serbian people and Church in the era of the Vračar pyre, two out of three died martyrs' deaths under the hands of the Turks: Patriarch Jovan Kantul (1614) and Patriarch Gavrilo Rajić (1659). The next great patriarch was Arsenije III Crnojević (1674–1706), who, after the Turkish defeat outside of Vienna (1683), wholeheartedly helped the all-encompassing uprising of the people and who, with some 20,000 men, joined the Austrian army in its drive southward. With the help of these Serbian fighters, Kosovo was freed all the way to Prizren and Skoplje. But when the Austrian drive was

broken at Kačanik (1690) Patriarch Arsenije was forced to move his people (some 30,000 families) north, in order to escape Turkish reprisals. In this, "the Great Migration" (as it has been historically called), the Serbs took the body of the Holy Great-Martyr, Lazar of Kosovo, with them to their new lands (first to Sentandrey and Budim and then to the newly-built Monastery of Ravanica in Srem). Thus, the veneration of Lazar and the covenantal thought of Kosovo to liberate and reclaim the sacred places of the homeland from its foes strengthened and spread to the Serbian diaspora. This was the time when chronicles and genealogies were recopied, the first *srbljaks* (service books dedicated to Serbian saints) were printed, and the time when monks and *guslars* (Serbian bards) traveled among the people, steered them, and kindled the memory of their past within them.

When a new Austro-Turkish War broke out soon thereafter (1718–39), the Serbs of Old Serbia and Kosovo again revolted against the Turks, this time under the leadership of Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović. Belgrade was liberated for a short time, and someone from among the Serbs erected a small church on Vračar in commemoration of the burning of Saint Sava's relics there. This little church existed until 1757, when the Turks destroyed it—but that place was well-remembered and that memory was passed on from one generation to another. Soon afterward, the Patriarchate of Peć was abolished by the Turks (1766), but this again could not extinguish the spirit of the Serbian Church and the Serbian covenantal thought. Toward the end of that century, the Serbs once again rose up (Kočina Krajina) and, again, checked in blood, this uprising represented another example of self-sacrifice on the part of the Serbian nation. At the dawn of the 19th century, the Serbian Kosovo choice surfaced again, this time under the great Vožd Karadjordje Petrović—and this time it marked the first "Resurrection of Serbia." The Serbian insurgents were inspired by the Serbian saints and the Kosovo martyrs to fight for their freedom. The letter of the Vizier of Travnik, Mustafa Pasha, to the Turkish court testifies to this. In March of 1806 he wrote about the Serbian freedom fighters: "They sent letters to all sides... and as once before King Lazar came to Kosovo, they will all come to Kosovo. They constantly keep in their hands history books about the aforementioned king, and he is a great instigator of the revolts in their minds." At this time the Serbian people in all the Serbian lands stood to fight for the liberation of Serbia and the Serbs despite the historic circumstance of its impossibility—for the Ottoman Empire was still a strong European power. But the uprising in Serbia was carried on by the belief in Heaven's justice, and in that spirit Karadjordje placed the venerable cross on his flags, under which stood hegumans, monks, priests, protopresbyters Atanasije of Bukovica and Mateja Nenadović, the priest Luke Lazerević, and others.

Immediately after the liberation of Serbia, which was finally completed by Miloš Obrenović and later rulers, the traditional Serbian spirit of *zadužbinarstvo* was renewed, and it was then that preparations began for the erection of a memorial church in honor of Saint Sava on Vračar. On the day of the 300th anniversary of the burning of his relics a "Society for the Erection of the Church of Saint Sava on Vračar" was formed, and in only seven days this society built the temporary, small church on Vračar, which was dedicated on April 27 (May 10), 1895.

The Balkan wars of 1912 interfered and interrupted the preparations for the building of a larger church. The centuries-old Kosovo covenant and choice once again sustained the Serbs when engaged in conflict. Through their great self-sacrifice and heroism they finally succeeded in abolishing the Ottoman yoke—which enslaved them for half a millennium—and in freeing the great martyred land of Kosovo.

In World War I Serbia was once again placed in a situation of complete disadvantage, but she, once again, refused to accept the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum, chose the Kingdom of Heaven, and accepted conflict with the powerful Habsburg Empire, much like David against Goliath. After the war and the creation of Yugoslavia (1918), the initiative for the building of the Saint Sava Church on Vračar was renewed, as was the old spirit of Serbian *zadužbinarstvo*. The most prominent standard-bearers of this spirit at that time were King Peter I (exemplified by his *zadužbina*, the Saint George Church at Oplenac) and Patriarch Varnava Rosić.

Only two decades afterward came the tragic events of World War II and on the eve of their greatest martyrdom the Serbs once again revealed that the Kosovo choice of Heaven over earth was very much alive within them when they, after Yugoslavia was blackmailed into acquiescing to the Tri-Partite Pact with the Fascist Axis, spurned that Pact (March 27, 1941). Patriarch Gavrilo Dožić went on Belgrade Radio and proclaimed, in the name of the Serbian people, that: "We have once again chosen the Kingdom of Heaven, that is the Kingdom of God's truth and justice, of the people's unity and freedom. This is an eternal ideal, carried in the hearts of all Serbian men and women, kept aflame in the holy places of our Orthodox *zadužbine*—the monasteries and churches..."

Thus, once again, deeds proved that the ideal of the Kosovo choice is ever-present in the historic destiny of the Serbian people. This time the Serbian choice of the Kingdom of Heaven was paid for by hundreds of thousands of innocent Serbian lives whose only "guilt" lay in belonging to the Serbian Orthodox people of Saint Sava. The church that is being erected on the ashes of the burned relics of Saint Sava on Vračar (in Belgrade) is, for these reasons, at the same time a monument to the martyred people of the great Kosovo covenant.

Coffin with Holy Relics of Saint Prince Lazar,
Ravanica Monastery

The Holy relics of Saint Prince Lazar

Prince Lazar Cephalophoros, copperplate from *Stemmatography*,
Hristofor Žefarović, Vienna, 1741

Finding of the Head of the Prince Lazar, Djordje Krstić, 1905

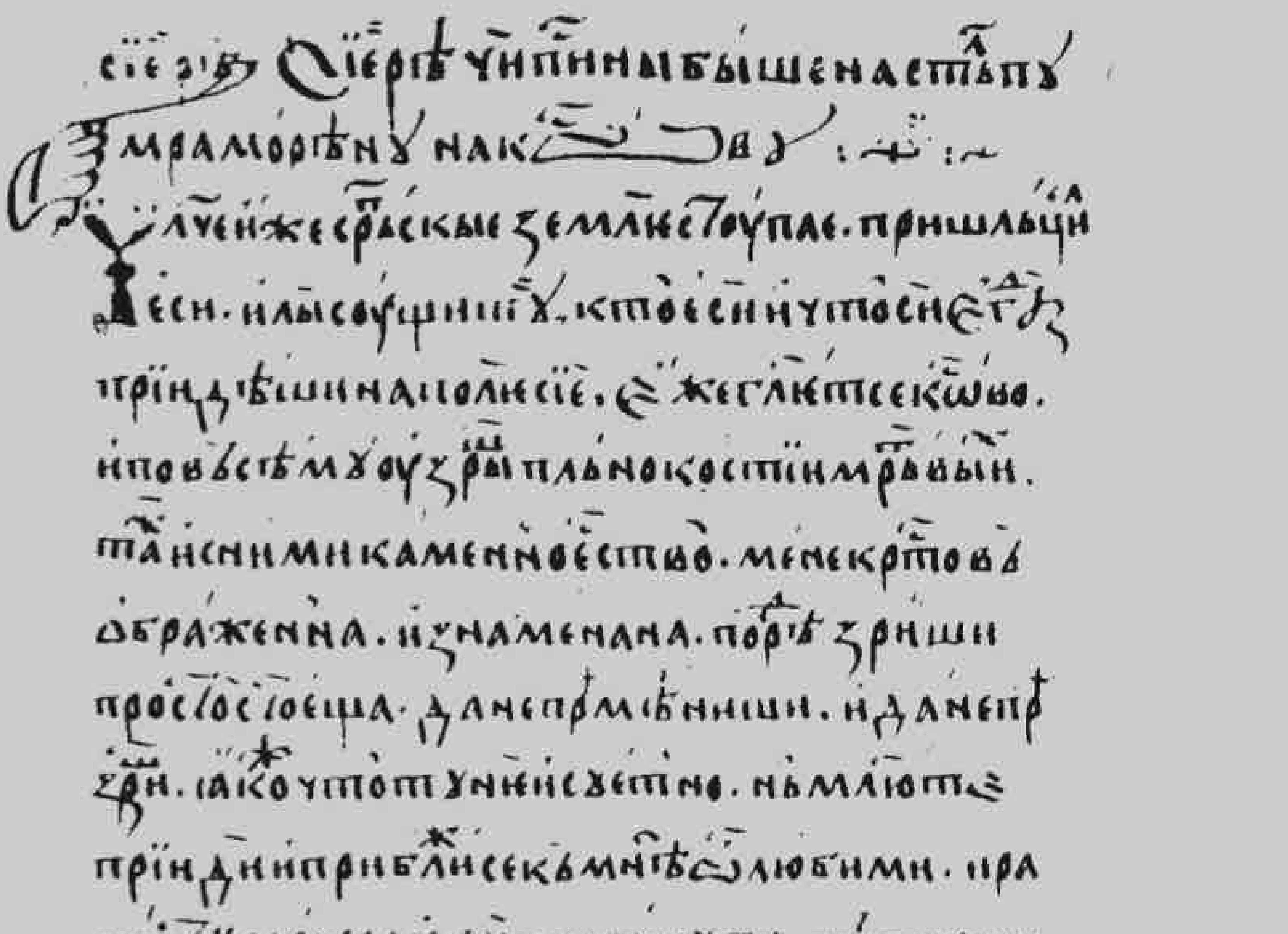
The Inscription on the Marble Pillar in the Kosovo Field (1404)

Despot Stefan Lazarević (1377–1427)

You, the man who walks on this Serbian land,
No matter if you are a newcomer or native,
No matter who you are or what you are,
When you reach this field,
By the name of Kosovo,
You will see many dead bones,
And stony nature surrounding them,
And me in the shape of a cross.
You will see me standing upright in the center of this field,
So you cannot overlook or pass by me,
As though I was something idle or insignificant.
So please, come near me oh, dear one,
And see the words I am bearing,
And you will comprehend the reason,
How and why I am standing here,
Because I am telling the truth to you,
No living man could tell you better,
I will tell you everything that happened.
Somewhere around here there was a great nobleman,
Whom all in the land wondered, a Serbian hero
Called Lazar, great prince,
Constant pillar of the Faith,
Open sea of the goodness and deepness of wisdom,
Fiery mind and the protector of the foreigners,
The feeder of the hungry, gentle for the rough,
The counselor and the keeper,
Who loved everything Christ loved,
Who walked alone by his own will,
And with his numerous knights
Whom he commanded.
Good husbands, brave husbands,
Husbands both in words and deeds,
Who shone like those bright stars,
Like ground covered with colored flowers,
Dressed in gold and diamonds,
Many selected horses with golden saddles,
Along with their excellent riders,
Noble and glorious,
Like the Shepherds Protector,
He leads his spiritual lambs
To die in Christ
And accept the chaplet of suffering,
And take part in the higher glory.
Like one the whole army marched,
With the great and fine gentleman in front,
With good soul and stone-hard faith,
As if they saw a magnificent hall or food
They attacked the enemies,
And they overran the true dragon,
And killed the wild beast and the great adversary
And the never-sated Hades who devours all,
I am saying Amurad and his son,
Descendent of an asp and a snake
A cub of a lion and of a basilisk,
And with them (they killed) many others.
Oh, wonders of God's faith,
The brave sufferer was caught,
By the lawless hands of the Agarens,
He accepted the end with dignity,
And became Christ's martyr,
The great Prince Lazar.
No one else cut him down, o my beloved,
But the very hand of the murderer, son of Amurad
And all told above happened,
In the year of our God 6897, 12th indict, 15th month, Tuesday,
And the hour was the sixth or the seventh,
I do not know, God does.

Prince Stefan Lazarević (1377–1427), the son of Prince Lazar was a poet and a ruler of Serbia. He was only 12 years old when his father was killed in the battle of Kosovo and little Stefan probably never got to know his father as he wanted to.

Being a poet as well as the ruler of Serbia, Prince Stefan felt that he had to pay a tribute to his father and all those knights and men that died in the greatest battle of the time. He erected a pillar at the field where two armies clashed with the poem engraved in the cross.



Insription of Despot Stefan Lazarević on the Marble Pillar in Kosovo Field, transcription from the 16th century

The Kosovo Covenant in the Light of the New Testament

Bishop Irinej Bulović

In our times the entire local Saint Sava Church has been making enormous efforts to renew, for the broadest circles of its faithful, the true importance and the true meaning of the Kosovo Covenant, that leading idea of our entire history. For that reason it is very important that in this Jubilee Kosovo Year we, the clergy of the intelligent flock of Christ, remind first ourselves of the meaning and content of that Testament. And how would we remind ourselves and remember that? We would have to measure our Serbian Kosovo Covenant by the criteria of the New Testament, which is the last and eternal Testament between God and humanity, and see it in the waters of the Lord's revelation, as it is written in the New Testament, given to us according to the Apostolic Tradition of the Holy Church of Christ and interpreted, explained, and realized for us through the works and wisdom, and God-given reasoning of the Fathers and Teachers of the Church. I will, therefore, attempt, as succinctly as possible, to present several basic ideas and to articulate in words that all of us, as Christians and as clergy, feel deeply in our hearts and souls.

The Notion and Meaning of Testament

What does Testament mean in the Holy Scriptures, that is, in that old experience and tradition of the Church later written down in the Bible? A Testament is actually the basic and initial spiritual experience of the Lord's people, first the Old Testament and then the New Testament. It is not by chance that the two main parts of our Holy Scriptures are called exactly by the very name in which the word Testament appears in the title: The Books of the Old and of the New Testament.

Sadly, the Serbian language has, since the time of Vuk Karadžić, gradually lost its *ecclesial* component, and two variants of Serbian were created: one variant of the language, which only we Christians understand, is used in church; the other became profaned. In the latter many words are either missing or their meaning has changed. Therefore, in our language we no longer fully understand the spiritual and religious notion "testament." That is why I will remind you briefly of the original meaning of this word and of this concept. *Testament* (*Zavet*)—*Berit* in Hebrew, *Diathiki* (Διαθήκη) in Greek, *Testamentum* in Latin, *Zavjet* in Old Church Slavonic—actually originally meant covenant, as well as many other words with related or similar meanings such as: contract, agreement, act, understanding, pact, etc. These words could all express the original Hebrew word *berit* which attempts to describe, but not exhaust—that is, to describe only approximately—the spiritual experience which is found in the base, at the root of that concept.

As in our entire spiritual reality, spiritual experience in the Judeo-Christian tradition is preceded by experiences and followed by words. Furthermore, the notions and the words by which we try to point out the meaning of that which the Lord's revelation contains, and which is contained in our spiritual experience, are usually taken from our ordinary, real, everyday experiences and then are enriched by those contents that surpass them. The same has happened with this notion of testament. *Berit* or *covenant* was originally a single legal, military, social term. It referred to relationships between individuals, between social groups, and between nations, much as it is in our language: when we say *covenant* we think of a certain understanding, a treaty with common interests, goals, with specific rights and duties, and conditions necessary to protect that covenant, and so on. It was the same in ancient Israel, which made military, economic, political, and other covenants with neighboring nations.

That was also a common practice in the whole Middle East, including Israel, and there are many written traces of that in the Old Testament. Besides the covenants between equal partners, there also existed covenants among unequal ones. Those are the covenants that maintain relationships of vassals with sovereign masters. Such covenants, totally profane in character, be it legal, military, political, or social, also had (besides the written contract or act) an external, ritual, apparent side. They were always accompanied by appropriate ceremonies and certain cult-related actions. Usually, in addition to the ceremonial written part, which both parties had to sign, sacrificial animals were also killed. Both signers of the pact, i.e. the covenant, had to walk among the dismembered parts of the sacrificial animals; the blood of the sacrificial animals was a ceremonial confirmation of the importance and value of the concluded covenant. They would pronounce some curses and threats against those who would violate the covenant and they would also say blessings for those who honored the regula-

tions of the agreement. Finally, following all those cult-related acts and after the feast, certain objects were placed as markers to commemorate the signing of the covenant. For example, a tree was planted or rocks were placed somewhere, or other similar actions were taken. That was the external aspect.

Israel then, as the first and only people at that time who knew about the true God and who were God's people, also expressed their experience of Yahweh, the Lord, on that basis. Taking a notion from their everyday experience, the notion of covenant (*berit*), they tried to use it to express the nature of their relationship with the Lord, in other words the nature of the Lord's relationship with His chosen people. In the process Israel did not pretend to claim that the relationship was the same as the relationship between two equal human partners or between human masters and their vassals. Rather, reality, pictures from human life, served as a good illustration of a relationship that was difficult to describe in words and which cannot fall into any concepts, because that experience simply surpasses our words and our notions. However, these pictures from our reality, if we understand them in a godlike, sublime manner, help us to become more deeply engrossed in the nature of the mystery and the revealed truth.

Thus it came to the application of the word *covenant* to the relationship of God and His chosen people. Here we have an essential theological and spiritual dimension that separates the religion of Israel, as the people of God, from the religious experience of the rest of humanity. Thus the notion of Covenant indicates that here one truly deals with a supernatural religion revealed by God. In contrast, the religions of the ancient East—for example, Canaanite or Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian or Hittite in Asia Minor, as well as still living religions such as Shintoism, Shamanism, Hinduism, and others—are in reality natural religions of the pagan type: they represent an expression of a fallen man's longing for God, but that longing is often turned upside down and perverted in the adoration of nature and natural powers. All of them are more or less of a pantheistic character. However, the idea of Covenant reveals to us something very deep that shows the great distance between religions revealed by God and those so-called natural religions.

In the first place, the concept of Covenant shows us that Man—that is, God's people—is a catholic person, a universal man, created free by God and created in the image of God. That idea—that God is not some sort of a heavenly pharaoh who simply dictates conditions and forces them upon man, but that He respects man, that is, the human community, so much that He comes to an agreement with it—is unique and was unheard of in that time. By making a Covenant, God seeks free collaboration in His plan for salvation. He prepares that plan in a sovereign way: it doesn't depend on man, just as the creation of the world did not depend on man. But the Lord doesn't want to realize His plan for life and for the salvation of the world alone. Rather, He seeks the collaboration of man, of the people, of the community, and, finally, of the Church. Because man was created free and in the image of God, the idea of the Covenant points to the greatness, the elevated character of the human being and to the infinite perspective that the living and true God, revealing himself to man and stepping into a direct relationship with him, opens up to man and to humanity. In all the natural religions, as I said, the human being doesn't play any role. On the contrary, that is often what those religions fight.

It is therefore not strange at all that throughout the entire history of the chosen people the idea of Covenant has remained the framework, the central religious idea which expresses the uniqueness and the God-revealed character of the religion of ancient Israel and, later, of the Church, which is its natural continuation and fulfillment. In that way Covenant remains to this day a solid religious experience of all mankind and something that is truly God-given to us and that represents more than the natural human religious inclination. The essence of the original Covenant is a community whose aim is the salvation of man and the world. God makes a covenant with man not because He wants to show him His power or to subjugate him or to force him to do what He wants, but in order, out of love, to make that free community possible and to lead man toward salvation.

The Sinaitic Covenant of the Old Testament

That Testament—Covenant—we already have in Paradise itself. It was made between our most ancient parents and God, before sin; later it was renewed by individual righteous men chosen by God, men such as Noah, Abraham, etc. But all those were preparations, or rather, pale pictures of what would follow. In the true sense of that word, we don't truly have a Covenant until the Sinaitic Covenant, where we have God's people at the lead with Moses, and where we have the Lord, and we have the Law—the Torah—which actually represents the written part of the contract, i.e., the agreement between God and His people. It is clear to us in the entire Old Testament that the essence of that Covenant is found in the following words: "You will be my people, and I will be your God." That community between God and the people has its agreed-upon aspects. Out of pure love, and not by force, nor through any merit earned by people, God gives them blessings, life, wellbeing, happiness, progress in everything, and leads them toward abundance, toward that which He has prepared, that which He has planned for them. The people—who were not chosen because they were better than others, but because God chose them, entrusted them with a mission, with responsibility—respond at the same time with their faith and love. On God's side there is no possibility, nor is one even envisaged, that He would violate or alter his positions established in that original contract or Covenant, while on

the side of the Israelites, the side of God's people, it is expected that when they violate the Covenant, instead of blessings they will earn curses; instead of happiness, unhappiness; instead of freedom, slavery; and all that which we already know from the Old Testament.

That Sinaitic Covenant, made in the time of Moses, was later renewed with regularity, along with the reminder of its meaning and content. We had that during Josiah, then during the time of King David—again, a ceremonial renewal of the Covenant—as well as at the time of Solomon with the building of the Temple and the reading of the Law, and later during the time of Ezra, and so on up to the dawn of the times of the New Testament. The prophets renewed and deepened the meaning of this concept of Covenant, because that concept would be threatened were it to be understood literally or negatively rather than in a manner connected to God, through the elevation of our thoughts and concepts to a higher reality, through the experience of the spiritual, through communication with God. Without that dimension the concept of Covenant is in danger of being understood in a superficial, juridical way, as an external relationship, a sort of "for hire" or mercenary and commercial relationship between God and His people—I give to you, give to me; I give you blessings, you give me loyalty; you show me disloyalty, I curse you. But that is neither the first nor the final meaning and content of the Covenant. Its meaning and content are actually those of love that assumes man's absolute freedom. And its goal is also an absolute love, a complete reciprocally permeating love between God and man, a love of the kind that would appear only in the person of the God-man Christ.

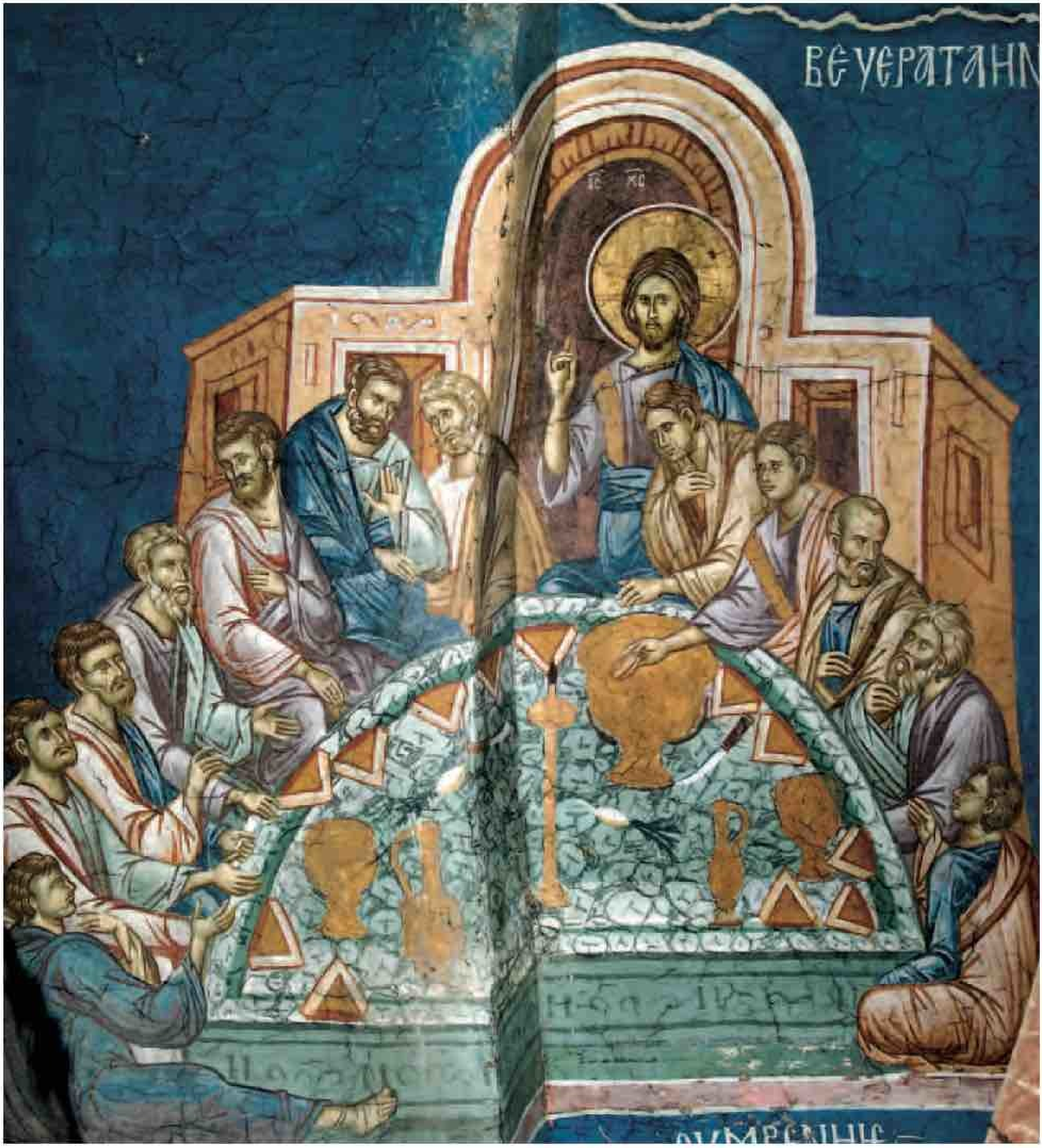
The person of the God-man Christ, as the carrier of the New Testament is not the result of man's fall into sin. Rather, it is the embodiment, the humanization of God's Logos. That love already existed in God's primordial plan before the creation of the world and man, before the fall and before sin, before everything. According to Saint Maximus the Confessor and other great Fathers and Teachers of the Church, that love is also the ultimate goal of God's entire creative act. Therefore, that reciprocal love between God and man which leads to and brings about the hypostatic or personal union of man and God in the person of the God-man Christ was the ultimate goal of that entire Covenant of God and Israel throughout history. Because of that, the prophets do not warn only Israel and do not point out only the horrible consequences of disloyalty to Him, of violating the Covenant with God; they do not predict only the misfortunes that will fall upon Israel through violation of the Covenant; they do not only say that Yahweh is the master and Israel His servant and slave. He is also the vintner and Israel is his vineyard. But this too is not enough to show the relationship and communion of love between God and His people, that is, the Old Testament Church. They go even further: Israel is the Son of God and Yahweh is his father. And they go still further: Israel, the believing people of God, is the (female) fiancée and the (male) fiancé is God himself. Israel is the wife; Yahweh is the husband. His faith and love are marital faithfulness; idolatry is adultery. Through all these illustrations and comparisons, the Prophets sought to awaken and preserve in the consciousness of God's people the truth that love, God-man's love and God-man's salvific communion, are indeed the final goal and content of the Covenant.

However, the Prophets, observing as real people, for the Prophets are superb realists, and seeing the historical development of things and the real disloyalty of the majority of Israelites, were brave enough to tell God's people: People, your sin is so immense that the Covenant has actually been broken. You violated the Covenant with God! At the same time, the Prophets predict, with much conviction and hope, the renewal of the Covenant and the creation of a new one, which would be eternal, last, and final. That which must be done to remain faithful to the Covenant will be written on the pages of human hearts; and only then will that which was at the base and the root of the Sinaitic Covenant be fulfilled. And that was: "You will be my people, my sons and daughters, and I will be your Lord God." In such a manner we arrive at the realization of God's Logos. The Lord Christ first arrives among the people of Israel, and through them to all of mankind. He brings the message that He is the new and eternal Archpriest and the sole intermediary between God and mankind and He who establishes the new Covenant—in other words, He who renews that Covenant to its completion and perfection.

The Content of the New Testament

As we know from the testimony of the Evangelists and the Holy Apostle Paul, at the Last Supper our Lord Jesus Christ established the New Testament and the Church by blessing the bread and the wine and establishing the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist. The Church would be entirely built, revealed, and announced on the day of Pentecost. However, we actually already have the New Testament Church at the Last Supper. It was born from the ribs of Jesus Christ; as Eve was born from the ribs of ancient Adam, so from the life-bringing ribs of Christ, through Christ's suffering, is born the new Eve, the source of Life, and that is the Church. Therefore, Our Lord Jesus Christ—preparing for his suffering, for his cross, for the spilling of his blood for the life and salvation of the world—gives bread and wine and through his Holy Spirit, He transforms it into his body and his blood. Then, according to the Evangelist Mark, He says to the Apostles: "This is the New Testament, that is, the New Covenant in my blood," and, according to the testimonies of other Apostles, he added: "which is shed for you." So, the ritual sacrificial part which accompanied the creation of the Old Testament now looks like a magnificent prototype and the prophesy of a new reality, in which the only true Bishop and Archpriest of the New Testament,

The Tabernacle,
altar, north wall,
Gračanica, 1318–1321



The Last Supper, nave, arch between the west pair of pillars, Dečani

the final, eternal Covenant between God and His people, spills his blood "for the life of mankind." The blood that was spilled was not that of any animal but the blood of the Lamb of God, the blood of the Archpriest who offered the sacrifice and of the Sacrifice that is offered, the blood of the intermediary between God and man. He is the intermediary in the sense that He is the herald, our apostle before God the Father, because He is equal to us through his humanity but at the same time He is also the real and true herald and apostle of God, or the courier, the envoy from heaven, because He is the true God, the very same as the Father and the Holy Spirit, one of the Holy Trinity.

Therefore, in His person God and man are forever together and one, without confusion and without change but also without separation and division. He is, therefore, Archpriest and Sacrifice, the Lamb and the Shepherd. He is the one who brings about the completeness of the Covenant between God and man by shedding His blood for the life of mankind. Now the nature of the Covenant is shown in its completeness. What the Old Testament once suspected and prophesied, what it hoped for, that is now being realized. That is what He himself says: that there is no greater love than that shown by someone who gives his own life for his friends (John 15:13). And He, the sinless God-man, gives His life, not for his friends but for mankind, which, through its sins, was His enemy. By that act He destroys death and gives the gift of life. This shows that the content of the New Testament is self-sacrificing love, a love that crucifies itself for others. This also reveals the true content and the true meaning of Covenant or Testament. Let me mention here that already in the translation of the Old Testament into Greek (in what is known as the Septuagint), the Jewish translators chose the word *diatheke* for the Hebrew *berit*. This adds a new dimension, a new understanding, which connects with death and with testament, with the bequeathal of one's entire estate when writing one's testament.

Hence *diatheke* or *testamentum* or testament, the last will, indicates that essential sacrificial character of the New Testament and points out that the death of Christ will redeem and save the entire world. It is clear that now, here, there are many dimensions, that this Testament–Covenant now spreads out across the entire world, including all nations and tribes. Israel is spreading too; the prophetic vision that God will save all those who call His name is being realized. As the Apostle Paul would say, all of us other nations and tribes, like the wild olive tree, graft ourselves to the cultivated one, and all together we become one people of God, the clergy of the kingdom, we become God's inheritance. And thus we have the union of the New Testament. The Synagogue of the Old Testament was again the prototype of that union of the New Testament, the introduction to the New Testament Church. Actually, we are all the people of the New Covenant–the New Testament. The reality in which we live, the spiritual reality, is the reality of that new and final Covenant between God and men. That Covenant which is sealed by the descent of the Holy Spirit and by the founding of the Church is the last, final, eternal Covenant, which will, in its complete form, appear in the future Kingdom, the Kingdom of universal love. This is, speaking briefly, the elementary concept of Testament–Covenant.

What Is the Kosovo Covenant?

Let us now see what the Kosovo Covenant is in the light of the New Testament. We all know that our people compare the person of the Holy Prince Lazar and his behavior before the Battle of Kosovo with events in the New Testament. It is not by chance that in our folk poetry we have Prince Lazar's Supper. It is actually a projection of Christ's Last Supper before his suffering; all those words that, according to folk tradition, were exchanged between Lazar and his feudal lords and heroes, about faith and treason, etc., then follow. We also have those now classical words by which the Holy Prince Lazar expresses the essence of the Kosovo Covenant: "The Earthly Kingdom is a short-lived; the Heavenly Kingdom is forever and ever." He also said that we have to choose the Heavenly Kingdom in order to be true to God, i.e., to our salvation through Christ, through the Church. One thing is certain: our people, as a Christian nation, unmistakably understood the spiritual essence of Lazar's decision, his character, as well as the spiritual essence of the events which took place on Kosovo Field on the day of the battle. From then up to our time, and, as I personally believe, as long as there will be Serbs on this planet and as long as they belong to the Orthodox Church, they will live according to the Kosovo Covenant.

However, what is that Covenant in its essence? Can we Serbs make our own separate Covenant with God and establish our own special relationship with Him now, besides the one and eternal Covenant that God and all of mankind have made with the God-man Christ? Is this what it is? Of course it is not. So what it is? I will try to answer this question in the shortest way possible. Of course, more capable and educated people in our nation have already spoken and written much better about this question. Suffice it to mention the Holy Bishop Nikolaj and St. Justin (Popović), who pondered these topics, who delivered sermons and wrote about these topics. All that I can say will seem, compared to them, like simple recitation or stuttering. That is why I mention the book by Bishop Nikolaj (Volume Five) which contains a text of his entitled *The Prince's Covenant*. I personally think that this is perhaps one of the most beautiful descriptions of the Kosovo Covenant, just as I think that the book by Father Justin Popović, entitled *The Way of St. Sava as a Philosophy of Life* could also be entitled *The Kosovo Covenant as a Philosophy of Life*. What do I mean by that? The Kosovo Covenant is nothing but a ceremonial renewal of the St. Sava Testament or Covenant in a given

Mandilion, Dečani, ca. 1339

historic moment, under given historic circumstances. And that, again, is nothing new and original, except that it too is actually a true, creative application of our original Cyril-and-Methodius Covenant with the living God. But even the Cyril-and-Methodius Covenant of our ancestors was nothing new. It is an organic continuation, a creative application of that which the great Fathers and the great Synods of the ancient Church revealed to be the eternal Covenant between God and His people. This means that they revealed the secret of the Church. The Church is actually the locus of the Covenant, its fruit and its meaning.

But what the great Fathers and the Teachers of the Church and the great Synods convened by God accomplished is, once again, nothing new. In their time and in their living, creative way, remaining faithful to the Tradition but responding to the challenges of their times, they only revitalized or actualized what the Apostles saw, experienced, and tasted, as the original disciples of Jesus Christ and witnesses of His making of the Covenant between God and mankind. Thus, we can follow this line backwards from the Holy Prince Lazar to Christ's Last Supper and the making of the New Testament, the New Covenant; and if we want to go even further back, to the prophesy and expectation, then we go to the Sinaitic Covenant and the Council and yet further to Paradise.

So, here is a short definition of the Kosovo Covenant, or Testament: It is nothing but a creative application of the only and the eternal Testament or Covenant of God with Man, i.e., Christ's Covenant, to the history, life, experience, and sufferings of our people. In other words, the choice of Lazar, his Covenant, is actually our choice—like our decision to have a conciliar personality, as the local Church, as one of the tribes of the New Israel, as an organic part of God's people—to responsibly, freely, with sacrificial love and conscience include ourselves in that eternal Community which is expressed in Jesus Christ through the Covenant between God and mankind.

I consider it very important to insist on that spiritual, evangelical, Christ-centered content of our Kosovo Covenant. It is nothing new, nothing special and nothing original. For me, the most important characteristic of its novelty and originality is contained in the fact that it maintains us in communion and love with the Only One, the One eternally new under the sun, with the person of the God-man Christ. That is why the Kosovo Covenant is irreplaceable for us, and that is why as long as our people exist on this planet, they will not be able to live without it.

Father Justin used to say that The Way of St. Sava simply represents Orthodox Christianity expressed in the Serbian style and through Serbian experience. We can say the same about the Kosovo Covenant: that it is the New Testament expressed in the Serbian style and through the Serbian experience. Still, it is Christ's New Testament and not something else. The Kosovo Covenant does not exist outside of the New Testament. Therefore, the Kosovo Covenant is an embodiment of the New Testament in the fabric of our nation, in its history, in its being, in its destiny on this Earth. But this didn't happen by magic or automatically. This happened thanks to the conscious and free choice by our people.

What the Kosovo Covenant Is Not

We all know that the possibility exists of incorrect interpretations and of distortions of the meaning of the Kosovo Covenant. I will mention only two. You know that the ideologues of the until recently ruling Marxist ideology (today pretty tired and apathetic) often blamed us, the Orthodox clergy of the Serbian people, as being carriers of intolerance, nationalism, even chauvinism, exclusivity, and other similar claims. Others, shuddering at the Kosovo Covenant, consider it as some sort of Serbian equivalent of that inhuman ideology in Croatian territories which reached its peak in Francoist ideology, in an extreme clerical nationalism that finally gave birth to the Ustasha movement in Croatia. This shows that such people not only do not understand the evangelical essence of the Kosovo Covenant, its natural tie to and similarity with the only eternal Covenant, Christ's Covenant, but they also deny us it.

However, we must say in all sincerity that in an era of romanticism and nationalistic awakening a part of our churchless intelligentsia gave a certain permission, through its interpretation at the time of the Kosovo Covenant and of the Way of St. Sava, to those bad-intentioned people blinded by intolerance to falsify in this manner the content of our Kosovo Covenant and to constantly slander and attack us. We must admit, whether we like it or not, that there exists one translation of the Way of St. Sava and of the Kosovo Covenant into the language of Serbian nationalistic ideology which is unacceptable to us who are Christians. This wasn't the only cause but it was one of the causes which later triggered this kind of leftist climate, a total lack of concern for our nation, and the loss of national feeling. This was not normal, because we exist as concrete peoples.

Certain romantics, therefore, instead of accepting the Kosovo Covenant for what it is—that is, the only way by which our people would return to the Church, be introduced to the reality of the New Testament, to the reality of the people of God, in the Church—they rather tried to use the Kosovo Covenant as the basis for creating a nationalist ideology, and ideologies are, by their nature, idolatrous. There was, however, a barrier preventing such an ideology from becoming genocidal and misanthropic; that barrier was actually the content of the Kosovo Covenant itself. Although we had nationalisms, nationalistic ideologies and movements, the Kosovo Covenant alone saved our national renaissance from degenerating into something that happened in other nations. The danger of translating the Kosovo Covenant into the forms and shapes of a nationalist ideology, where Orthodoxy appears as a kind of servant to the nation, is a temptation, a spiritually subtle danger, which is not always easily recognizable but which we, the clergy and the faithful of God's Church, must face. We cannot allow the Kosovo Covenant to be demeaned to the level of a nationalistic ideology. This is one thing.

Secondly, many of our intellectuals, educated people who are not tied closely enough to the Church, to God, and to prayer but who worry about the destiny of our nation on this exposed, wind-blown Balkan territory, and many of whom lack the criteria evident in Lazar's decision and in Vidovdan (St. Vitus' Day), think that our Kosovo Covenant is a kind of historical misfortune, a certain masochism on our part, an enjoyment of our own martyrdom and fall. For that reason, they think that we were not decisive enough throughout our history and that it was exactly the Kosovo Covenant, so church inspired and monastically branded, that brought us to the point where everyone can step on us. Those people believe that we should abandon the Kosovo Covenant and move forward with strength, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. This is the second variant of translating the Kosovo Covenant into its opposite. For the same reason as in the previous case, we must oppose, with all our spirit, this kind of calculated interpretation of the Kosovo Covenant and such an approach to its content. That is an absolutely untrue and wrong interpretation. Lazar did not go to Kosovo to be defeated but to defeat evil by good, so that Christ wins over Satan. Lazar did not try to defeat evil by evil, because that way evil only multiplies. Christ did not go to Golgotha to be defeated but to win, and he did win. God's son is celebrated on the cross; and on his cross, on his crucifix, are written the words "The King of Glory." Therefore, every defeatist interpretation of the Kosovo Covenant is truly nonsense and a falsification.

Finally, let me posit several problems to my and your conscience. What, in our practice, should we, and must we, do to revive the Kosovo Covenant and its true meaning within ourselves and around us? In the first place, we must resurrect and awaken in our people the ethos of true spirituality characteristic of the original Kosovo Covenant because it makes us part and parcel of God's eternal New Testament and members of Christ's Church. Awakening, enlivening, resurrection, development, and nurturing of those contents—these represent our only possible contribution to the return to the Kosovo Covenant and our faithfulness to it.

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The Western world owes an immeasurable cultural debt to a civilization which alone preserved much of the heritage of Greek and Latin antiquity during these dark centuries when the lights of learning in the West were almost extinguished.
(Lord Norwich in the epilogue to his trilogy on the Byzantine Empire)

Inscription ***Whoever eats My flesh*****, Bread Communion**, Communion of the Apostles, detail: Bread Communion, altar, Church of Saint Demetrius, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1322–1324

Heavenly Liturgy, detail: Christ the Lamb, main dome, Gračanica, 1318–1321

Prophet Aaron, northeast pillar of the naos,
Gračanica, 1318–1321

Prophet Moses, southeast pillar of the naos,
Gračanica, 1318–1321

Holy King Stefan Dečanski,
the hagiographic icon painted by Longin

Longin decided in 1577 to paint at his own expense a hagiographic icon of Saint Stefan, the most beautiful artistic praise the Holy King has ever received. A well-known painter and a gifted writer, Longin painted icons for Dečani on at least two other occasions, both before and after 1577. This icon, perhaps created in accordance with the wishes of the monastery's brotherhood, was the painter's personal gift to Saint Stefan to help him with the illness from which he suffered. In the large central area of the icon, Holy King Stefan Uroš III is shown on the throne between two sentries; from Heaven above, surrounded by cherubs, Christ Emmanuel blesses with both hands, while two angels descend toward the King with laurels and a crown in their hands. Although the scene is based on old and well-known portraits of rulers, through certain iconographic details we can already see the intent to glorify Stefan as a model holy king and martyr.

Patterns of Martyrial Sanctity in the Royal Ideology of Medieval Serbia: Continuity and Change

Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić

A *broad* research field such as that offered by the issue of royal sanctity may be approached in a number of ways.[1] Without losing sight of different aspects of royal cults and their place in medieval piety, we have chosen to focus on the political role of a particular cult, that of the royal martyr. The holy king cult to which, in a broader sense, that of *regnans*-martyr also belongs, proves to be a European-wide phenomenon. Reflecting both ideological continuity and change, it varies revealingly with the epoch and cultural environment of the protagonists involved.

Seeking to define the type with more precision, modern scholarship has looked at the personalities of rulers, the *realia* associated with their reigns, and the very acts of martyrdom.[2] Hagiographic portrayal of a ruler and of the style of his rule is based on standardized imagery, that is, on the principles of ideal kingship found in Christian moralizing literature such as Pseudo-Cyprian's treatise and mirrors of kings, a type of writing increasingly popular from the ninth century on. This literature took shape under the powerful influence of the monastic ideal, which profoundly marks the typical portrait of a holy king. Almost as a rule, the hero of a hagiographic narrative is characterized by traditional *virtutes*: noble descent and strict Christian upbringing, a proclivity for asceticism, Davidic *humilitas*, generosity towards the poor, protection for the weak and the sick, the gift of teaching showing the true path to salvation, temperance in every way, and exceptional *pietas*. It is this piety that leads the ruler to choose the monastic way of life or practise ascetic discipline. A distinctive group of royal martyrs are those who suffered *pro patria et gente propria*.[3] Notwithstanding this early and very old function of kingship, which finds expression in early ruler cults, the royal martyr primarily is a favorite with the Church and his devotion is expressed in erecting churches, giving donations to monasteries and protecting the clergy. His concern for justice ensures perfect peace, harmony and quietness, the ideals of God's kingdom on earth. Since such conduct confers certain clerical functions upon his kingship, early types of holy kings may be rightly classified as conform to the *rex-sacerdos* pattern.

A feature common to all the cited ruler cults is recognizable in hagiographies where the *passio* of a new martyr as a rule is shaped on the model of Christ's passion. In that sense, somewhat later types of royal martyrs such as the passion-sufferers Boris and Gleb basically fit into the same hagiographic pattern despite their different dates of origin.[4] By the end of the eleventh century the cults of holy rulers had consolidated in Europe as a legitimate form of religious support to kingly authority.[5] Of particular interest in studying the holy rulers' cults is to observe the phenomenon of linking up saintly cults with authority and so-

[1] The phenomenon of royal saints has been much written about. G. Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses. Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe* (Cambridge, 2000), offers a very good and detailed overview of the ample relevant literature on the subject.

[2] For the martyred ruler type, see a very good study by N. Ingham, "The Sovereign as Martyr, East and West", *Slavic and East European Journal* 17, no.1 (1973), 1–17. On this ruler type in detail, R. Folz, "Les saints rois du Moyen Âge en Occident (VIe–XIIIe siècles)", *Subsidia Hagiographica* 68 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1984), 23–67, and his "Les saintes reines du Moyen Âge en Occident (VIe-XIIIe siècles)", *Subsidia Hagiographica* 76 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1992).

[3] On this ideal ruler type, see E. H. Kantorowicz, "Mourir pour la patrie (Pro patria mori) dans la pensée politique médiévale", in *Mourir pour la patrie et autres textes* (Paris: PUF, 1984), 105–141.

[4] J.-P. Arrignon, "L'Inhumation des princes et des saints de la *Rus'* de Kiev", in *Le sacré et son inscription dans l'espace à Byzance et en Occident. Études comparées*, ed. Michel Kaplan (Paris, 2001), 5–11. Cf. also G. Lenhoff, *The Martyred Princes Boris and Gleb: A Socio-Cultural Study of the Cult and the Texts*, UCLA Slavic Studies 19 (Columbus, Ohio: Slavic Publishers, 1989), 32–33, with earlier literature.

[5] F. Graus, "La sanctification du souverain dans l'Europe centrale des Xe et XIe siècles" in *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés IVe–XIIe siècles*, Actes du Colloque organisé à Nanterre et à Paris 2–5 mai 1979 (Paris, 1981), 561–572.

Prince Lazar's Vestment, detail,
Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church

Vestment of Prince Lazar was found in Vrdnik Monastery. The vestment is a sleeved tunic, buttoned up front with collar and sleeves hemmed in silver bands. It is cut in heavy red silk with woven infuriated lions and herons propped on scorpions among floral motives. Buttons are *platelets* of white thread decorated with the coat of arms of the Lazarević: a helmet with two oxen horns. Silk for the vestment was made in 14th century in the Italian town Lucca.

ciety.[6] A close link established between sainthood, authority and noble blood becomes a commonplace in all hagiographies.

In that respect, especially important for the development of the holy king concept with the Serbs appears to be the early period of Serbian sovereignty, initially in Zeta, and subsequently in Rascia (Raška) under Stefan Nemanja and his descendants. We shall try to show that Serbian societies, their many distinct features notwithstanding, sought to build the cults of their own holy kings in much the same way as most of Europe. The eleventh century proves to be "formative" in that respect. It was then that the earliest cult of a holy ruler was shaped, that of Jovan Vladimir of Zeta. Despite a significant ideological gap between the need of the emerging European nations to ensure their place in sacred history by elevating a national ruler to the rank of saint and the situation in Constantinople, certain traditions, central to understanding the ways in which the holy king cult was designed and put into practice with the Serbs, were under a tremendous influence of the ideologically prestigious empire on the Bosporus.

It cannot be a coincidence, then, that it is in the eleventh century that new patterns of the ruler's image rise to prominence. As shown by well-studied Byzantine examples, the link between the cult of saints and authority becomes obvious, and publicly proclaimed in contemporary hagiography.[7] We can observe holy men's increasing repute and importance, their way up on the social ladder, the influence they begin to exert in the field of active politics.[8] Holy men act as spiritual fathers of the leading figures of the secular hierarchy, and their prophetic visions and advice have an effect on the actions of the political elite. The popularity of a monastic vocation in the Eastern Christian world leads to the monastic ideal being embraced by representatives of the highest political circles as early as the tenth century, and it even leaves its mark on the development of the emperor cult.[9]

The said model undoubtedly influenced the cult of emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (963–969), increasingly popular in the Slavic world from the thirteenth century.[10] Owing mostly to the widely-read "Eulogy on emperor Nikephoros II Phokas and his spouse Theophano",[11] the emperor's cult becomes the preferred prototype of the ruler-monk. Contemporary western Lives of martyred rulers meeting their end while praying, at the church door, or performing ascetical practices as emperor Phokas did by sleeping on jagged stones, as a rule contrast the hero of the Life with his murderer who profits from the crime and takes power. A well-liked *topos* in such texts is the murderer's repentance and his assumption of the leading role in the ensuing process of canonization. In the above-

6 P. Brown, "Chorotope: Theodore of Sykeon and his sacred landscape", in *Hierotopy. The Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. A. Lidov (Moscow, 2006), 117–124.

7 For Byzantine examples, see the exceptionally useful volume *The Byzantine Saint: University of Birmingham Fourteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. S. Hackel (Birmingham, 1981), and therein, esp. E. Patlagean, "Sainteté et Pouvoir", 95–97; and R. Morris, "The Political Saint of the Eleventh Century", 43–50. The elevation to sanctity of highest-ranking members of the secular and church hierarchies in Byzantium is observable in the thirteenth century as well; see, in the same volume, R. Macrides, "Saints and Sainthood in the Early Palaiologan Period", 67–87.

8 On the concept of the holy man, see A. Cameron, "On Defining the Holy Men" in *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, eds. J. Howard-Johnson and P. A. Hayward (Oxford, 1999), 27–43.

9 As shown by the research of P. Magdalino, "The Byzantine Holy Man in the Twelfth Century", in *Byzantine Saint*, 51–66.

10 Patlagean, "Sainteté et Pouvoir", 99.

11 A critical edition of the text of the Eulogy, E. Turdeanu, *Le dit de l'empereur Nicéphore II Phocas et de son épouse Théophano* (Thessaloniki, 1976).

mentioned Byzantine text, the pattern is applicable to John Tzimiskes, who subsequently also receives a cult, cultivated especially on Mount Athos along with that of Nikephoros Phokas. In the eleventh century Phokas receives an office, read on 11 December, the day of his death, honouring him as a martyr, an ascetic, and the bringer of victory spreading the glory of the Romaion arms. Relevant to the shaping of the emperor's cultic image was the fact that the monk Athanasios acted as his spiritual father. An emphasis on this new spiritual lineage and the ascetical tradition embraced by Phokas accommodate the celebration of the emperor's sanctity to the frame of current piety and popularity of the cult of ascetics and martyrs.[12] Subsequent Serbian hagiography and especially the fashioning of the popular ruler-monk pattern undoubtedly drew upon the related literary genre cultivated in the Byzantine cultural orbit. It cannot be an accident that the popularity of the *Eulogy* and *Office* to the emperor, composed at the Great Lavra and honouring him as an ascetically inclined ruler close to the Athonite monastic circles, coincides with the growing popularity of royal monkhood which from the time of Manuel Komnenos becomes an accepted model in Nemanjić Serbia.[13]

During the eleventh century, cults of royal martyrs arise across the Slavic world, receiving a most enthusiastic response connected with the spread of the martyrial and monastic ideals in Byzantium.[14] Careful comparative analysis of the eleventh-century royal martyrs' cults reveals significant similarities in the manner of shaping the contemporary cults of St. Vaclav, Sts Boris and Gleb, and St. Jovan Vladimir, *knez* of Zeta.[15] The cult of St. Jovan Vladimir is the earliest royal saint's cult with the Serbs, and it is rightfully set apart from the ideologically consistent whole encompassing the subsequent cults of the Nemanjić rulers. The *Life* of Jovan Vladimir written shortly after his heinous murder in 1016 is now lost. The surviving version, known as the "Legend of Jovan and Kosara", is incorporated into the twelfth-century Latin chronicle *The Annals of a Priest of Dioclea*.[16] The writer of Vladimir's original Life, or the anonymous priest

Epitaphios of King Stefan Uroš II Milutin

The epitaphios (shroud) from the late 13th century, supposed to have belonged to King Milutin, is embroidered on dark red silk filled with ornaments, edged in velvet and interspersed with gold. Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

[12] Imperial sanctity and its connection with the assassination of emperors has been discussed by E. Patlagean, "Le Basileus Assasiné et la sainteté imperiale", in *Media in Francia. Recueil de mélanges offert à Karl Ferdinand Werner* (Paris: Institut Historique Allemand, 1989), 345–359; P. Schreiner, "Aspekte der politischen Heiligenverehrung in Byzanz" in *Politik und Heiligenverehrung im Hochmittelalter*, ed. J. Peterson (Sigmaringen, 1994), 365–383.

[13] P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180)* (Cambridge, 1993), chap. "The emperor and his image", 413–488. On the application of the said model in medieval Serbia, cf. S. Marjanović-Dušanić, *Vladarska ideologija Nemanjića* (L'idéologie monarchique de la dynastie des Némanides) (Belgrade, 1997), 274–286, and by the same author, "L'idéologie monarchique dans les chartes de la dynastie des Némanides (1167–1371). Etude diplomatique", *Archiv für Diplomatik, Schriftgeschichte, Siegel- und Wappenkunde* 26 (2006), 149–158.

[14] Patlagean, "Basileus Assasiné", 348–349, 372.

[15] On the evolution of the cult of St. Vaclav, most exhaustively, F. Graus, *Lebendige Vergangenheit. Überlieferung im Mittelalter und in den Vorstellungen vom Mittelalter* (Cologne, 1975), 159–181.

[16] *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, in Stara srpska književnost u 24 knjige [Old Serbian Literature in 24 Volumes], ed. S. Mijušković (Belgrade, 1988).

of Bar who composed the chronicle, offers a standard description of the saint's image conforming to the example set by Christ in all of its major points. Although the act of ultimate sacrifice is the main requirement for martyrdom, the Lives of royal martyrs as a rule "introduce" the reader, or the listener, to their prospective sanctity. The *Life* of Jovan Vladimir also makes use of well-proven mechanisms based on recognizable *topoi*. They begin by describing the hero as a child "endowed with all manner of skills and holiness",[17] on whom miraculous signs are manifested. The king is described as a "holy man"[18] and, as such, he refuses to confront the enemy directly, but "withdraws humbly" to the hill of Oblik before Samuil's attack. Even then, besieged on Oblik, the king begins to work miracles (the miracle with a snake). This type of miracles, "performed during lifetime", falls among the expected *topoi* when it comes to the "holy man's" attributes;[19] obviously familiar with the rules of the genre, the writer knowingly builds up the image of a future martyr. Possibly as a result of subsequent interpolations into the original text of the Life, there are surrounding this miracle references to contemporary legends about how Vladimir saved his people with his prayer which God heard and granted.[20] As there is no martyrdom without sacrifice, and no sacrifice without betrayal, following this biblical pattern, the traitor was found in the figure of the local lord who denounced Vladimir to the tsar; he is explicitly described as being "like the traitor Judas". Bidding farewell to his people, the king proclaims himself a good shepherd giving up his soul for his flock. "So my brethren, I would rather give my soul for you all and willingly let my body be mutilated or killed than let you be imperilled by famine or sword."[21] Quite in the spirit of contemporary Lives of martyred rulers, emphasis is not only on making a sacrifice for the people, but also on willingly accepting the sacrifice and consciously choosing the death of a martyr. But Vladimir was not to suffer death immediately; he was shackled and thrown into the imperial dungeon. Even in those conditions, he exercises the exemplary Christian virtues, fasting and praying day and night. Unsurprisingly, a divine messenger appears to him. God's angel announces the course of future events and their fortunate outcome, namely that he is to earn the Kingdom of God and be rewarded with the unwithering wreath of eternal life.

In the cultic veneration of the royal saints of the martyr type, the dramatic climax of the hagiographic narrative is their passive acceptance of a violent death.[22] The underlying idea of this hagiographic pattern is the saint's identification with Christ or the repetition of the sacrifice of Christ, and an identical *imitatio* consistently recurs in the accounts of their style of ruling and catalogue of virtues. Not at all infrequently, even the list of posthumous miracles includes some that in fact are recognizable New Testament motifs.[23]

The scheme of the hagiographic narrative about St. Jovan Vladimir shows much resemblance to the contemporary biographies of martyr-saints.[24] At emotional level, the reader's compassion elicited by Gleb's words, "This is not a murder, this is the felling of a young forest," finds its counterpart in the romantic background against which unfolds the love story of prince Vladimir and his rescuer princess Kosara. The description of their marital love is carefully devised: "And thus king Vladimir lived with his wife Kosara in absolute holiness and chastity, loving and serving God day and night." The king's virtuousness, a common motif in the accounts of a prospective saint's reign, also reveals itself in his perfect rule over his people, consistent with David's psalm about the fear of God as the beginning of all wisdom. This is not only the wisdom of a monk, but indeed of a statesman. In the twelfth century, when the *Annals of a Priest of Dioclea* was composed, the image of a martyr-ruler gradually becomes accommodated to the then popular chivalrous ideal.[25] In the text itself this process is observable in the description of the late ruler as an avenger garbed in knightly armor. Instead of a knight, it is God's angel that delivers coup de grace to the enemy, whereby the saint's murderous image becomes sublimated, which is a well-known hagiographic motif. Typical of the eleventh century in all of its details, and comparable with similar cults from the Slavic world, the cult of this royal saint undergoes a change in the twelfth century as regards the image of the exemplary ruler. The martyrial cults of holy kings emerge in medieval Serbia only in the fifteenth century, under the influence of completely different motives. They become fitted into a changed cultic framework and bear little resemblance to the eleventh-century cults of martyrs.

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17 "The child Vladimir, having ascended to the throne, was growing up endowed with all manner of skills and holiness", *ib.*, 125.

18 "The king, who was a holy man, humbly withdrew with his men and ascended to the hill named Oblik", *ibid.*, 125.

19 For a detailed account of the power of working miracles during lifetime as an important attribute of "holy men", see P. Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity", in *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity*, (Berkeley–Los Angeles, 1982), 103–152.

20 Legend has it that even at the time the chronicle was written "indeed, even today, if a man or an animal gets bitten by a snake on that hill, both the man and the animal come out alive and unharmed. On that hill, ever since the day the blessed Vladimir prayed till this day, snakes seem to be venomless", *Ljetopis*, 125.

21 *Ibid.*, 126.

22 Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers*, 62–113.

23 S. Marjanović-Dušanić, "Dynastie et sainteté à l'époque de la famille des Lazarević: exemples anciens et nouveaux modèles", *Recueil des travaux de l'Institut d'études byzantines* XLIII (2006), 77–83.

24 N.W. Ingham, "The Sovereign as Martyr", *Slavic and East European Journal* 17, № 1 (1973), 1–17; Arrignon, "L'Inhumation des princes", 5–11.

25 G. Klaniczay, "L'image chevaleresque du saint roi au XIIe siècle" in *La Royauté sacrée dans le monde Chrétien*, eds. A. Boureau and C.-S. Ingerflom (Paris, 1992), 53–61.

The cults of national royal saints associate domestic dynasties with the Old Testament-based traditions of God-chosenness, which play a central role in the processes of securing political legitimation for ruling houses.[26] At the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, we can see both the national and universal relics being used for raising an awareness of chosenness, observable in expanding the sacred realm as the fatherland's prayerful shield. In that sense, all-Christian relics, especially those of Constantinopolitan provenance, become integrated into domestic traditions.[27] Such processes are widely observable in the Byzantine commonwealth: in shaping the concept of the capital city;[28] in the cults of patron saints adopted;[29] in a changed piety the public display of which is very well documented in texts created for the purposes of ephemeral spectacles;[30] and especially in an insistence on the concept of a polysemic *translatio* recognizable as central both in the political and in the religious shaping of a new world. This concept of "translation", variedly viewed, and distributed over a vast area from Venice to Moscow, is expressed in the translation of both the sacral essence and of its various manifestations. It is observable in the widespread practice of translating relics—ranging from the relics of patron saints of cities to *palladia* of states, and from constructing new capital cities to translating the idea of a New Jerusalem[31] and a New Constantinople,[32] proper to the Slavic inheritors of Romaion Orthodoxy.[33]

Reconciliation between King Milutin and his son Stefan Dečanski,
detail from the hagiographic icon of Stefan Dečanski painted by Longin, 1557

It is against this historical background that in the Serbian society of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries new cults of royal saints emerge and become included into martyrologies as the then prevailing literary genre. The most interesting issue here is the manner of creating the holy kings' *memoria* in conformity with the notion of cult proper to the late medieval sensibility.[34] Expressive of the interests of the environment that is creating the cult, the carefully constructed *memoria* reflects most of all a coupling of the highest church hierarchy and political authority. In the case of a particularly popular cult of a martyr saint, prince Lazar—celebrated sufferer of the Battle of Kosovo—the *memoria* draws upon two crucial points: the violent death of the hero murdered af-

[26] For the Serbian example, see Marjanović-Dušanić, *L'Idéologie*, 60 and *passim*.

[27] Marjanović-Dušanić, "Dynastie et sainteté", 90–92.

[28] On the shaping of the concept of the capital city, see B. Kühnel, "The Use and Abuse of Jerusalem" in *The Real and Ideal Jerusalem in Jewish, Christian and Islamic Art*, sp. issue of *Jewish Art* 23 (1997/8); J. Erdeljan, "Belgrade as New Jerusalem", *Recueil des travaus de l'Institut d'Etudes byzantines* 43 (2006), 97–110.

[29] D. Popović, "Mošti svetog Luke – srpska epizoda" (The Relics of St. Luke – the Serbian Episode), in Eadem, *Pod okriljem svetosti* (*Under the Auspices of Sanctity*) (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2006), 287–291.

[30] A good example is the so-called Smederevo office to the translation of the relics of St. Luke (Ms no 165, Library of the Patriarchate, Belgrade) first published by Ilarion Ruvarac in 1868, the latest edition edited by T. Subotin-Golubović, "Sveti apostol Luka, poslednji zaštitnik srpske zemlje" in *Čudo u slovenskim kulturama*, ed. D. Ajdačić (Novi Sad, 2000), 167–179, with earlier literature; cf. Eadem, "Smederevska služba prenosu moštiju svetog apostola Luke" in *Srpska književnost u doba Despotovine* (Despotovac, 1998), 133–156. Cf. also the office to St. Theophano (published by K. Ivanovna in *Arheografski prilozi* 10/11 (1988/9)), 83–106; cf. Đ. Trifunović, *Ogledi i prevodi XIV–XVII vek* (Belgrade, 1995), 37.

[31] Claims to the role of a New Jerusalem were laid, apart from Moscow, by Tirnovo and Preslav or Prague and Aachen. On Kiev seen as the second Jerusalem, see the interesting recent study by V. Richka, *Kiiv – Drugi Yerusalim* (Kiev, 2005), 95–96.

[32] B. Flusin, "Construire une nouvelle Jérusalem: Constantinople et les reliques" in *L'Orient dans l'histoire religieuse de l'Europe. L'invention des origins*, eds. M. Amir Moezzi and J. Schneid (Brussels, 2000), 51, 53, 57, 68.

[33] Telling are the well-studied examples of the *translatio Hierosolymi* idea related to Tirnovo and Moscow, two capitals shaped on the model of Constantinople. Cf. V. Tapkova-Zaimova, "Tarnovo mezhdu Erusalim, Rim i Tsarigrad" (Ideyata na prestolen grad), *Tarnovska knizhovna shkola* 4 (1985), 249–261; I. Bozhilov, *Sedem etyuda po srednovekovna istoriya* (Sofia, 1995), 201–203; cf. also above № 5.

[34] A. Vauchez, "Saints admirables et saints imitables: les fonctions de l'hagiographie ont-elles changé aux derniers siècles du moyen age?" in *Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental (IIIe–XIIIe s.)*, Actes du colloque organisé par l'Ecole française de Rome avec le concours de l'Université de Rome "La Sapienza" (Rome, 1991), 161–172.

Nun Jefimija's *Encomium to Prince Lazar*, pall for the face of Prince Lazar (the shroud for the casket containing Prince Lazar's relics), embroidery, ca. 1402

In the tranquility of the Monastery Ljubostinja, the former despot's wife Jelena Mrnjavčević (ca. 1350 and after 1404), at the time nun Jefimija, immortalized her gratitude to Prince Lazar, embroidering, in silver and gold thread on red silk, one of the most poetic texts of Serbian medieval literature, composed as a prayer in old Church Slavonic. Harmoniously bordered around with stylized floral garlands, the embroidered text of the "Eulogy to Prince Lazar," with its silver and gold letters, captivates the eye, creating the impression of a luxurious ornament on the red silk background.

ter the battle, and the halo of martyrdom acquired by a death suffered in defence of the fatherland against the infidel; both elements derive from the practice of emulating Christ, so important in founding a saintly cult. Another significant phase in the veneration of saints involves manifestations of miracle. A change, both in structure and in manners of expanding the area envisaged for miracles, is observable in a changed model of sanctity. An integral and essential component of the medieval mentality is the fundamental belief in the omnipresence of the supernatural and its continual intervention in the world of the living.[35] Thus miracles are the most important manifestation whereby a close connection between the earthly and the heavenly comes to be defined.[36] Devotional compositions written for the intended founding of his cult associate his posthumous *miracula* with instances of healing, and with his role as his successors' intercessor before the heavenly assembly of martyr saints coming to aid and ensuring victory in the field of battle.[37] The prince's hagiographers and writers of offices insist on the martyr's crown that his death, and especially his decapitation, earned him. His powers as a saint are expected in prayers.

Setting up the new saint's *memoriae* also involves creating an appropriate sacral space essential to the cult. Not only a matter of a space in the church, it is a three-layer phenomenon comprising a particular way of marking the place of death, a carefully designed funerary whole centred on the original grave, the translation and deposition of the body in another grave, and, finally, the composition of eulogies outlining the main features or type of the sanctity in the making. This drift away from the previous martyr-ruler patterns in Serbian tradition has its reasons, and is basically a result of the establishment of a new pattern. The new cult does not fall within the familial or dynastic type of sanctity, because it is not intended as a source of a new holy dynasty. What Lazar acquires through his martyrdom is personal sanctity. It is to do with the legitimation of his successors and their consolidation in power. Prince Lazar's grave, in his foundation at Ravanica, thus becomes a "holy place", a sacral space of the highest order where an unrepeatable act of martyrdom is commemorated.[38]

The new holy ruler type takes on a well-defined martyrial character. Into that mould, shaped for the cult of prince Lazar, is fitted the newly-established cult of Stefan of Dečani (*Stefan Dečanski*), initiated by the monastic community of Dečani and its hegumen Gregory Tsamblak. Tsamblak wrote the king's *Life* after 1402, the year he had arrived in despot Stefan's Serbia from Moldavia and become hegumen of the monastery of Dečani (until 1414, when he was appointed metropolitan of Kiev).[39] Given that by the time Tsamblak accessed to the hegumen's throne the relics of Stefan Dečanski deposited in his foun-

35 P. Brown, *Authority and the Sacred. Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge, 1995).

36 A. Vauchez, "Structures et extension du champ miraculeux" in *La sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du Moyen Age* (Rome: Ecole française de Rome, 1981), 519.

37 Relevant sources for this issue have been published in Vol. 3 of *Stara srpska književnost* [Old Serbian Literature] (Novi Sad–Belgrade, 1970): Povesno slovo o knezu Lazaru (p. 118); Pohvala knezu Lazaru od monahinje Jefimije (p. 126).

38 On the prince's tomb at the monastery of Ravanica, see D. Popović, *Srpski vladarski grob u srednjem veku* (The Royal Tomb in Medieval Serbia) (Belgrade, 1992), 121–127.

39 D. Bogdanović, *Istorija stare srpske književnosti* [A History of Old Serbian Literature] (Belgrade, 1980), 205.

dation had become the centre of a cult for which the existing "dynastic" *Life* from Danilo's Collection was not fully appropriate, Gregory wrote the necessary liturgical compositions, above all a new Life and an office eulogizing a martyr ruler. Students of Old Serbian literature have long ago observed the unity, in terms of literary fashioning and internal cohesion, of the Kosovo writings and the contemporary compositions written for the purpose of two new cults, those of the holy prince Lazar and the holy king Stefan Dečanski. The view that it is the same martyriological inspiration of Serbian post-Kosovo literature resulting in the historical and spiritual motivation for the simultaneous cultivation of both cults[40] should be fitted into the bigger picture of current "historiographic" trends, into the time of the first genealogies, precursors of historical genealogies,[41] or the first Serbian annals—*skazaniye*s—distinguished by their chronographic style.[42]

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the cult of royal martyrs in medieval Serbia assumes features found in the hagiography of the Slavic world. While arising under the influence of similar developments in Byzantine hagiography, they form part of broader processes of forming sacral kingship, which in the underlying ruler cult requires the ruler's identification with Christ on several levels, including the level of martyrdom and sacrifice bringing about collective salvation. During the late medieval period, under the impact of historical circumstances turning Serbia into a shield against the infidel, this ideal gradually undergoes transformation into an elaborate programme of the sainted martyr king, whose most important function other than healing is to assure his successors victory in battle. The ideal of the martyr ruler thus conforms to the chivalrous inspiration of ideal kingship in general, but shows distinguishing features connected with the emergence in Serbia of new historiographic genres – genealogies and annals as specific historical chronicles of the early modern age.

Service to Holy King Stefan Dečanski, ca. 1500, manuscript № 59, the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery

Paraklesis to Saint Stefan Dečanski, ca. 1500, manuscript № 134, the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery

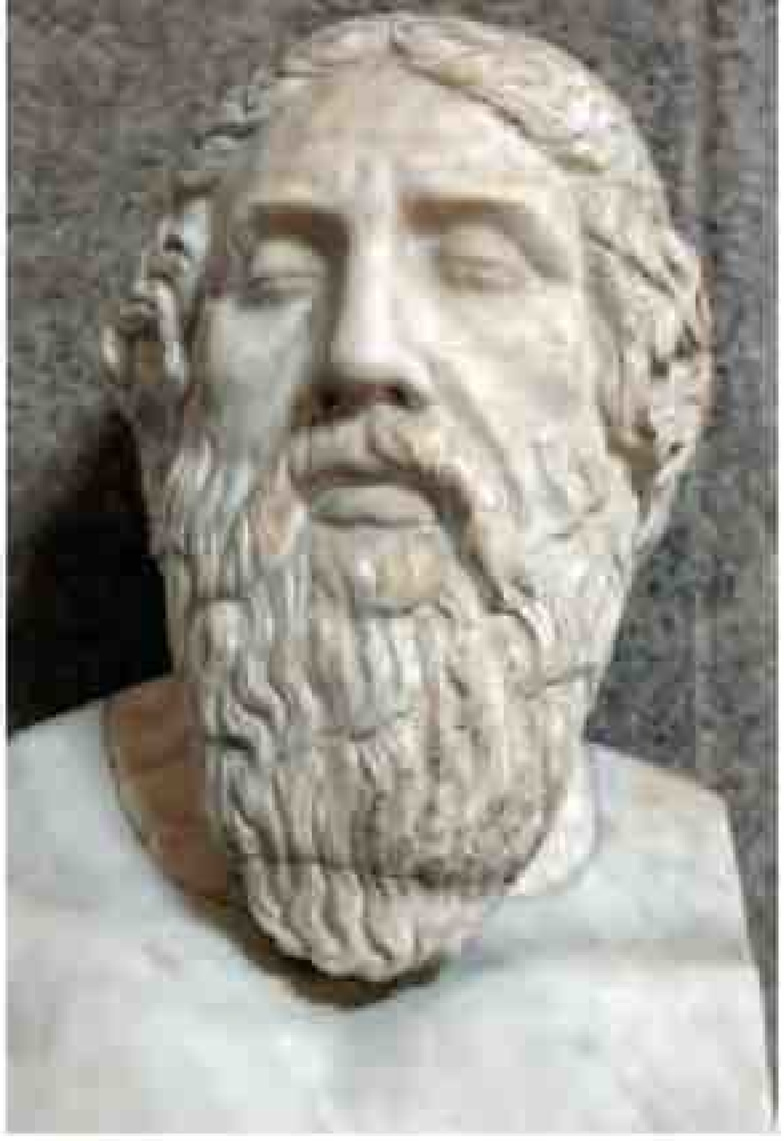
[40] *Ibid.*, 207.

[41] The short text of the first Serbian genealogy appeared in the last quarter of the fourteenth century, between 1374 and 1377. Devoted to the ancestral trees of the Serbian rulers, it seems to have been written for the purpose of legitimizing king Tvrtko's claims to the legacy of the Serbian kings.

[42] Earliest Serbian annals appear in the mid-fourteenth century as Serbian versions of the then translated Byzantine chronicles. On the genre, see Bogdanović, *Istorija*, 210–211.

The Iliad in the Mirror of the Kosovo Cycle Poems

Milan Budisavljević



Bust of Homer of the Epimedes type,
Vatican Museum

The proven similarity between our Kosovo cycle poems and Homer's *Iliad* not only provides clear answers to certain questions raised by the *Iliad*, but also prompts us to explain it.

Many similarities certainly stem from the primitive world-view, understandably quite common to many peoples at the time when epic poetry flourished, and also from the matching subject matter of the two epopees. Others, however, require different explanations, which will shed new light on many aspects of the *Iliad* as a whole.

1. We have seen that the very beginning of the *Iliad*, the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon, resembles the beginnings of our most ancient folk songs and legends, which seek—in a very small way, of course—to present a complete picture of the Kosovo event, namely the quarrel between Miloš and Vuk. Delving further, it may be said that even some of the poems dealing with certain different details imply the same event as marking the beginning of the battle of Kosovo. The *Iliad* tells us that Apollo's priest Chryses comes to ransom his daughter Chryseis, that Agamemnon releases her eventually but abducts "the fair-faced" Briseis from Achilles, who has a quarrel with Agamemnon over this and refuses his aid to the Achaean army. In our poems, Vukosava (Miloš's wife) and Mara (Vuk's wife) quarrel over the gentlemanly and heroic qualities of their respective husbands. Mara slaps Vukosava on the cheek; Vukosava repairs to "green gardens"; Miloš finds her there and, consoling her, learns why she is crying. He gets hold of Vuk, throws him on the ground and beats him until Emperor Lazar breaks the fight, barely able to appease Miloš after "pleading full-heartily" (Hilferding).

While the events themselves bear little resemblance to each other, the motive of both quarrels is the same: a woman. In the *Iliad*, Briseis is the cause of the protagonists' quarrel and of Achilles' rage, which in turn led to the suffering of the entire army and the death of Patrocles, Achilles' best friend. In our épopée, it is again the woman who provoke the quarrel; they are the cause of the quarrel between Lazar's two best knights, of Miloš's rage, which in turn led to his departure for the Turkish camp (thus weakening Lazar's army) and the death of his bosom friends Ivan and Milan. Briefly, the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon over females was the cause of great sufferings for the Achaeans, while the quarrel between Miloš and the Branković, also over women, spelled the ruin of the Serbian empire. Another case of women causing great perturbations is to be found elsewhere in the *Iliad* and our epic poetry.

The Trojan War breaks out over Helen being abducted by Paris, wherefore the brothers Agamemnon and Menelaus attack Troy. Outside Troy, Paris and Menelaus fight a duel, in which Menelaus nearly succeeds in killing the abductor of his wife Helen. In our folk poem (Karadžić), Banović Strahinja is (like Menelaus in the Greek story) absent from home for some time and the mighty Vlah Ali takes advantage of his absence to abduct his wife and install her in his tent at Kosovo. Strahinja finds him there and wreaks terrible revenge on him in a bloody duel.

We know of yet another Greek story along the same lines, wherein Helen is abducted by Theseus and set free by her brothers, the Dioscorides Castor and Pollux. A similar motif is to be found in some of our folk tales (Karadžić). The question that arises here is how to account for the similarity of such crucial motifs in the épopées of the two nations.

2. The strongest reason for this is that the woman is a common motif in the poetry of all Indo-European nations. It would certainly be better and more advisable, therefore, to take this thematic similarity between Greek poetry and ours as a legacy from the earliest times of our communal life. Those motifs, like many others, are but a reflection of that communal poetry which some nations have preserved since earliest times. The spirit of the poem, individual motifs, even entire situations live together with the national spirit; it is only the outer color that changes, depending on the relative importance of this or that particular event to the spirit of a given nation.

Indian épopées, Homer's epics, our folk poetry, the poems of other Indo-European nations consequently contain many common and similar motifs surviving from God knows what ancient times and communal life. That being so, such common motifs not only establish the *Iliad* as a piece of folk poetry but can also tell us more about its development.

3. Our mythological folk poems reveal that a large part of our folk poetry had been in existence before the migration of the Serbs and Croats to the Balkan Peninsula (cf. Jagić). Some passages indeed suggest a purely Asiatic origin from the earliest times before the separation of the Indo-European nations (Ruvarac). The Kosovo catastrophe was one of those events which renewed and refreshed—and certainly enriched—the poetic heritage from earliest times with the national spirit, so that all poetry flowed anew from a fresh source. In the same way that Christianity only altered the outer color of mythological poems, indeed leaving here and there fresh traces of ancient mythological beliefs (Jagić), it may well be that the Kosovo event added fresh outer markings, places and names to many earlier motifs, which combined to evoke a more vivid memory of and a stronger empathy with the national spirit than was the case with the old names of places and heroes of olden times, which could have faded a great deal in national memory by then. Or, to quote E. Mayer, "epic poetry came fully into its own when the mythical and the historical came together. The historical story provided the form and the myth provided the material". In both our and Greek mythologies there exist elements belonging to quite an ancient myth about gods of light fighting evil demons and forces of darkness and drought. Ruvarac concludes from certain elements in folk poetry that Vlah Ali is none other than a representative of the Indian Valas. According to a Vedantic description of a tempest, the cloud waters are gods' wives held captive by the demon of darkness (Valas, Ali), whom Indra kills by a thunderstrike in order to set them free." In addition to Ruvarac's arguments, we hold that the lines about Vlah Ali being

wont to fall asleep at sunrise,
at sunrise when the sun comes out

reflect the mythological significance of the demon of darkness. That very myth is also reflected in the legend of the Argonauts, while in our folk poetry prince Marko—as different from the sun god who fights the forces of darkness—lights the Arab, i.e. with forces of darkness personified, the root cause being again a quarrel over a woman (Ruvarac). It follows from all this that the myth was localized in spatial-temporal terms in both the Trojan story and our folk poem about Banović Strahinja (E. Mayer). Consequently, all the elements of such a myth (which is in fact dealt with in the *Kypria* and not in the *Iliad)* having to do with the combat of the Greeks over Troy must be taken as originating from a much earlier time than that of the Trojan War. In the same way as Strahinja's duel at Kosovo (undoubtedly a historical fact) had a mythical element added to it as the prime cause, so must a similar addition have been made to the combat of the Greeks, of individual Greek heroes, over Troy. The combat would have taken place first (and according to many scholars it actually did) and ancient mythological elements would have been added to it as t he prime cause afterwards.

4. The above consideration gains additional validity if a comparison is made between the protagonists of the two epic poems, Achilles and Miloš. We are immediately struck by an uncanny difference between themselves and all the others. The most readily noticeable thing they have in common is that their respective fatherlands, parents and tutors are distinctly unusual. On closer scrutiny, other points of similarity come into view. Achilles' fatherland is Phthia in Thessaly, his father is Peleus, the hero of the eponymous mountain, his mother the sea goddess Thetis, and his tutor the centaur Chiron. Later on in the story, albeit this is only hinted at in the *Iliad,* he dies of a wound inflicted upon him under divine instructions. The entire *Iliad,* with the exception of chapters 1 to 9, depicts nothing but his wrath and its consequences, later on passing to revenge for his friend's death and his duel with Hector. In addition to this we find that Achilles is a pious, full of gentleness and care for his comrades in arms; we also see him respecting Agamemnon's heralds as befits a noble and superior man. On the other hand, he is also extremely quick-tempered and too easily offended; his grievances haunt him day and night and his susceptibility to offence passes almost into madness from which only a massive emotional shock can bring him back. Furthermore, he is at times capable of committing truly horrible acts, such as mutilating the body of Hector. Achilles will even fight the elements themselves (v. his combat with Scamander), while Trojan warriors can escape death at his hands only through intercession of gods. All those and many other traits clearly show that Achilles is not only what the *Iliad* says he is but that he is also a substitute for man bearing all the distinctive marks of a genuine demon, a stand-in for one, as it were. The poems of the Kosovo cycle deal with Miloš only to the extent of his influence on the Battle of Kosovo, while others, presented in the collection *Miloš Obilić in Folk Poetry,* fill in the gaps. Thus in the very first poem in the said collection, *Miloš Obilić, the Dragon's Son* says this about his parents:

Thy mother is Janja the shepherd girl,
Thy father is a dragon dwelling in clouds.

His mother tended sheep for twelve years (a number typical of both the *Iliad* and our folk poetry) and, being exceedingly beautiful, her "passing fair face" resembling that of a mountain fairy, caught the eye of the fierce dragon who flew down from his cloud and made love to her. (Many a character in Homer was born from the union of a mortal woman and a deity.)

Heroes of Iliad by Tischbein

Janja gave birth to a son and laid him down under a fir branch, covered his face with a sprig of poplar leaves and left. Seeing this, a fairy took pity on the baby, flew down from her cloudy abode and suckled the child "upon her white lap"; lest Janja should sorrow overmuch, however, she did not take it back with her but left it there for someone else to find. Thus the poem. In Vuk Karadžić's *Dictionary*, under the entry *obil*, a reference is made to a folk tale according to which Miloš was found by the Emperor Stephen himself and taken to his court. Reminiscent of this is the belief that Miloš was reared by a mare *(kobila*, in Serbian) that let him suckle her; hence his last name Kobilović or Kobilić (Hilferding).

Let us add that Miloš is also known as Pocerac, meaning "of Mount Cer" (V. Karadžić). This leads us to the following points of similarity between Achilles and Miloš: *Pelionian* (after the mountain)—*Pocerac; Pelides* (son of Peleus)—*Obilić* (son of dragon); the sea goddess *Thetis*—the fairy, often called "boatman's protectress; the *Centaur* tutor (half man and half horse)—the mare that reared Miloš.

Let us now add to all this that folk poetry and tradition refer to Miloš as Lazar's son-in-law, which is reminiscent of Agamemnon's offer to give his daughter in marriage to Achilles—in both instances the spirit of the folk poem tends to have the protagonist marry into a royal family—and the similarity between Miloš and Achilles as presented in our folk poetry and the *Iliad* will be brought almost to the point of identity.

5. Remembering that Miloš was an actual living person, as is transmitted to us by both our, own and Turkish chronicles, we cannot but wonder why so many and so varied interpretations should have enveloped such a man—one that is still alive, so to speak—that we take him for a hero of the most ancient mythological poems rather than a protagonist of the battle of Kosovo.

The only answer possible is that folk poetry, as the battle of Kosovo receded farther an farther into the past, added to Miloš's image more and more mythical characteristics of the kind usually ascribed to ancient and truly mythological persons. Let us now consider the principal mythological features of Achilles.

The very fact, mentioned above, that his parents were allegedly the hero Peleus and the sea goddess Thetis, that his tutor was the centaur Chiron, and that he ought Xantos, suggests the mythological attributes of a sea deity (cf. Rasher). As Miloš's last name, Obilić/Kobilović, is associated with something unusual, so would Achilles's name be associated with names of certain rivers. Also suggestive of his mythological nature are his spear, his invincible weapons forged by Hephaistos himself, his already mentioned character traits, the ornamental epithets, his matchless strength, his wrath and rage, his strange unarmed appearance in the midst of the Trojans, his fight with the elemental forces.

It may well be concluded, then, that Achilles's feats reflect the feats of the river demon Achilles with the demons Xantos (Scamander, which is also the name of Hector's son) and Hector for the sake of Deidamia or Briseis (cf. E. Meyer, Wilamowitz).

We thus finally have a mythical Achilles who fights over a woman in the *Iliad*, and Miloš who also fights over a woman in our epopee, where not only the ancient motif of women but also the very personalities of the two protagonists would suggest a much earlier origin of those motifs—or rather, poems—than the Troyan war or the battle of Kosovo. Such a status of both Achilles and Miloš could be termed mythical, regardless of their historical wartime roles. Thus we arrive at a question of major importance for our case: is the Trojan story older than the Aeolian colonization?

6. Here we have two opposing opinions of the two principal scholars, Meyer and Cauer. E. Meyer perceives quite correctly *(Geschichte des Alterlhums II*, Stuttgart 1893) that Aeolia is the true homeland of heroic poems, Aeolia being the country wherein were formed both the language and the story, together with the poet's entire mythical circle. He describes equally aptly the relation between Aeolian and Ionian elements, stating that the latter were s superimposed on the layers of the former in terms of both the language and the story. His most interesting hypothesis, however, is that the Trojan war story is not of Aeolian origin or based upon the feats of Aeolians but a piece of tradition, of historical information, inherited by them from ancient times; as the Ionians were later to inherit the story from the Aeolians and develop it further, so did the Aeolians inherit it and weave their own elements into its fabric.

Meyer depends for his conclusions on the contents of the *Iliad*. He evidently takes Achilles to be the hero of the Aeolian story, i.e. unknown to the pre-Aeolian epic; his connection with the Trojan war, no matter how ancient, is still a secondary one. On the other hand, it is Agamemnon, the Mycenian king, who is already the central figure of the story; the Trojan story originates principally from the Peloponnese, its core being the destruction of Troy by the army of the Peloponnese princes, or, even more likely, "*wie wir wohl unbedenklich sagen dürfen*," by the

army of the king of the Mycenae, which took place earlier than 1184 BC, the date mentioned in Alexandrian sources. Later on, following the settlement of the north-western shore of Asia Minor by the Aeolians, battles were fought which gave rise to the Achillean story. Hence the conspicuous (*herschend*) place of Thessaly and the Thessalians therein (cf. Paul Cauer, *Grundfragen der Homerkritik*, Leipzig 1895, pp. 135 and passim).

In reply to all this, Meyer's opponent Cauer says: *"Das ist gewiss ein gesundes Prinzip, aber wo sind in diesen Falle die Zeugnisse, aus denen geschlossen, die Gründe, auf denen eine so überraschende Construction aufgefürt worden ist?* (*op.cit.*, p. 137).

Brothers Grimm where translating Serbian epic songs on Kosovo, collected by Vuk Karadžić, into German. They where impressed by their quality and equal them in Homeric poetry

Wilhelm Grimm (left) and Jacob Grimm (right) in an 1855 painting by Elisabeth Jerichau-Baumann

Having thus voiced his doubt as to Meyer's hypothesis, Cauer goes on to elaborate his own opinion. Reflected in the Achillean story are battles preceding the Trojan war: those at Lernos, Thebes and Lesbos. The battles which are only cursorily mentioned in the *Iliad* also took place at the time of the initial Aeolian conquests. Tenedos is not far away from Hissarlik; upon taking that island, the Greeks planned to conquer the littoral as well. The fact that it took ten years to take Ilium could be gladly and easily forgotten by the descendants of the attackers when they had the bards tell that the tenacious resistance of the Trojans was only broken after ten years' attempts. It is not accidental that t he *Iliad* leaves off at the point of Hector's death, leaving the battle undecided. This is but an instance of the historical factors which gave rise to the epic under discussion unintentionally showing through. Finally, Cauer sees no contradiction between the Trojan war story and the fact that the Aeolians fought but failed to establish themselves. Therefore—Cauer believes—Meyer's hypothesis, proceeding as it does from such contradictions, has no foundation. Equally untenable is its central thesis, since Meyer always has the pre-Aeolian period begin at the time of the Aeolian one. On the basis of the foregoing, Cauer concludes that, contrary to Meyer's belief, Achilles was not introduced in the Trojan story at a later date, as the *Iliad* is inconceivable without him.

Such nice yet controversial hypotheses are arrived at through sheer speculation. Let us now consider the question in the light of our epic poems—which are our best basis—*Zeugnisse and Gründe*, to see what is acceptable.

7. The Trojan story is certainly based on the events that took place at what are today the ruins of Troy; those are the battles between the Aeolians and the autochthons. Meyer, Cauer, A. Holm, Beloch and others all agree on this point.

The Aeolians came from Thessaly and Beotia, where Aeolian was the principal language. The Aeolian period is the most ancient in our *Iliad*.

Those, then, are incontrovertible facts and the only question is whether or not the Trojan story had been in existence before the Aeolians came to Asia Minor. Believing Achilles to have been an Aeolian hero, Meyer considers his position regarding the Trojan story as secondary and asserts that the story about him predates the Aeolian colonization; on the contrary, Cauer holds that the story stemmed from Aeolian battles a long the north-west coast of Asia Minor. Let us now attempt to project that question on to our Kosovo legend. Here again we might ask whether the entire subject matter belonging to the Kosovo Cycle predates the Turkish invasion or stems from it. As in the case of the Trojan story, opinions would differ. Where does the truth lie?—We have already seen that while neither extreme is true, there is some truth in both. Miloš was in reality a protagonist of the Kosovo event, but some elements from stories greatly predating the battle of Kosovo have been attached to his image. Consequently, Achilles, too, could have been an actual person taking part in the Trojan war. To put forward a few possibilities, he may well have taken many towns and defeated many heroes, fought at Lernos, Thebes and Lesbos, and even met his death in one of those battles between the Acolians and the autochthons of Asia Minor.

Goethe, painting by Joseph Karl Stieler

Johan Wolfgang Goethe was thrilled by the poetic quality of Serbian Kosovo-related epic ballads, became friend with Vuk Karadžić and even began learning the Serbian language in order to read them in original.

Major Philosophical Texts in Medieval Serbia

Boris Milosavljević

Any approach to medieval Serbian philosophy needs to take into account its significant reliance on Byzantine philosophy.[1] Medieval Serbian philosophy looks up to its Byzantine models and may in fact be described as Byzantine philosophy in the medieval Serbian language. It took shape mostly through the process of translating Byzantine texts and revising the Slavic translations. Although the philosophical texts in medieval Serbian were not locally produced nor were they original in the modern-day sense of the word,[2] they played an exceptionally important role in embracing complex Orthodox theological thought, in mediating the Hellenic philosophical legacy and, particularly, in building a Serbo-Slavic philosophical terminology.[3] Owing to that work, which was centred mostly on translation and interpretation—beginning with early translations of excerpts and manuals in the tenth century and being crowned with extensive translation projects in the fourteenth century—the millennial intellectual and spiritual tradition of Byzantium was introduced into Serbia and became an integral part of its culture and philosophy. This process, on the other hand, enabled Serbia to participate actively in the intellectual and cultural life of the Byzantine "commonwealth".[4]

This paper will take a look at the most important Byzantine texts that were translated into medieval Serbian and thus played a decisive role in forging a language for abstract thinking.[5]

The reception of Byzantine philosophy in Serbia

In medieval Serbia, the adoption of written culture entailed the adoption of Byzantine state ideology and cultural legacy.[6] Literacy was widespread in Byzantium and it was appropriated mostly in lower schools attached to monasteries and churches. Higher learning was reserved for the highest social ranks.[7] How the school and education system in medieval Serbia was organized is unknown. There were no secular universities, and the number of second-level schools is unknown. Even in Byzantium such schools were mostly in Constantinople. What is known, however, is that highest education was acquired mostly in Byzantium or under private tuition provided by foreign teachers, whilst further educational opportunities were provided by monastic centres such as Mount Athos,

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1 Until recently it has been widely accepted that the beginnings of Serbian philosophy cannot be traced further back than the late 18th century and the influence of the Enlightenment. As S. Žunjić, "Likovi filozofije u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji" [Aspects of philosophy in medieval Serbia], in *O srpskoj filozofiji* (Belgrade: Plato, 2003), 233, puts it: "The earlier philosophical tradition has been largely neglected not only in overviews of the already well-known high achievements of medieval Serbian art, but also in historical overviews of Serbian philosophy. The belief that philosophy did not emerge in Serbia until the break with the Church-Slavic tradition ("Byzantinism") and the radical turn towards modern Western philosophical literature persists in our culture even today."

2 In this connection, the distinctly Byzantine understanding of originality should be borne in mind. Originality as we understand it today was little valued. Byzantine thought sought to conform to the ultimate paradigm in much the same way as the Byzantine visual arts did. The purpose of the icon as well as of the text was a likeness of the prototype.

3 Žunjić, "Likovi filozofije", 236.

4 D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth* (London 1971); G. Ostrogorski, *History of the Byzantine State* (Rutgers University Press, 1986); Lj. Maksimović, "The Byzantine 'Commonwealth': an early attempt at European integration?", in *The Idea of European Community in History* I, eds. E. Chrysos, P. Kitromilides and C. Svolopoulos (Athens 2003), 99–109; specifically on Byzantine-Serbian relations, see G. Ostrogorsky, "Problèmes des rélations byzantino-serbes au XIVe siècle", in *Main Papers* II, Thirteenth International Congress of Byzantine Studies (Oxford 1966), 41–55; Lj. Maksimović, "Byzantische Herrscherideologie und Regierungsmethoden im Falle Serbien. Ein Beitrag zum Verschtändnis des byzantinischen Commonwealth", in *ΠΟΛΥΠΛΕΥΡΟΣ ΝΟΥΣ. Miscellanea für Peter Schreiner zu seinem 60. Geburtstag* (Munich–Leipzig 2000), 174–192.

5 The focus of the paper is on Serbia under the Nemanjić dynasty (from the 12th century) and their successors. As far as is known, there was no significant, if any, development of philosophical thought in early medieval pre-Nemanjić Serbian states, including Dioclea (Duklja) and Bosnia.

6 S. Averintsev, *Poetika rannevizantiiskoi literatury* (Moscow 1977), 35; D. Bogdanović, *Istorija stare srpske književnosti* [History of old Serbian literature] (Belgrade 1991), 35.

7 On education in Byzantium, see, among others, J. M. Hussey, *Church and Learning in the Byzantine Empire, 867–1185* (London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1937); R. Browning, "Byzantinische Schulen und Schulmeister", *Das Altertum* 9 (1963), as well as his text "The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the twelfth century", *Byzantion* 32 (1962), 167–202 and 33 (1963), 11–40.

and there notably the Serbian monastery of Hilandar[8] with its renowned translation school. Thus, there were in the centres of medieval Serbia sophisticated writers and connoisseurs of many languages trained in the liberal arts (i.e. grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, astronomy, geometry, arithmetic and music), as well as scribes, who, just like those in Byzantium, were trained for secular and ecclesiastical administrative duties as well as for commerce.

In the early medieval period differences among the Slavic languages were relatively insignificant.[9] In the 860s brothers Cyril (Constantine) and Methodius created the first Slavic written language,[10] based on the Slavic speech used around their native town of Thessalonica, in order to be able to translate the most important religious books as a necessary tool in their evangelizing mission to the Slavs. Old Slavic (and Church Slavic) remained for a thousand years comprehensible to the educated reader for whom it was intended, functioning as the lingua franca of the Slavic world.[11] Thus the terms characteristic of philosophical thinking were for the first time written down or translated:[12] for example, the Greek term *logos* was translated into Slavic as *slovo*, the ancient philosophical term *arche* was first translated as *iskoni*, but over time the latter gave way to *načelo*, which was more easily combined to form compound words typical of the Greek language. Briefly, the missionary work of Sts Cyril and Methodius in the ninth century laid the groundwork for articulating philosophical thought in Serbia.

Medieval Serbian philosophy was based on patristic literature, such as the writings of Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory Nazianzen, Maximus the Confessor, John of Damascus, Gregory Palamas and others. Of the greatest importance for Serbian philosophical terminology was the translation of Theodore of Rhaithu's *Preparation* and John Damascene's *Dialectic*. Theodore of Rhaithu's *Preparation*, a kind of a dictionary containing basic philosophico-theological concepts, was translated with reliance on several Greek texts and included in *Svyatoslav's Miscellanies*.[13] The *Codex* is encyclopaedic in nature and consists of 383 texts of well-known authors (e.g. Basil the Great, Justin the Philosopher, Athanasius of Alexandria) on a variety of subjects such as astronomy, mathematics, biology, philosophy and theology. Theodore's *Preparation* predates the text of John of Damascus, but its Slavic translation from the Greek original included certain portions of the *Dialectic*. Despite some terminological inconsistencies, the basic philosophical terms are already established in *The Preparation* (*rod, lice, vidъ*), but it is the translation of the full text of Damascene's *Dialectic* that played a crucial role in creating Serbian philosophical terminology. Apart from the Aristotelian terminological tradition, introduced via the translation of the *Dialectic*, there also was—under the influence of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* and ascetic literature, notably of John Climacus' *Ladder*—another strain of thought originating from Christian Platonism. Some modern scholars believe that this caused a duality in thought which has marked the entire subsequent history of Serbian philosophy.[14]

***Wisdom has built her house* (Proverbs 9:1),**
detail: writing tools, altar, east wall, Gračanica, 1318–1321

[8] Mount Athos, the holy mountain on the Athos peninsula in northern Greece, is a unique monastic state of Orthodox Christianity. In the 12th century it was the main center of Eastern monasticism, with monasteries and monks of various nationalities. Besides the most numerous Greek monasteries, there were also Georgian, Russian, Bulgarian and Serbian. In the scriptoria of the main monasteries Byzantine theological and literary works were copied and translated and the translations sent to their native countries. Hilandar, which ranks fourth in the Athonite hierarchy of monasteries, was founded in the late 12th century by Stefan Nemanja, grand *župan* of Serbia, and his son Sava.

[9] P. Ivić, "Standard language as an instrument of culture and the product of national history", in *The History of Serbian Culture* (Porthill Publishers, 1995), 41, illustratively put it: "...probably smaller than the differences among modern German dialects in Switzerland."

[10] According to the 9th-century monk Hrabar's (*Chernorizets* Hrabar) text *On letters*, prior to the mission of Sts Cyril and Methodius the Slavs had no letters, cf. A. Knežević, *Filozofija i slavenski jezici* [Philosophy and Slavic languages] (Zagreb 1988), 189; for Cyril and Methodius, see A.-E. Tachiaos, *Cyril and Methodius of Thessalonica: The Acculturation of the Slavs* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001).

[11] D. Bogdanović, *Istorija stare srpske književnosti*, 51.

[12] Some of the terms (e.g. word, spirit, reason) can be traced back to proto-Slavic.

[13] The *Miscellanies*, the third-oldest dated Slav book (copies of 1073 and 1076) to the *Novgorod Codex* (first quarter of the 11th c.) and the *Ostrimir Gospel* (1056 or 1057), was initially translated from Greek (913–919) for the Bulgarian Emperor Simeon; 150 years later, it was copied for the ruler of Kievan Russia Iziaslav Yaroslavich, whose name was later erased and replaced by that of Svyatoslav Yaroslavich, Prince of Kiev.

[14] M. Djurić and S. Žunjić, "Philosophie in Serbien—Ansätze zur Entwicklungsgeschichte und zum heutigen Stand", in M. Djurić and S. Žunjić, eds., *Die serbische Philosophie Heute* (Munich 1993), 14.

Corpus Areopagiticum

Distinctiveness of the *Corpus Areopagiticum*[15] mostly resides in its synthesis of Neoplatonism and Cappadocian doctrine. The influence of Plato's school, by then a thousand years old, including the influence of Plotinus and Proclus, can be seen particularly well from the use of typically Neoplatonic terms such as *hen* (one), *henas* (unity), *proodos* (emanation, procession), *kallon* (beauty), *agathon* (good), *ekstasis* (a step out, ecstasy). The One emanates into the world of things and thus becomes multiple, while remaining one without dispersing into multiplicity when outpouring its goodness. The One and Hyper-essential, as perfect Good, Beauty and Light, is the cause and the final aim of all things. Evil is the privation of good and does not have a positive existence.[16] On the other hand, the Areopagite's strong link with Cappadocian doctrine (Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory the Theologian) is best seen in *The Mystical Theology*, which is the most important Areopagitical text in methodological terms because it describes the apophatic method developed by the Cappadocian Fathers. Unlike the deductive cataphatic method which begins from the whole and gradually deduces particular from general affirmative statements, the apophatic method, which prevailed in later Byzantine thought, uses negative statements in its "ascent" from the particular towards the general. The mystagogic character of the apophatic method stems from its inductive character, as reflected in its demand for using the experience of believing and thinking as reference points in the quest for truth. The mysticism of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* does not imply an emotional isolation in unravelling mysteries, but a binding awareness of the impossibility of ever fully knowing the truth, because the truth resides in the "hyper-essential darkness". Laying an emphasis on "leaplike" ecstasy as the last step in the gradual journey toward the "Hyper-essential" and issuing a warning, similar to that of Plato's in his *Seventh Letter*, to exclude the uninitiated and ill-prepared, who believe they can understand the essence of the "hyper-Divine", *The Mystical Theology* further points to a dialectical relationship between the apophatic and cataphatic methods. While the essence of the Unknowable and Transcendent is impossible to understand or know, it is possible (through its actualizations) to attribute affirmative statements to the Unknowable by generalizing the knowable attributes, because negations (*apophaseis*) are not simply the opposites (*antikeimenai*) of affirmations (*kataphaseis*) since "beyond privation [*steresis*] is He who is beyond any subtraction and placement [assertion, *thesis*]" (Migne PG 3, 1000BC). Differentiation between the two methods originated with Proclus, entered Christianity via the *Corpus Areopagiticum*, and subsequently the apophatic method became predominant in the East, while the cataphatic or positive method, developed as the fundamental method of Aquinas' philosophy, culminated in rational philosophy and theology in the West.[17] After commenting on the necessity of preparation and cathartic experience for reaching the situation propitious for knowing, the apophatic "ascent" from the last to first negations is compared to the sculptor's taking away the excess of the material to reveal the "hidden features" of a statue. The cause of all sensory is not sensory (*aisthesis*) (it is not a body, nor is it a form, nor appearance) and the cause of all noumenal is not noumenal (*nous*) (it is not a soul, nor mind, nor truth), because above every thesis is: "...the unique cause of all and beyond all subtraction is the pre-eminence of Him who is simply [*haplos*] free from all and transcendent to all [*holon*]" (Migne PG 3, 1048B). This teaching about God's transcendence, characteristic of the Areopagite's apophatic method and of the Cappadocian Fathers (fourth century), is shared by Maximus the Confessor (seventh century), Symeon the New Theologian (tenth century) and Gregory Palamas (fourteenth century), thereby becoming a lasting feature of the Byzantine mode of thought. The claim of Gregory of Nyssa that "if the subject is the essence of God it is time to keep silent, but if the subject is His works then it is time to speak..." is embraced

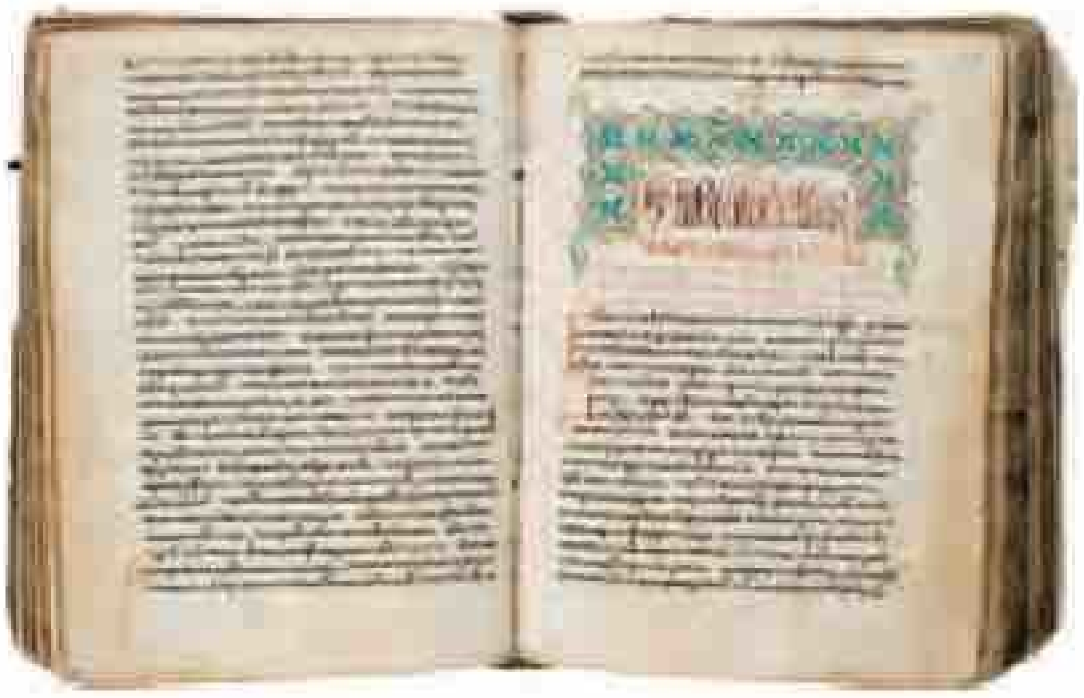
15 The identity of the author of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* has been a long-standing controversy, but none of the many theories has been proved correct. It remains unknown who hides behind the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, a disciple of the Apostle Paul (Acts 17:34), figuring at the bottom of the text. Although it cannot be said with certainty what led the author to conceal his identity, the work does not derive its renown from the name of its writer, but from its content, which is obvious from the fact that the authority of many other texts claiming to have originated in apostolic times was later rejected. The *Corpus* enjoyed undivided respect and had a strong impact on both Greek and Latin patristic authors. Having been analyzed and interpreted in complex and long-lasting theological disputes, the *Corpus Areopagiticum* became included in the Byzantine higher education curriculum. The *Corpus Areopagiticum* was early transmitted to the West. The large number of translations, copies and commentaries in both East and West led G. Florovsky to conclude that "without taking into account the influence of the *Areopagitica* the whole history of medieval mysticism and philosophy remains misunderstood".

16 The understanding of evil as the privation of good is shared by Plato, Neoplatonists, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, the Areopagite, Gregory Palamas (*Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*).

17 That the Byzantines were aware that the apophatic method had been used by Neoplatonists as well can be seen from Barlaam of Calabria's statement that "the Greeks understood that the hyper-essential and nameless God is above knowledge, science and all other achievements" (Migne PG, 151, 1365), a view shared by Gregory Palamas, who says that some classical philosophers accepted the monotheism of a hyper-essential God and apophatic theology. "If you want to find out if the Greeks understood that the hyper-essential and nameless God transcends knowledge, science and all other achievements, read the works of Pythagoras' disciples [...] Philolaeus, Charmides and Phyloxenus addressing this subject. You will find there the same expressions that the great Dionysius uses in his *Mystical Theology*... Plato also understood the transcendence of God" (*Triads* II, 3,67, Migne PG, 151).

in the *Corpus Areopagiticum* and Palamas' writings, particularly when the emphasis is on the difference between God's essence (*ousia*) and God's actualizations (*energeiai*).

Relying on these basic tenets of Orthodox theology, the fourteenth-century Hesychasts encouraged interest in reading, interpreting and translating the *Corpus Areopagiticum*, which thus became a cornerstone of medieval Serbian philosophy, culture and learning, and directly influenced the society's worldview. The Dionysian corpus was translated into medieval Serbian on Mount Athos about 1371, by monk Isaiah (*Inok* Isaija, also known as Isaiah of Serres, and *starac* or elder Isaiah),[18] and under the influence of the Hesyhast movement whose teaching was largely based on the Areopagitical texts. The Serbian translation of the corpus (*Mystical Theology, Divine Names, Heavenly Hierarchy, Ecclesial Hierarchy* and *Ten Letters*) was accompanied by the *scholia* attributed to Maximus the Confessor[19] and the translator's commentaries. The large number of both Bulgarian and Russian copies testifies that the texts were popular and much read.[20] Their influence was particularly furthered by the Hesychasts active on Mount Athos and in the Slavic south, after they



A collection of lessons of Saint Isaac the Syrian,
the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery, 1360–1370

emerged victorious in the dispute with the Latinophrones (those reasoning in a Latin way) in 1352, and after the Ottoman conquest of the southern parts of the Balkans caused the migration of monastics towards Serbia.[21]

The Divine Ladder

Judged by the number of its copies and translations, *The Divine Ladder* was the most popular text in medieval Serbia.[22] It is a strict monastic handbook based on the tenets of some of the systematizers of the erstwhile monastic teachings and the tradition of Sinaitic monasticism. John Climacus built a complex phenomenological system of thirty levels with strict rules for passing from one level to the next.[23] The number thirty symbolizes the thirty years

[18] Monk Isaiah, a Serb born in Kosovo c. 1300, entered the Serbian monastery of Hilandar on Mt. Athos sometime before 1330; in 1349 he was appointed abbot of the Russian monastery of St. Panteleimon; in 1353–63, he was in Serbia, actively contributing to relaxing the strained relations between the Serbian Church and the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate; in 1366, he became advisor to Despot Uglješa, master of the Serres region; he was commissioned by Theodosius, Metropolitan of Serres, to translate the *Corpus Areopagiticum*; in a note about the Battle of the Marica (1371), Isaiah says that he began working "in good times" and finished "in the evilest of all evil times", brought about by the Ottoman invasion. For more on Isaiah, see Dj. Trifunović, *Pisac i prevodilac inok Isaija* [The writer and translator monk Isaiah] (Kruševac 1980); V. Mošin, "Zhitie startsa Isaii, igumena russkogo monastiraya na Afone" [The Life of Elder Isaiah, Abbot of the Russian Monastery on Mount Athos], in *Yubileinyi sbornik Russkogo arkheologicheskogo obshchestva v Korolevstve Yugoslavii* 3 (Belgrade 1940), 125–167; B. St. Angelov, *Iz starata balgarska, ruska i srbeska literatura* II (Sofia 1967); see also S. Radojčić, *Uzori i dela starih srpskih umetnika* [Old Serbian artists' models and works] (Belgrade 1975), 260–262.

[19] It is most likely that Maximus (7th century) compiled and systematized all extant "scholia", adding his own commentaries to the collection, which is why it has commonly been attributed to him; for commentaries on the *Corpus Areopagiticum*, see B. R. Suchla, "Die sogenannten Maximus-Scholien des Corpus Dionysiacum Areopagiticum", *NAWG* (1980), 33–66; Rorem and Lamoreaux, *John of Scythopolis and the Dionysian Corpus*.

[20] E. Afonasin, "Corpus Dionysiacum Slavicum", *ΣΧΟΛΗ*, *Ancient Philosophy and the Classical Tradition* II/1 (2008), 111, observes: "The Ottoman occupation and the destruction of many centres of education in the Balkans determined the further destiny of the *Corpus Dionysiacum Slavicum*. Fortunately, the victory in the battle on Kulikovo-Field and the establishment of Metropolitanate in Moscow opened the great possibilities for the development of Christian culture in Russia, and the *CD* found its place in this process. In fact, these writings became very popular in Russia from the time of the Metropolitan Cyprian (d. 1406), who is said to have brought a copy of Isaiah's translation here and possibly was personally acquainted with the translator, Starets Isaiah."

[21] On Hesychasm, see G. Ostrogorski, "Svetogorski isihasti i njihovi protivnici", *Sabrana dela* V [The hesyhasts of Mount Athos and their opponents, *Complete Works* V], 203–223; J. Meyendorff, *Introduction à l'étude de Grégoire Palamas* (Paris 1959); J. Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality* (Faith Press, 1974); A.-E. Tachiaos, "Le monachisme serbe de Saint Sava et la tradition hésychaste athonite", *Hilandarski zbornik* 1 (1966), 83–89; for a bibliography on Hesychasm, see *Isikhazm: annotirovannaya bibliographiya*, ed. S. S. Khoruzhii (Moscow: Publishing Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, 2004).

[22] John of the Ladder or John Climacus (c. 525–608) entered the Sinai monastery at the age of 16; after some time in the monastery and forty years of anachoretic life, he became its abbot, but then withdrew into the desert again, cf. *Dictionnaire de la Spiritualité* VIII, s.v. Jean Climaque, Saint, by G. Couillean (Paris 1972); J. Chryssavgis, *John Climacus: From the Egyptian Desert to the Sinaite Mountain* (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2004); for an English translation, see John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, transl. C. Luibheid and N. Russell, introd. K. Ware (New York: Paulist Press, 1982); on the reception of John Climacus in medieval Serbia, see D. Bogdanović, *Jovan Lestvičnik u vizantijskoj i starijoj srpskoj književnosti* [Jean Climaque dans la littérature byzantine et la littérature serbe ancienne] (Belgrade 1968).

[23] R. Lawrence, "The Three-Fold Structure of the Ladder", *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 32/2 (1988), 101–118.

Manuscript of the Dioptra,
page with head-piece, early 15th century,
the Treasury of the Patriarchate of Peć

of Christ's life before the revelation of the Gospel, so Climacus invites monks to reach: "...the measure of the stature of Christ", who, "baptized in the thirtieth year of his earthly age, attained the thirtieth step on the spiritual ladder" (Migne PG 88, 1161A). Other numbers also have symbolic and mystical meaning, such as three (the Holy Trinity), four (the number of the Gospels), five (purification of the five basic senses through repentance), eight (eight levels of passion) and so on. *The Ladder* is structured as a coherent system of ascetic ascent on the "ladder of virtue", where each step has its *basis*, *bathmos* and *anabasis*.

The basic conceptual pair virtue (*arete*)—passion (*pathos*) is simultaneously present on every step of the *Ladder* because there is an intrinsic interdependence between suppression of passion and advancement in virtue. Rather than discussing sin as an act, John of the Ladder looks at passion as a propensity for making typical mistakes. Passion as illness is a consequence of man's fall, and hence the body, which is neither good nor evil by nature, succumbs to a certain tendency towards evil: "We have turned the positive traits of the soul into passions. ... By nature we have in us anger, but to use it against the serpent, and we have used it against our neighbour. We have in us ardour to work towards good but we work towards evil. It is natural for the soul to long for glory, but for glory in Heaven" (Migne PG, 88, 1068C-D). When defining the passions, John Climacus takes into account the experience of monastic life and the works of the great systematizers of asceticism, such as Evagrius Ponticus,[24] according to whom "the natural purpose of anger is to fight against demons", and John Cassian, who sees gluttony and debauchery as "natural" passions, for they are extensions of natural needs. Apart from their natural origin, some responsibility for the passions also falls on the power of habit: [Passion is a] "sin which has over time passionately nestled in the soul, and which has through habit become its natural characteristic, until the soul of its own accord clings to it" (Migne PG, 88, 897A). Passion does not arise all of a sudden, but gradually, through an encounter with a thought; coupling or communication with the thought; assent to pleasure; captivity as the seduction of the heart by the object which injures the soul; and the struggle between the attacker and the attacked, the outcome of which is either victory or defeat (i.e. passion).

Although John of the Ladder expands the list of eight basic passions (gluttony, debauchery, greed, anger, sadness, sloth, vanity and pride), he sees all passions as deriving from two basic ones: gluttony and pride. Combinations of the two basic passions produce all others, which, despite the fact that John of the Ladder does not follow John Cassian's strictly logico-psychological method, have a certain hierarchy and causes.[25] Passion as a hereditary propensity for evil can be overcome through dedicated and perseverant practice and through a disciplined advancement in virtue. Opposite to the passions is a life in virtue as a permanent tendency towards good, with the monastic ideal of "godliness" as its final aim. By practice (*askesis*) we acquire certain spiritual characteristics which gradually become a permanent tendency toward good and virtue. The final aim is reached, according to John of the Ladder's aretology, through transformation of suppressed passions ("love is to be suppressed by love"). While discussing love as the place in which the mystery of becoming God-like (*theosis*) is hidden, he does not refrain from terming love not only *agape* but also *eros*. "It is not in the least unseemly to compare longing and fear, ardor and dedica-

24 Evagrius Ponticus (†399), a friend and disciple of the Cappadocian Fathers and teacher of Macarius the Great is the first serious systematizer of monastic teachings; his teaching was condemned by the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 553, for he claimed, following Origen, that the spirit frees itself from matter in prayer in order to reach God; his work, misattributed to St. Nilus of Sinai, influenced Eastern monasticism nonetheless. See A. Guillaumont, *Les"Kephalaia Gnostica" d'Evagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'origenisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens* (Paris 1962); J. Bunge, "Origenizmus-Gnostizismus, Zum geistgeschichtlichen Standort des Evagrios Pontikos", *Vigiliae Christianae* 40 (1986).

25 Cf. Lawrence, "Structure of the Ladder".

tion, serving and love of God, with what we can usually see in people. Blessed is therefore the man who loves God like an infatuated lover loves his beloved one" (Migne PG, 88, 1156B-C).

The one who has attained the highest step of virtue experiences the mystical states of joyous crying, ecstasy, illumination, resulting from the "change of mind" (*metanoia*). What these states have in common is the vision of the Divine light (*fos theou*), or Divine actualizations (*energeiai*). This highest spiritual experience is easy to confuse with illusions (Slav. *prelest*), and only the most experienced are able to tell one from another. John of the Ladder therefore advises caution as regards mystical experiences: "With a modest hand push away joy as if you were not worthy of it, so that you would not be deluded into receiving a wolf instead of the shepherd" (Migne PG 88, 813C-D).

The Ladder was very early translated into Slavic (ninth or tenth century). The oldest surviving manuscript is in Russian redaction with traces of a Bulgarian original.[26] The influence of this monastic handbook on Serbian culture does not, however, begin with its translation into the medieval Serbian language. It is observable even earlier, in the *typika* for the Serbian monasteries (such as Hilandar and Studenica) written by St. Sava of Serbia.[27] King Stefan the First-Crowned obviously had in his library a copy of *The Ladder* and referred to it in the *Life of St. Simeon* (Nemanja)[28] he wrote before 1216. A Serbian redaction of the translation was done in Serbia around 1370, but it seems that the transcription differences raised doubts as to the accuracy of some portions of the text. Despot Djuradj Branković[29] ordered therefore that a Greek version and other Slavic translations be procured, and so various excerpts were collected in Constantinople and on Mount Athos. Under the guidance of Metropolitan Sabbatius (Savatije), the translation was corrected, the result of which is the *The Ladder of Braničevo*, so called because the work was completed in Braničevo in 1434.[30]

The cause of the great popularity of the *Ladder*, initially intended only for coenobitic monks, resides in the special preference for this strict monastic handbook shown by the ruling house of medieval Serbia. The text provided guidance to the medieval reader as regards the types of sins and virtues, explored under the perfect conditions of complete commitment to acquiring goodness and virtue. As most secular situations could be explained through ascetic phenomenology, the monastic ideal was not limited to the monastery (after the example of St. Sava), but was posited as an ideal that everyone should strive for (after the example of St. Simeon Nemanja).[31]

John of Damascus' Dialectic

John of Damascus was the first to conduct a synthesis of the Eastern Christian tradition and to present it systematically in *The Fountain of Knowledge*, a philosophico-theological encyclopaedia in three books.[32] In its first part commonly known as *Dialectic* he outlines Aristotle's categories, antepredicaments, postpredicaments, and Porphyry's *Introduction* to Aristotle's categories. In the second part (which was not translated into Serbo-Slavic), he gives an account of one hundred heresies, while the third volume, *Dogmatic Chapters*, is devoted to Orthodox dogmatics, or the anthropological, Christological, soteriological and eschatological teachings. In its content and structure *The Fountain of Knowledge* is a combination of a philosophical propedeutics and true philosophy, i.e. Orthodox theology. John of Damascus claims in his introduction that in presenting the "best thought of the Greek wise men" he will accept "all that is in accordance with truth", and reject "all that is wrong and close to quasi-knowl-

26 For the surviving copies of the *Ladder*, see Bogdanović, *Jovan Lestvičnik*, 25.

27 For St. Sava, see note 28 below.

28 Stefan Nemanja, grand *župan* of Serbia (1166/68–96), the founder of the Nemanjić dynasty which ruled Serbia until 1371. In 1196 he gave up the throne for his second son Stefan (grand *župan* 1196–1217; king 1217–28) and withdrew to Hilandar, where he died as monk Simeon in 1199. His youngest son Rastko (c. 1175–1236), in monkhood Sava, the first archbishop of the autocephalous Serbian Church (1219), is one of the central figures in the history of medieval Serbia. For St. Sava, see D. Obolensky, *Six Byzantine Portraits* (Oxford 1988), 115–172. The well-known late 12th-century *Miroslav's Gospel* was written and illuminated for Stefan Nemanja's brother Miroslav, who ruled the Hum region of medieval Serbia.

29 Djuradj (George) Branković, Serbian Despot (1427–56), grandson of Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović and Milica Nemanjić, succeeded his uncle, Despot Stefan Lazarević, on the throne of Serbia thereby becoming the first ruler of the House of Branković (1427–1502).

30 See D. Bogdanović, *Jovan Lestvičnik*, 175.

31 On the ascetic writings, see B. Milosavljević, "Monaško-asketski spisi u srpskoj srednjovekovnoj filozofiji" [Monastic-ascetic writings in Serbian medieval philosophy], *Srpska filosofija, Gledišta* 1–2 (1999), 78–93.

32 John of Damascus or John Damascene (c. 676–c. 750) was born in Damascus into a distinguished and influential Christian family which held a high hereditary office under both Byzantine and (after 636) Arab rule, and he obviously inherited his father's office; at some point he resigned and withdrew to the monastery of St. Sabas to devote himself to reflection and asceticism; as a theologian, he took an active part in the fight against Iconoclasm. For an English translation, see F. Hathaway Chase, ed., *Saint John of Damascus. Writings* (Washington 1999); for a German translation, see B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos* I (Berlin 1969); on the *Dialectic*, see G. Richter, *Die Dialektik des Johannes von Damaskos* (Ettel 1964); E. Weiher, *Die Dialektik des Johannes von Damaskus in kirchenslavischer Übersetzung* (Wiesbaden 1969); A. Louth, *St. John Damascene: Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology* (Oxford University Press USA, 2005); S. Žunjić, "The definitions of philosophy in the *Dialectica* of John Damascene: their ancient sources and their Byzantine meanings", in *Philosophy and Orthodoxy*, ed. K. Boudouris (Athens 1994), 294–323; for the reception of the *Dialectic* in medieval Serbia, see S. Žunjić, "Damaskinova *Dijalektika* u srpskoj filozofiji" [The *Dialectica* of John Damascene in Serbian philosophy], *Istočnik* 9 (Belgrade 1994), 43–77.

edge". When discussing the importance of philosophy, he uses the Aristotelian argument that the one who questions philosophy has already accepted its relevance. Because of its comprehensive, systematic and easy-to-follow presentation, *The Fountain of Knowledge* was often copied and translated in the Byzantine world, either entirely or in part. The *Dogmatic Chapters* were translated into Slavic as early as the late ninth or early tenth century, within the large-scale translation project undertaken under the Bulgarian Emperor Simeon. The leading figure of the project, John Exarch, in fact translated just one part of John Damascene's dogmatics, but it was him who found the first terminological solutions in a Slavic language. Damascene's philosophical chapters, or *Dialectic*, were translated into medieval Serbian in the third quarter of the fourteenth century. This translation, a product of the Hilandar school, does not show only the high standards of translation technique developed in Serbian monastic scriptoria; it also testifies to a highly educated readership interested in such a complex theologico-philosophical text with its nuanced terminology. While Exarch's translations show a certain freedom in terms of adding and omitting portions of the text, the Serbian method is iconographically true to the Greek original not only in lexical but also in syntactic terms. An advantage of such a method is the precision of the translated text, which was checked and rechecked over and again in order that it might be true to the original. On the other hand, the Serbian translation of the *Dialectic* is often very difficult to understand without the original, and not only to the modern reader, but also to the medieval one. The Greek text of Damascene's "philosophical chapters" survives in two versions, one shorter, *Dialectica brevior* (50 chapters), the other longer, *Dialectica fusior* (68 chapters). It is usually assumed that Damascene himself authored both versions. The fourteenth-century Serbian translation is in fact the shorter version to which some chapters from the longer version are added. The extraordinary importance of this translation for Serbian philosophical culture consists in the creation of appropriate terminology, whereby Serbian philosophical thought became capable of communicating at the highest academic and intellectual level.

The Serbian translator's terms for the basic philosophical disciplines follow closely the etymology of Greek words. The only term that is not translated in accordance with the previous practice of Exarch's school is "philosophy": instead of being translated as *l'ubomudrije* (love of wisdom), it is simply transcribed from Greek. From the literally translated names of philosophical disciplines, only the adjective *bogoslovno* (theological) has survived until this day, while the rest were at some point replaced with Greek words, following the term philosophy (*filosofija*). According to a division of philosophy after the Aristotelian model, philosophy is divided into theoretical (*zritelnoje*) and practical (*delatnoje*) knowledge (*znanije*). The theoretical knowledge is further subdivided into theological (*bogoslovnoje*), physical or natural (*jestьstvьnoje*), and mathematical (*učitelnoje*), while the practical knowledge is subdivided into ethical (*običajьnoje*), economic (*domostroitelnoje*) and political (*gradnoje*). Although the translator closely followed the rule that a compound word should be translated with a compound word, the term wisdom (*mudrost*) is translated in accordance with the older tradition as *premudrostь*, which has remained in liturgical usage until this day.

The *Dialectic* recounts the contents of Porphyry's *Introduction*, Aristotle's *Categories*, antepredicaments and postpredicaments, and its terminology is therefore based on the terms contained in these logical texts. Basic ontological concepts from Damascene's text are translated quite successfully, and correspond grammatically to the Greek language: Greek *on*, the present participle of the verb "to be" (*einai*) is translated as *suštь* (today commonly *biće, bivstvujuće, bitujuće*); *ousia*, derived from *ousa*, the feminine participle of the same verb, as *suštьstvo*, earlier also as *suštije* (today *suština, bivstvo*); and the infinitive of the verb "to be" (*einai*) as *suštestvovati* and *bytije* (today usually *bivstvovanje, bitak, biće, bitovanje*). Opposite of *suština* (essence) is *slučajь* (accident; Gr. *symbebekos*).

After the division and several different definitions of philosophy, the considerations of the terms *being, essence*, and *accident*, the explanation of logical concepts of division and subdivision, the definition of concept, John of Damascus presents Porphyry's predicables, for the translation of which a high level of proficiency in grammar and logic was required. The term *genos* is translated as *rod*, which remains unchanged until this day, while *eidos*, species, is etymologically correctly translated as *vid*.[33]

The consideration of the predicables in the *Dialectic* is followed by antepredicaments, which establish relations between things and concepts. In contrast to Aristotle's three relations, the *Dialectic* describes five (synonyms, homonyms, polyonyms, heteronyms, paronyms), and in the way it was done in Plato's Academy and in subsequent Neoplatonic schools. The antepredicaments are followed by Aristotle's ten categories: *suštьstvo* (*ousia*), *količьstvo* (*poson*), *kь česomu* (*pros ti*), *kačьstvo* (*poion*), *gde* (*pou*), *kogda* (*pote*), *ležati* (*keisthai*), *imeti* (*ehein*), *tvoriti* (*poiein*), *stradati* (*pashein*). The concluding part of John of Damascus' text deals with postpredicaments, i.e. the different forms of opposition (contradiction, contrariety), types of statements (negation, affirmation) and syllogism. Apart from logical concepts, the *Dialectic* also explains philosophical and theological concepts such as hypostasis (Slav. *sьstav*), person (*lice*), etc. It is obvious that the purpose of this work was to introduce the reader to logic and ba-

[33] Because *eidos* has the same root as *oida*, a perfect with the meaning of present (I have seen=I know), which is coradical with Slav *vedeti, vem*.

sic philosophical concepts, without which it was impossible to proceed to more advanced philosophical and theological topics.

The most important achievement of the Serbian translation of the *Dialectic* was the creation of philosophical terminology in Serbian. It was not the first medieval translation of a philosophical text, but terminologically it certainly was the most diversified one. John of Damascus' work was much read in both translation and original, copied and worked on many times. Its first three chapters were translated anew in the early fifteenth century. A certain number of Bulgarisms have led to the assumption that this new translation was done by Constantine the Philosopher, the author of the earliest Serbian philological study *Skazanija o Pismenah* (*A Story of the Letters*) and of the *Life of Despot Stefan*.[34] It did not introduce any change as regards terminology, and therefore the reason for the undertaking remains obscure. Later translators did not rely on the Hilandar translation, but either "Serbianized" Russian translations (e.g. Gavril Stefanović Venclović in the first half of the eighteenth century), or translated from Greek or Latin (e.g. Bishop Dionisije Popović, whose translation done in 1827 introduced different terms for several basic concepts). In her translation of Aristotle's logical texts, Ksenija Atanasijević (1894–1981)[35] used by then widely accepted Latin terminology, which soon almost completely replaced medieval Serbian terms (*supstancija*, substance, instead of *suštьstvo*; *subjekt*, subject, instead of *podьležešteje*; *definicija*, definition, instead of *ustavь*).

A Miniature in the Paraenesis of Ephrem the Syrian,
the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery, 1337

Palamas' Exposition of the Orthodox Faith

The basic tenet of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* and Cappadocian doctrine of the impossibility of knowing God except through His works is rekindled by Gregory Palamas.[36] A new debate about this topic, which began in Byzantine academic and monastic circles after the long-lasting disputes about the Hesychast practice of "mental prayer" and the possibility of seeing Divine actualizations (*energeiai*), led to his complex text, *The Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, eventually accepted by the Council of Constantinople in 1351. Characteristic of Palamas' teaching is his theoretical articulation of the traditional monastic notion of "becoming God-like" (divinization) and the vision of the Divine light, which is uncreated but not identical to God's essence. Presenting the distinction between essence (*ousia*) and actualization (*energeia*), Palamas uses the concepts discussed in detail in Aristotle's philosophy, because they make it possible to understand the relationship between that which can, i.e. has potency (Gr. *dynamis*; Sl. *sila*) to, become something (a form), and that which has become a form, i.e. has been actualized.[37] In the context

34 Constantine the Philosopher, a medieval writer and chronicler who, following the Ottoman conquest of Bulgaria in 1393, found refuge in Serbia, at the court of Stefan Lazarević (Prince 1393–1402, Despot 1402–27).

35 Aristotel, *Organon*, transl. K. Atanasijević (Belgrade: Kultura, 1965).

36 Gregory Palamas (1296–1359), was son of a courtier of Emperor Andronicus II and he received education at the imperial court; his whole family with servants entered a monastery in 1316; on Mount Athos Palamas studied theology and embraced Hesychast monastic practice, served as abbot of the monastery of Esphigmenou, and was the official representative of the Athonite monastic community in the dispute with Barlaam; although the Council of 1341 accepted Hesychast teaching, Palamas was imprisoned in 1344 because of his alleged involvement in a coup; he was rehabilitated and appointed archbishop of Thessalonica in 1347; the 1351 Council of Constantinople included his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* among the official texts. On Gregory Palamas and Hesychasm, see Ostrogorski, "Svetogorski isihasti", 203–223; G. Florovsky, "St. Gregory Palamas and the Tradition of the Fathers", *Sobornost* 4 (1961), 165–176; A. Jevtić, "Prolegomena za isihastičku gnoseologiju" [A prolegomena to Hesychast gnoseology], and "Živi i istinski Bog Svetog Grigorija Palame" [The living and true God of St. Gregory Palamas], in *Filozofija i teologija* (Vrnjačka Banja 1994); Meyendorff, *Introduction à l'étude de Gregoire Palamas;* Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality*; S. Yiagazoglou, "The Demonstrative Method in the Theology of St. Gregory Palamas", *The Fifth International Conference of Greek Philosophy* (Samos–Patmos 1993), 6–8.

37 See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1002b32–1003a5 ff.

of Hesychast theory, the unknowable Divine essence as the first cause has potency for different knowable actualizations, such as the Incarnation or the uncreated "light of Tabor" seen during the Hesychast prayer.[38] Seeing the Divine light does not imply understanding or knowing the unknowable Divine essence, but only its actualizations, knowable because of the potency of the essence to become accessible through actualization (*energeia*), through God's work (*ergon*).

Barlaam of Calabria's criticism of Palamas' teaching calls into question the uncreatedness and eternity of the Divine light, and argues that only the Divine essence is uncreated.[39] If we accept that the light is uncreated, then the light is the Divine essence itself, which implies that seeing the Divine light is the same as seeing the Divine essence, and that in the final analysis the Hesychast teaching is the same as that of Thomas Aquinas:[40] "Thomas, and everyone who reasons like him, thinks that there is nothing out of reach for the human mind" (*Paris. gr.* 1278, fol. 137). On the other hand, since it is only the Divine essence that is uncreated, then the light seen during prayer cannot be the uncreated "light of Tabor", which then casts doubt on the Athonite monastic practice. Since both Palamas and Barlaam referred to the Areopagite in stressing the impossibility of knowing the Divine essence, their dispute ended up being about the distinction between essence and light (or actualization). Barlaam and his followers denied the possibility of such distinction, claiming that it would endanger Divine unity and simplicity, implying a "second", "lower" god. Palamas replied by claiming that the multiplicity of God's manifestations and apparitions (*ekphaseis*) does not affect the unity of God who is above the whole and the part: "Goodness is not one part of God, Wisdom another, Majesty and Providence still another. God is wholly Goodness, wholly Wisdom, wholly Providence and wholly Majesty. He is one, without any division into parts, but, possessing in Himself each of these energies [actualizations]. He reveals Himself wholly in each by His presence and action in a unified, simple and undivided fashion."[41] If we do not accept the teaching about Divine essence and Divine actualizations, then there is no link between God and the world, because, Palamas says, such God would be non-actualized (*anenergeton*), and could not be called Creator since that "which has no potency or actualization, does not exist, either generally or particularly". To deny a distinction between essence and actualization would therefore result in an atheistic position.

The most important terminological distinction for understanding Palamas' teaching is the conceptual pair *potency–actualization*, because the essence is what has potency for actualization through a particular act. Potency is the capacity for (actualization), because, Palamas makes a further distinction following Gregory Nazianzen, between that which has intention (desire) as permanent potency and particular intentions (desires) by which actualizations take place, or in other words, the potency of birth, and the actualization of birth as act. Through potency the essence sets in motion, and the act itself is motion and, eventually, actualization.[42]

Palamas' distinction between essence and actualizations, based on the teachings of the Church Fathers, particularly of the Cappadocians and Maximus the Confessor, has implications for the understanding of the Eucharist as the central theme of Orthodox theology and the basis of the liturgical practice.[43] Hesychast emphasis on the monastics as a critical force in society and adamant resistance to non-Orthodox political pressures, shaped the Eastern Christian understanding of society, not only because of the political strength of this movement, but also because Hesychasm was the final form of one thousand years of Byzantine thought.

Hesychast teaching was embraced by the Serbian Church as early as the fourteenth century, and Palamas' writings, notably his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, were translated and copied.[44] Hesychasm left a strong imprint on

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38 Hesychasm (from *hesychia*, meaning silence, quietness), an influential monastic movement in the Byzantine world in the 13th and 14th centuries, combined the communal and anachoretic ways of monastic life, and laid emphasis on the constant individual practice of mental prayer, which may or may not involve particular psychosomatic techniques, and on the duty of participating in the liturgical life of society. According to Hesychast teaching, monastic practice enables a spiritual conversion (divinization or "becoming God-like") through the vision of the Divine light. Hesychasm can be traced back to 5th-century sources and its teaching is based on the experience of Eastern monasticism, particularly the Sinai school (7th century) and the work of Symeon the New Theologian (11th century).

39 Barlaam of Calabria, a learned Greek monk from southern Italy, came to Constantinople c. 1330 and joined the University of Constantinople to teach about the *Corpus Areopagiticum*. As a representative of the Byzantine Church he took part in negotiations about union with the Roman Church. He was the opponent of the famous historian Nicephorus Gregoras in a scholarly debate which ended in his defeat (decided by the audience). In this debate, Barlaam argued for the importance of syllogism in understanding theological and philosophical teachings, while Gregoras favoured Plato over Aristotle, and argued against the adequacy of the syllogistic method as an additional logical tool for solving fundamental philosophical problems. According to Gregoras, the syllogistic method could only be overrated by the Latins, unenlightened as to higher spiritual spheres. See Ostrogorski, *Sabrana dela* V, 210–211. For Barlaam's use of the syllogistic method, see Yiagazoglou, "Demonstrative Method", 6–8.

40 See V. Lossky, *The Vision of God* (Faith Press, 1973), 10–11, 16–17.

41 Palamas, *Writings* II (Thessaloniki 1966), 209.

42 Palamas, *Writings* III (Thessaloniki 1966), 384, 5.

43 If we reject the distinction between the essence and actualization (energy), even the Eucharist or Holy Communion becomes impossible: "Since man can participate in God and since the superessential essence of God is completely above participation, then there exists something between the essence that cannot be participated and those who participate, to make participation in God possible for them" (*Triads*, III, 2, 24, Migne PG 687).

44 Several copies of the Serbo-Slavic translation have survived, such as *Codex of Vladislav Gramatik*, Ms 80 (1469), Archive HAZU, fol. 562–564; Hilandar Ms 469 (end of 15th century), fol. 182–185;

Serbian medieval literature and art, which is evident already in the works of Domentianus (Domentijan) and Theodosius (Teodosije),[45] but most prominently in the writings of Daniel (Danilo) of Peć, monk Ephrem (Jefrem), Silouan (Siluan),[46] and Monk Isaiah. Its prolonged influence on both the state and church hierarchies and amongst the people was largely a result of the activity of the Sinaiti.[47]

The influence of Byzantine philosophy on the Serbian medieval state and society

The great translation project and the revisions of translations of both the most important liturgical books (gospel books, epistle lectionaries, psalters) and the texts crucial for the development of Serbian philosophical thought, is closely connected with the liturgical reforms that began in the first half of the fourteenth century. In the Serbian monastic scriptoria such as that at Hilandar, texts were translated from Greek, earlier translations were corrected and improved, and more suitable terminological solutions were usually found. An exceptionally important feature of this project, commenced under King Milutin (r. 1282–1321), was a powerful Hesychast influence. Athonite spirituality influenced both the style and method of codifying sacral texts, and the Serbian translation school, which embraced the strict, "iconographically" correct, approach to translating the most complex Byzantine texts. That the translation effort was part of a comprehensive scholarly and educational reform can also be seen from the selection of texts for translation. At first only informative edifying texts were translated (such as Theodore of Rhaithu's *Preparation*), but the fourteenth century saw the translation of texts of encyclopaedic character (John of Damascus' *Fountain of Knowledge*), collected works (*Corpus Areopagiticum*) and texts of current interest such as Palamas' *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*.

This thought-out approach to the work of translation obviously had a deeper meaning. Namely, according to Byzantine scholarly methodology, whose main characteristic is systematic and consistent thought, in order to understand the "true philosophy" it was necessary to successfully climb several rungs of the ladder of knowledge. For understanding dogmas, which are the final expressions of cataphatic thought, it is first necessary, according to the highest authorities (Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, John of Damascus etc), to discipline the mind on the Greek texts on logic and philosophy. Given that the basic dogmatic statements remain obscure without background knowledge of complex Platonic and Aristotelian terminology, the fourteenth-century effort to translate the philosophical chapters of Damascene's *Fountain of Knowledge* is understandable. In addition to the already mentioned characteristics of Byzantine philosophy (systematic thinking, consistency, influence of classical philosophical terminology), being true to the original is yet another of its major features. The originality of the author in the modern sense of the word did not exist in the Byzantine world. Original is only one immutable truth, while individual authors, continuing the work of previous thinkers, are only able to come more or less close to it.

Philosophical texts were frequently copied and much worked on in Serbia, but it is difficult to infer about the actual scope of their influence on the formation and articulation of the worldview of medieval Serbian society. As a result of their demanding theoretical complexity, study of philosophy was restricted to quite narrow monastic, court and urban circles. However, the strongest aspect of the influence of Byzantine thought on medieval society was the liturgy as the central social event of the community. It was through the liturgy that the wording of the translated texts influenced the life of medieval Serbian society. They were important for understanding the Eucharist itself, as well as for understanding the celestial, ecclesiastical and state hierarchies, which was particularly evident during the Hesychast dispute. In the liturgical texts themselves, mainly of prayerful nature, there are ontological formulations and statements[48] that are crucial for

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Mss 82 and 83 (16th century), Bulgarian Academy of Science, 301–304 and 67–69 respectively, and possibly also some other copies in monasteries, libraries and academies.

[45] Domentijan (mid-13th c.) and Teodosije (end 13th–first half of 14th c.), both members of the monastic community of Hilandar, writers of hagiographical literature. The former wrote the *lives* of St. Sava and St. Simeon, the latter the *life* of St. Sava, services to St. Sava and St. Simeon, several eulogies, services and canons. Cf. Bogdanović, *Istorija stare srpske književnosti*, 157, 169–170.

[46] Danilo, Archbishop of the Serbian Church (1324–37), founder of several churches, political mediator, writer of several hagiographies of the canonized members of the Nemanjić dynasty (kings Uroš, Milutin and Dragutin, Queen Jelena), and church heads (archbishops Arsenius I, Ioannicius I and Eusthatius I) and two services (to Arsenius I and Eusthatius I), cf. Bogdanović, *Istorija stare srpske književnosti*, 175–176; monk Ephrem, Serbian patriarch (1375–79 and 1389–91) of Bulgarian origin, writer of the canons (hymns) to Christ, the Virgin and the so-called Canon to the Emperor, cf. Bogdanović, *Istorija stare srpske književnosti*, 182–183; monk Silouan (second half of 14th–early 15th c.), Athonite Hesychast, writer of the *lives* of St. Sava and St. Simeon. The so-called Epistles of Silouan (1418) to Athonite monks shed light on the intensive communication between Mount Athos and Serbia, cf. Bogdanović, *Istorija stare srpske književnosti*, 185–187.

[47] For the Hesychasts in Serbia, traditionally known as Sinaiti, see A. Radović, "Sinaiti i njihov značaj u životu Srbije XIV i XV veka" [Sinaiti and their importance in the life of Serbia in the 14th and 15th centuries], in *Spomenica o petstogodišnjici manastira Ravanice* (Belgrade 1981); Bogdanović, *Istorija stare srpske književnosti*, 202–205; D. Bogdanović, "Preteče isihazma u srpskim zbornicima XIV veka" [Precursors of Hesychasm in 14th-century Serbian collections], *Cyrillomethodianum* V (1981); D. Bogdanović, "Neoplatonizam u isihastičkoj književnosti kod Srba" [Neoplatonism in Serbian Hesychast literature], *Pravoslavna misao* 32 (1985).

[48] E.g. the (Nicene) Creed; "It is truly right to bless you"; or statements such as: "Thine own of Thine own we offer You on behalf of all and for all".

Hagiography of Holy King Stefan Dečanski by Grigorije Camblak, Manuscript No 99, the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery, 1430–1440

understanding the liturgy and essential for understanding Byzantine thought.

Apart from large-scale translation projects, the immediate influence of Hesychasts and direct communication with liturgical texts, medieval Serbian society could encounter philosophical terminology in legal texts and in more popular readings such as collections of maxims of "wise men" and philosophers (*gnomae*, *melissae*).

Chapter 61 of the Serbian *Nomocanon* (*Krmčija*), a collection of canon and secular law put together by archbishop Sava about 1220, contains a paragraph on some of the most prominent ancient Greek schools of philosophy. This widely known text, which Sava either translated himself or borrowed from some previously translated collections, refers to the teachings of the Pythagoreans, Platonists, Stoics and Epicureans.

The *Life of Despot Stefan Lazarević*, penned by Constantine the Philosopher,[49] contains sayings attributed to Orpheus, Thucydides, Plato and Aristotle. The Byzantine *melissae* (bees) which were in use in the Serbo-Slavic-speaking areas as early as the twelfth century and continued to be copied until the eighteenth century, contain maxims of "wise Hellenes" (Socrates, Pythagoras, Democritus, Epictetus, Plutarch). Just as widespread in medieval Serbia were also the *gnomae* compiling reflections of classical philosophers and writers on a variety of life's issues (Euripides, Menander, Democritus, Socrates, Epictetus). Some of these sayings, whose ancient Greek origin sank into oblivion, have survived in Serbian folk wisdom and poetry.

Medieval Serbia's forgotten philosophical legacy

This particular case of oblivion is closely connected with the history of the Serbian language. Unlike Latin, Church Slavic was not as incomprehensible to the medieval population as it might be assumed from its subsequently growing difference from the Serbian, Russian and Bulgarian vernaculars.[50] Apart from the literary language into which philosophical texts were translated, the vernacular was used in writing as well, mostly for laws and royal charters, and there was also a vernacular written literature (chivalrous romance) and history (chronicles).

The Ottoman expansion into the Balkans began in the fourteenth century and eventually all parts of the former medieval Serbian state were conquered. The conquests, however, had no impact on the relationship between the literary language and the vernacular. The diglossia survived. Ottoman rule in fact conserved the state of affairs as it had been in the middle ages.[51] The texts that were copied or printed in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were in fact earlier Church Slavic translations. With the fall of the medieval state and its secular rulers, the only leaders left, and formally recognized by the Ottomans, were ecclesiastical leaders of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Under Ottoman rule, the liturgy remained the central social event and, due to the distinctive features of Ottoman administration as well as geographical and historical circumstances, Serbian society lived its own and largely independent life.

It was the eighteenth century that brought about some significant changes leading to the eventual suppression of medieval philosophical tradition. In 1783 the central figure of eighteenth-century Serbian literature, Dositej Obradović,[52] proposed his language project. Inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment, he opted for a pragmatic approach: written language was supposed to be fully comprehensible to the reader. At first some Church Slavic and Russian, mostly abstract, words were spared because they had no vernacular equivalents, but they also were expelled eventually.

49 For Despot Stefan Lazarević and Constantine the Philosopher, see note 34 above.

50 Ivić, "Standard language", 43.

51 In many Serbian charters, especially donation charters to monasteries, the opening text expounding the donor's God-pleasing act, is written in Church Slavic. One could speak of and address God only in the hallowed church language, while the profane language was only acceptable for profane themes. In fact the use of both languages in one text shows that they were not seen as two different languages, but as functional varieties of a single language.

52 M. Kostić, Dositej Obradović u istorijskoj perspektivi [Dositej Obradović in Historical Perspective] (Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka, 1952).

With the First Serbian Insurrection in 1804 statehood was restored. As recent research has shown, medieval tradition played a role in creating state institutions and in lawmaking.[53] During the first half of the nineteenth century, however, the increasingly prominent role of Western models resulted in, among other things, an uncritical rejection of earlier traditions. As Serbian society and culture changed, so did its literary language: it was no longer shaped by the Church, and there was a general orientation shift from Russia towards Western Europe.

Once the principles of Vuk Karadžić's language reform prevailed,[54] Church Slavic became reduced to the language of worship. As a result, the thousand-year-old literary language sank into oblivion and, with it, the entire medieval philosophical legacy.

The Enlightenment belief in the rule of reason, the uncritically accepted Western misunderstanding of the Byzantine world viewing it as utterly mystical and theocratic, and the rejection of the "dark clerical burden of the past", helped the cultural amnesia to spread. Once the wars of liberation and the struggle for the use of the vernacular in public education ended victoriously, the emerging Serbian intelligentsia turned enthusiastically to modern Western Europe and its positivist science. The centuries of Old Slavic literacy sank into oblivion almost overnight. The Byzantine (philosophico-theological) worldview rapidly gave way to the philosophical effort of "celebrating the power of reason, moral autonomy and the benefits of a secular culture".[55] Attitudes towards this legacy swaying between disparagement and complete lack of interest continued into the twentieth century.[56]

Academic interest did not revive until the last decades of the twentieth century. The interest in medieval theological thinking was encouraged by the School of Orthodox Theology,[57] while the first impulses to study the medieval beginnings of Serbian philosophy came from Belgrade's School of Philosophy. Apart from new translations and fresh analyses of medieval texts,[58] there have been more or less successful attempts to take a comprehensive look at medieval philosophical thinking, and studies are underway into the scope and impact of translated philosophical writings and the building of philosophical terminology.

Saint Luke the Evangelist,
detail: bookstand and writing tools,
northwest pendentive, Dečani, ca. 1339

[53] In writing the first laws of restored Serbia, Prota Mateja Nenadović (1777–1854) drew from the *Krmčija of St. Sava* (*Nomocanon*), a collection of canon and secular law put together by archbishop Sava about 1220. Cf. *The Memoirs of Prota Mateja Nenadović*, ed. and trans. Lovett F. Edwards (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969). Cf. also Z. Mirković, *Karadjordjev zakonik* [The Code of Karadjordje] (Belgrade 2008), 13.

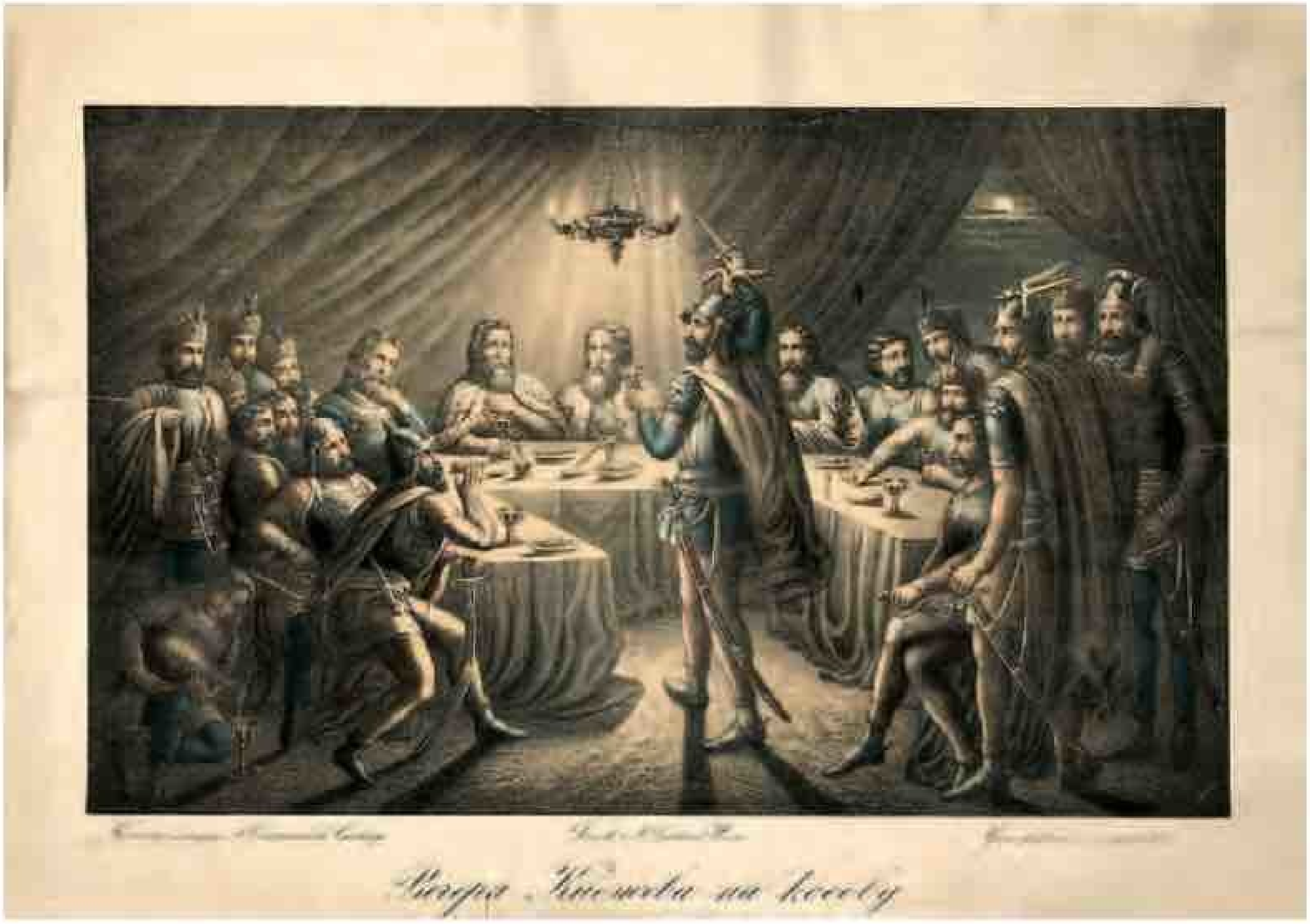
[54] Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864), the Serbian philologist who reformed the literary language and orthography by moving it away from Church Slavic and Russian and bringing it closer to the spoken language, more specifically to the Shtokavian dialect of the Serb-inhabited eastern Herzegovina. Cf. Lj. Stojanović, *Život i rad Vuka Stef. Karadžića* (Belgrade: Srpska knjiga, 1924); D. Wilson, *Life and Times of Vuk Stefanović Karadzic, 1787–1864: Literacy, Literature and National Independence in Serbia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

[55] S. Žunjić, "Likovi filozofije", 234.

[56] The first comprehensive overview of the history of Serbian philosophy, made in the late 1960s, finds that "sadly, the middle ages in Serbian culture lasted until the eighteenth century", cf. D. Jeremić, "O filozofiji kod Srba", *Savremenik* 5–12/1967, 1–2/1968, repr. in D. Jeremić, *O filozofiji kod Srba* (Belgrade 1997), 9.

[57] Reincorporated into the University of Belgrade since 2004.

[58] For the translations of the *Mystical Theology*, John Climacus' *Ladder*, Palamas' *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* and the first ever translation of Damascene's *Dialectic* into modern Serbian, see B. Milosavljević, ed., *Vizantijska filozofija u srednjevekovnoj Srbiji* (Belgrade 2002). For studies on the medieval Serbian philosophical legacy, see *Istočnik* 9 (Belgrade 1994); *Filosofija i teologija* (Vrnjačka Banja 1994); I. Marić, ed., *Srpska filosofija*, *Gledišta* 1–2 (1999); Milosavljević, ed., *Vizantijska filozofija*; I. Marić, ed., *O srpskoj filozofiji* (Belgrade: Plato, 2003).



Supper of Princes in Kosovo, lithograph, Adam Stefanović, 1871

Prince Lazar Chooses the Kingdom of Heaven

A grey bird, a falcon, took off
From the Holy Land, from Jerusalem,
Carrying a bird, a swallow.
That wasn't a grey bird, a falcon,
But that was Saint Elijah.
And he did not carry a bird, a swallow,
But a book from the Mother of God,
Which he brought to the Tsar in Kosovo.
He put the book on the Tsar's knee,
On its own the book spoke to the Tsar:
"Tsar Lazar, man of noble lineage,
which kingdom will you choose?
Do you prefer the heavenly kingdom
Or do you prefer the earthly one?
If you prefer the earthly kingdom,
Saddle up your horses, grasp the reins!
Knights, take up your swords,
And rush an attack against the Turks–
The entire Turkish army will perish!
If you prefer the kingdom of Heaven,
Then erect a church in Kosovo Field:
Don't build its foundation with marble
But make it of pure silk and crimson cloth.
Then take Communion together with your army,
For all your men will die,
And you, Tsar, will perish with them."
When the Tsar heard these words,
He thought long and hard.
"Dear God, what shall I do?
Which kingdom should I choose?
Should I choose the heavenly kingdom
Or should I choose the earthly one?
If I choose the earthly kingdom,
It will last only a short time,
But the kingdom of Heaven is eternal."
And the prince chose the kingdom of Heaven
Rather than the earthly kingdom.
And he erected a church in Kosovo.
He didn't build its foundation with marble
But made it of pure silk and crimson cloth.
He called the Serbian patriarch
And twelve great bishops,
And he took Communion together with his army.

A Serbian epic poem

De-Mythologizing "The Kosovo Myth"

Milica Bakić-Hayden

Apostles Peter and John Healing the Man Born Lame,
detail, northwest bay of the naos, Dečani

The theme of Kosovo[1] has had a number of variations over the centuries: from religious and literary to political, including more recent hybrid renderings by ethno-nationalists and populists. As a result, it appears that much of the modern scholarship on Kosovo, and especially its post-Yugoslav incarnations, in the attempt to explain the events from the 1990s and distinguish what is "true" and what "mythical" about "Kosovo" has not only created a myth of its own, but mythologized "the Serbs" as its negative heroes ("the serbs"),[2] reading into the past the realities of the present. Undoubtedly, Kosovo has played and continues to play an important role in the constitution of the Serbian cultural and national identity, both as a changing historical reality and as a metaphor. The "fictiveness" of Kosovo theme associated with its "representation" in the epic tradition, stories and songs is distinct but inseparable from historicity of the "facts" about it. The two (fiction and fact) are often intertwined more than we are ready to admit, and the point of our exercise here is to help better understanding of the symbolism that often joins them. As has been noted by scholars, the presumed objectivity of the historical events has too often depended on records, observations, and perceptions that can hardly be assumed neutral, ideologically or otherwise. Likewise, there are enough historically enacted situations embedded in the variety of imaginative texts (oral or written), that can be perceived as objectifying meaningful codes of conduct through which actions and behavior of people can be interpreted and measured.[3] Hence our present focus is on understanding the complex and changing identity of the Kosovo theme, expressed through the dynamic relationship between what may be perceived as historically real and unreal, as fictional and (f)actual, or literal and symbolic, that have existed in national consciousness of the Serbian people (or their imaginary) as inseparable even when differentiated. Kosovo is a complex narrative that interacts with reality in an unique way, integrating meanings operative at various levels simultaneously and thus creating unlikely homologies between different aspects of its story.

In our approach Kosovo is understood as a *tradition* comprising a historical event—the battle—that has taken place in actual historical (not mythical) time and real (not mythical) geographic space. This event has subsequently been recorded and interpreted in church chronicles and fictionalized in folk stories and epic poetry, the latter of which has been variously contextualized at different his-

[1] The basic theme of Kosovo story, whether understood as history or "myth" is the historic battle that took place on the Kosovo field in 1389 between the Serbian Prince Lazar and the invading Ottoman forces headed by the Sultan Murad. Both leaders die in the battle, the Sultan slain by one of Prince Lazar's knights later to be known as Miloš Obilić. Interwoven in the narrative as a subtheme is the betrayal of Prince Lazar by one of his knights. The central dilemma of the story is Prince Lazar's necessity to choose between heavenly and earthly kingdoms, i.e. between "golden freedom" of fighting even knowing that he must lose and die, or living by accepting slavery under the Turks.

[2] See Tomislav Longinović, *Vampires are Us. In Balkan as Metaphor*, eds. D. Bijelić and O. Savić (Cambridge 2002).

[3] See Milica Bakić-Hayden, National Memory as Narrative Memory: The Case of Kosovo. In *Balkan Identities: Memory and Nation*, Maria Todorova, ed. (London 2003).

Serbian city and fortress of Zvečan in medieval times

torical periods into specific political discourses and for distinct purposes, most notably in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is these extra-literary appropriations and engagement of the literary texts within the "cultures of nationalism" that are of special concern for us here.[4] Within the cultures of nationalism we see different interpretive communities at work, highlighting those aspects of the epic stories (themes, heroes) which "speak" most directly to the people at a given historical moment, and the mechanisms of that communication need more nuanced explanations than dismissing the phenomenon as "myth."

If we assume that the epics express traditional views of the conflict—where traditional is understood as the habitual pursuit of inherited forms of conduct which a society takes as its norms—then the self-conscious affirmation and appropriation of such norms and their establishment as articulated models for current and future behavior may be distinguished as *traditionalistic*.[5] For example, we can explore how the epic theme of the battle of Kosovo with its own (traditional i.e. pre-nationalist) representations and understanding of heroic ethos and warfare is adopted by nationalist discourse to become one of the national symbols of struggle and in that sense traditionalistic. Symbolic potential, as mentioned earlier, is by definition already embedded in the very structure of epic poems in general just as the battle theme is an epic theme *par excellence*—for there are no epics about peace.[6] But epic, understood here as a kind of public history of prenationed peoples, becomes redefined in the process of nation building as an intrinsic part of the (now) national past, and being complicit in the evolving present of the national life it is transformed into *national epic*, with new legitimation and function. Of course, the very conception of national literature is related to the rise of the modern nation-state in Western Europe. National literature conceived as "a particular national possession, as an expression of the national mind, as a means toward nation's self-definition," was particularly pronounced in German scholarship, most notably in the writings of the philosopher and theologian Johann Gottfried von Herder, who conceived of nations as individuals, having identities based on "national character" or "national spirit," with places of origin ("cradle") and missions to fulfill in history.[7]

Direct or indirect acceptance of this general ideological tenor of modernist models of nation formation, reinforced with the enthusiasm of Romantic Europe for the movements of national liberation at its periphery, revealed just how important cultural unification processes were for a nation. Within the inner realm of national culture, epic voice as the inner voice of the people, perceived as expressing something essential about them, emerged as the "natural core" around which much of the national culture could be defined. In the context of the societies with limited written history but rich oral tradition, such as was Serbia emerging from centuries of Ottoman rule, and attempting to forge itself as a modern nation, these ideas resonated strongly as they defined epic in terms of social and collective experiences in addition to aesthetic ones. In such societies, epic was recognized as a narrative of the historical record, something at once "our own" but also in agreement with widely accepted views of epic in the West as a proof and measure of the antiquity of a people

[4] "Cultures of nationalism" is a concept used by Bruce Kapferer in *Legends of People Myths of State: Violence, Intolerance and Political Culture in Sri Lanka and Australia* (Washington 1988).

[5] Brian Stock, *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (Baltimore and London 1990) 164.

[6] Whether we look at the ancient Indian or Greek epics, or medieval European epic poems we see that the central and common theme of all of them is battle. There are no epics about peace. For basic formal-substantive characteristics of epic as a genre see Mikhail Bakhtin, "Epic and Novel" in *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. M. Holquist; trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist (Austin 1992).

[7] René Welleck, "Literature and its Cognates", in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, ed. Philip P. Weiner, vol. 3 (NY 1974) 81–89.

and their culture. Benedict Anderson has suggested that such claims for antiquity are likely to be raised as "the *necessary consequence* of 'novelty'," at the historical crossroads that are characterized by radically changed forms of consciousness.[8] Indeed, it is the novelty of nation building in newly independent Serbia that required legitimation in the past, for which the epic poems provided a narrative. As Sudipta Kaviraj observes, "it is by telling these stories, by this construction of the past that this community, in exactly this shape and form, comes into existence. It is partly this narrative consciousness that determines the being of a nation."[9]

When we look in this light at the work of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, the 19th century Serbian folklorist and language reformer, his views on the centrality of epic narratives as a living expression of Serbian "national spirit" are not ethno-nationalist (in today's sense of the word), but very much in tune with or reflective of the then current *Zeitgeist* in western and central Europe, to which he was directly exposed during his exile in Vienna (1813–14).[10] Vuk clearly recognized and commented on the centrality of the Kosovo poems: "I think that the Serbs had the tradition of heroic epic singing before Kosovo, but the change of that time had effected the people to such an extent that they forgot practically everything before it, and it was only [of events] from that point that they began again to make tales and song."[11] However, by collecting and recording epic songs Vuk was not himself creating a "national myth," but was indirectly reconstructing national history. Yet, once these poems and stories were committed to a written form and published they opened up a possibility for a different kind of social scrutiny and interpretation of their constitutive religio-mythic elements. With its two purported key motifs, heroic martyrdom and betrayal, framed by the necessity to choose between heavenly and worldly kingdoms, the Kosovo story combined heroic epic ethos and Christian ethics, and proved to have all necessary elements to be a timeless source of poetic inspiration as well as an object of timed historical reinterpretations, appropriations and manipulations.

In what follows, we briefly look into the changing identity of the Kosovo battle theme and the implication of its invocation of historic national struggles in terms of epic battles, where the epic notion of battle is heavily informed by representations of cosmic battles consistent with a

The Patriarchate of Peć, oil on canvas, Pedja Milosavljević, 1943, Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade

Christian mytho-religious paradigm of the battle between good and evil. We suggest that the prominence of the theme of battle as a religious paradigm and in popular epic genre has created a receptive disposition in those to whom national(ist) leaders appeal in times of historic struggles, affecting the ways in which people experience and understand such struggles. These points of convergence and intersection of different discourses on Kosovo (religious, literary, political, popular), and the implications of their interplay in concrete historical situations, disclose the potency of interpretations of this theme to affect human action in ways constructive as well as destructive.

National Reality and Epic Metaphor

In order to assess how different historical realities interacted with the story of Kosovo, we have to look first at the two very different points of entry into the story of Kosovo. One, Lazar's ultimate dilemma between the heavenly and the earthly kingdom, stresses the Prince's conscious self-sacrifice and martyrdom. The other, Miloš's assassination of Sultan Murad, glorifies the hero's loyalty to his lord as well as his courage and resolve to defend his honor. Both elements (heroic martyrdom and heroic deed) are central for the epic poems and legend of Kosovo and are also found in numerous extra-literary sources. But at different times these two elements of the story were not equally relevant. For example, right after the 1389 battle, in the period of just a few decades, the Kosovo ideal of "golden freedom" was interpreted by the medieval writers almost exclusively in terms of spiritual victory and Lazar's martyrdom rather than Miloš's heroic feat of killing the Sultan Murat. This is consistent with the fact that the initial interpretive community was almost exclusive-

[8] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London and New York 1991) XIV.

[9] Sudipta Kaviraj, On the Structure of Nationalist Discourse. In *State and Nation in the context of Social Change*, ed. T.V. Satyamurthy (Delhi, 1994) 320.

[10] One only has to remember Hegel's essentialized view of epic as "*substance* of the nation's *spiritual* consciousness" manifesting itself in religion, family and communal life. G.W.F. Hegel, Aesthetics, vol. 2, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford 1975) 1045.

[11] Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, *Srpske narodne pjesme*, vol. 1 (Beograd 1972) 539.

Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864),
reformer of Serbian alphabet and main collector
of epic ballads from Ottoman period

ly religious.[12] But the logic of such interpretation was not incongruent with the perception of the long term political prospects: namely, the inevitability of eventual succumbing to the Ottoman might. In such circumstances, the focus on the spiritual meaning of Lazar's death is at once a "natural" outcome, given the religious background of the authors of chronicles, eulogies, *vitae*, and the like, but also a desired one, since it preserves the dignity and self-worth of the subdued people. Aleksandar Pavlović makes an interesting observation that of approximately fourteen poems about the Prince Lazar and the Kosovo battle found in Vuk's collection, only one, "Propast carstva srpskoga" ("The Downfall of the Serbian Empire"), contains the motif of the choice between heavenly and earthly kingdoms that came to epitomize the whole Kosovo cycle.[13] The poem is traced to a blind woman singer from Grgurevci whose singing was recorded in Šišatovac monastery in Srem by the heguman Lukijan Mušicki at the request from Vuk.[14] The fact that this song was rarely found among the popular singers of tales points to its origin in the clerical circles and their interest to nurture the memory of the martyrdom of Prince Lazar after the so called Great Migration of the Serbs in the 17th century from Kosovo and central Serbia north to the area of Fruška Gora, where the relics of Prince Lazar were also carried and kept in the Vrdnik monastery.[15]

We may similarly see the logic of the emergence of Miloš Obilić's heroic cult in the context of the reality of the early nineteenth century Serbian uprisings against the Ottomans. That time called for concrete victory on the ground, and hence it was the heroic aspect of Kosovo, symbolized in Miloš's killing of the Sultan, that was highlighted. Miloš's cult has had quite a different development from that of Lazar, partly because Lazar's historicity—his status as a ruler and his (if only indirect) connection with the ruling House of Nemanjić, as well as his death by beheading and purported posthumous miracles—provided solid grounds for canonization. Lazar's epic image does not seem to differ substantially from the one found in other writings devoted to him (eulogies, sermons, *žitija*). Miloš, on the other hand, starts as a *nameless hero* in most early Serbian manuscripts on the battle, almost exclusively focused on the Kosovo martyr rather than the Kosovo hero. Certainly, there are passing references to the brave knight who stabbed the Sultan to death, but his name is not mentioned until much later. The reason for this is not the chroniclers' "conspiracy of silence," but the convention of medieval writing which shows an author's strict respect for the social status of the individuals written about. Those of lower social ranks are not likely to be mentioned by name even when their deeds are described in detail.[16] For the same reason persons of lower social ranks, lacking adequate canonical justification could not be introduced into the saint's cults.[17] Yet, this is precisely what happened to this Kosovo hero.

12 Djordje Trifunović, *Srpski srednjovekovni spisi o knezu Lazaru i kosovskom boju* [Serbian medieval manuscripts about prince Lazar and the battle of Kosovo], (Kruševac: Bagdala 1968).

13 Aleksandar Pavlović, *Rereading the Kosovo Epic:* "Heavenly Serbia" in the Oral Tradition. *Serbian Studies* 23, 1 (2009): 87–89.

14 *Ibid*.

15 *Ibid*., 89.

16 Noel Malcom, for example, when discussing the battle and the "myth" of Kosovo and its revival in the 19th century, notes that "the main focus [in these songs] was on Lazar's fate as a personal hero-martyr, not on the national destiny of the Serbs," but fails to see that it is simply the basic convention of epic poetry not to sing about "common people" (even if they are its prime creators and disseminators)—but about noblemen and women, who become models of behavior for the community and personify its values and corporate ideals. It is the question of genre not of some nationalist ploy. Cf. Noel Malcom, *Kosovo* (New York 1998) 78–79.

17 See Mihaljčić, *Battle of Kosovo*, 86–88.

The sparse knowledge about the historical personality of the knight who killed the Ottoman Sultan sparked the imagination of those who sang about the brave warrior's acts. Miloš's epic birth and personality have a number of mythic elements. He has been endowed in popular imagination with unusual strength, which seems to have grown progressively with the centuries, epitomizing in the end the power of all the Kosovo warriors. The social circumstances (the Ottoman rule, decline of feudal culture and the development of enclosed patriarchal rural communities) have facilitated the re-emergence of many pre-Christian beliefs and practices within the oral epic singing and folk story telling. The effort of the Serbian Orthodox Church to preserve the memory of the medieval state and the Nemanjić family has been manifested through the creation of the cult of Prince Lazar. But the nameless hero of the Kosovo battle who killed the Sultan has had his own cult, formed first in the imaginations of the dispossessed *raya* for whom, with the passage of time and the worsening of their life conditions, the assassination of the Sultan seemed less and less humanly possible. The martyr's wreath was gradually made for Miloš within the Church too, as *all* those who were slain with the "blessed Prince" became holy. Among them, the one who himself attained a blessed death by beheading was to be seen on the walls of the Hilandar monastery on Mount Athos by the time of the First Serbian uprising (1804), portrayed as a holy warrior with a saint's halo. Finally, in the course of the nineteenth century, the Serbian Orthodox Church established, or perhaps only formally recognized, the cult of the Kosovo hero already widespread among the Balkan people.[18]

After the Congress of Berlin (1878), Kosovo became a region contested by newly independent Serbia and the Ottoman Empire, which still nominally ruled it. Despite the changed ethnic and religious composition of the province during Ottoman times and the migrations to and from it (by Serbian, Albanian and other groups),[19] the Serbian government and its people laid claims on Kosovo as an inalienable part of its pre-Ottoman history, and the "cradle" of Serbian spirituality (to which the hundreds of churches and monasteries that dotted the landscape were, and still are, witness).[20] All of these contested issues played

Gazimestan, aquarel, Todor Švrakić, 1913

out in the 500th Anniversary of the Kosovo battle, commemorating the event that was so pervasively perceived as a national tragedy that brought about the loss of the medieval state. In some ways, it was a test of the relations that Serbia had with the neighboring states, most of all Ottoman Turkey, within whose borders the Serbian population in Kosovo waited for their own liberation.[21] However, the very plan for celebration of this event made the Ottoman authorities in Istanbul (Constantinople) quite nervous. Their fear was that the commemoration of the past defeat would further provoke anti-Turkish sentiments and threaten the stability of the newly established borders with Serbia. The Serbian authorities were insisting on the religious and commemorative aspect of the celebration, trying to downplay its political explosiveness. This was reiterated even more in the light of interest and excitement that the news of the celebration aroused among the south Slavs in Austria-Hungary. The Austrian foreign minister, very much like his Turkish counterpart, warned Serbian diplomats about the possibility that the celebration would "arouse spirits" if publicity were given to the goal of unity of all Serbian lands.[22] Despite all difficulties, a number of religious and cultural functions commemorating the battle were held throughout Serbia, and, despite an official ban by the Austria-Hungarian authorities, in the Slavic circles of the Empire.

[18] It is interesting that cult of Obilić was particularly popular among the Albanians. In some of their epic poems about Kosovo his image is blended with that of Prince Lazar. Thus he is portrayed as carrying his severed head, an image otherwise typical for the rendering of Prince Lazar (Mihaljčić, *Battle of Kosovo*, 103).

[19] For a brief overview of Kosovo demographics see the Appendix A to Julie A. Mertus, *Kosovo: How Myths and Truths Started a War* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1999) 313–317. Based on the confessional population count form 1838 the ratio of Christian and Muslim population was 42% of the former and 58% of the latter.

[20] Unfortunately, a rather ironic proof of that presence is the fact that in the latest eruption of violence in Kosovo (March 2004) over twenty Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries some over 600 years old, have been torched, on the top of the 110 that were destroyed since 1999 i.e. since Kosovo became UN protectorate.

[21] See Mihailo Vojvodić, "Srpsko-Turski odnosi i proslava petstogodišnjice kosovske bitke" [Serbian-Turkish relations and the anniversary of the battle of Kosovo], *Boj na Kosovu, starija i novija saznanja* [The Battle of Kosovo, old and new materials], ed. R. Mihaljčić (Beograd 1992) 483–505.

[22] Vojvodić, *Srpsko-Turski odnosi*, p. 484; Thomas Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha: Kosovo 1389*, (New York 1990), pp. 126–131.

Christ before Annas, detail, Church of the Holy Apostles, nave, west wall of the west bay, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1300

In Serbia proper, the beginning of the 1889 anniversary celebration was marked with a commemorative session of the Serbian Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences in Belgrade on June 11, and continued until June 28, the famous St. Vitus' Day (*Vidovdan*).[23] The speeches on these occasions varied from those with more pragmatic concerns—such as Colonel Jovan Mišković's appeal to learn the lessons of Kosovo and keep newly independent Serbia militarily strong and united—to those with more romantic and emotional overtones, such as the one by Čedomil Mijatović, Serbian minister of foreign affairs whose opening speech about Kosovo as an "inexhaustible source of national pride" epitomized the prevalent mood of the celebration:

"More important than language and stronger than Church, this pride unites all Serbs in a single nation... The new history of Serbia begins with Kosovo—a history of valiant efforts, long suffering, endless wars, and unquenchable glory... We bless Kosovo because of the memory of the Kosovo heroes upheld us, encouraged us, taught us, and guided us."[24]

In addition to state and cultural functions, including a new edition of the Kosovo epic poems from Vuk's collection, the main celebration was in the form of sermons in churches and monasteries stressing Lazar's martyrdom and the heroic death of his knights as well as hope in God's blessing of the effort of the Serbian people to unify the whole Serbian nation.[25]

23 In popular, folk and epic traditions of Kosovo, "Vidovdan" (St. Vitu's Day) refers to the date of the 1389 battle of Kosovo, June 15 (of the Julian calendar) or June 28 (of the Gregorian). It is also remembered as the day of Prince Lazar's death. However, the political articulation of the Kosovo tradition in the early nineteenth century was buttressed by the increased promotion of this day in a patriotic rhetoric as a national holiday. There is some evidence that *Vid* ("sight"), otherwise known as a pre-Christian Slavic deity, was tied to a certain heroic cult: indeed, the words of Miloš Obilić before the battle suggest that the day was already known as a day of dueling ("tomorrow is the wonderful day of Vid/ we shall see on the field of Kosovo/ who is loyal and who disloyal"); see Vuk, II. 49. III; Popović, *Vidovdan* 50–64.

24 Quoted in Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha*, p. 129.

25 *Ibid.*

Incidentally, the epic tradition of Kosovo was also a subject of discussion in a commemorative session of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (JAZU) in Zagreb on St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan). The speakers included two prominent Croatian scholars, Tomo Maretić and Franjo Rački.[26] Despite an official ban on public memorials and travels to Serbia by Austro-Hungarian officials, the anniversary was marked in Zagreb's Orthodox church and through a number of smuggled news reports and articles. Among those, the most remarkable is the article sponsored by the Zagreb Catholic Bishop Jurij Strossmayer who worked hard to build public support for the celebration in Croatia. It appeared on St. Vitus' Day in *Obzor* ("The Horizon"):

"Whenever the Serbs rose up to lead whatever part of their people to freedom, they always appeared with the wreath of Kosovo around their heads to say in unison: This, O People, is what we are, what we want, and what we can do. And we Croatians—brothers by blood and by desire with the Serbs—today sing: Praise to the eternal Kosovo heroes who with their blood made certain that the desire for freedom and glory would never die. Glory to them and to that people who gave them birth."[27]

Clearly, in so much of the rhetoric related to this event, different aspects of the Kosovo tradition merged and comingled. Kosovo as a historical event, as a metaphor for freedom and as a popular epic tradition, all seemed to be interchangeable notions. The mobilizing power and emotional appeal of that "single word" in this period was impressive. The role that it played may be evaluated in more than one way, but with the examples that we have given we want to stress that even though Kosovo comes out as central to Serbian national imagination, at that particular moment in history, even if only briefly and collaterally, the inclusiveness of its interpretations by other South Slavic peoples shaped it into a metaphor for freedom they all longed for. Just as the epic poems of Kosovo from different parts of Herzegovina, Serbia, Vojvodina, Bosnia or Croatia, which Vuk Karadžić had brought together in his collections, enhanced awareness of commonness in languages and oral literatures of South Slavic peoples, while exposing the overlapping of some of their political interests, so did the ideal of the fight for national liberation that Kosovo represented at that time help bring about the formation of the first South Slavic state after World War I. It is ironic that it played a very different role in the more recent history.

One hundred years later, when the 600th Anniversary of the Kosovo battle was celebrated the situation looked quite different. Serbia was one of six republics of the Yugoslav socialist federation, with Kosovo as an autonomous province nominally part of it, but in effect acting independently of it within the federal system. Its majority Albanian population, feeling trapped in the South Slavic state from early on, was progressively disgruntled with their status and more assertive and demanding as they were becoming increasingly demographically dominant.[28] The Serbian population in Kosovo, for their part, had their own grievances as a minority not directly protected by Serbian republican laws, but more immediately subject to the local majority Albanian government. The dynamics of their tensed relationship was based on alternation of the oppression of the Albanians by the republican and/or federal Party apparatus, with the Albanian oppression of the minority Serb population in the province. Neither people had their grievances properly addressed, but rather systematically covered up or suppressed by the Party officials, not only Serbian and Albanian, but others from the federation as well. Until 1986 "Kosovo was not seen primarily as a Serbian but rather as a Yugoslav problem, which had to be solved at federal level. There was little understanding and even less sympathy for the demands of the Albanians in Kosovo."[29] Political goals of Albanians, articulated by some in separatist terms and by others for the status of Kosovo republic within the federation, were not addressed in a realistic manner, but rather were perceived as a threat to the stability of Yugoslav federation.[30] It was not really until the appearance of Slobodan Milošević on the Serbian and Yugoslav political scene (his election as a President of Serbia in 1987), that Kosovo became almost exclusively a "Serbian problem." Milošević's unilateral abolition of the autonomies of Vojvodina and Kosovo, guaranteed by controversial 1974 Constitution, only brought further alienation of Kosovo and establishment of a police state in which Serbs had control over all major institutions.

[26] Franjo Rakić, "Boj na Kosovu: uzroci i posljedice," in *Rad JAZU*, XCVII (Zagreb, 1889): 1–68; Toma Maretić "Kosovski junaci i događaji u narodnoj epici," *Rad JAZU*, XCVII, (Zagreb, 1889), 69–181.

[27] Quoted in Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha*, p. 128.

[28] Kosovo Census Data from the foundation of Yugoslavia to its end shows interesting variations: in 1921 Albanians constituted 65.8%; in 1939 54.4% (due to directly or indirectly encouraged or forced migration from Yugoslavia); after WWII (1948) there were 68.5% of Albanians, a remarkable increase during the war period, and steady increase all the way to 82.25 in 1991.Meanwhile, there were 33.1% of Serbs and Montenegrins in 1939, and 27.5% after WWII (1948); this percentage remains stable until 1971 when we see steady decrease from 20.9% to 10.9% in 1991, due to social, political and economic pressures. Mertus, *Kosovo*, 313- 16.

[29] Nevenka Tromp-Vrkić, "Kosovo and the Desintegration of Yugoslavia," in *Kosovo-Kosova: Confrontation or Coexistence*. Ger Duijzings, Dušan Janjić and Shkëlzen Maliqi, eds. (Nijmegen: Peace Research Center, 1997), p. 49.

[30] The general Yugoslav perception was that Albanians as an overall minority within the country had all the rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution: since 1968 they had even higher educational institutions in their language, extensive political and cultural autonomy, freedom to practice religion (unlike their kin in Albania), etc. This widespread view was accompanied with the knowledge that substantial financial support was going to Kosovo "from federal funds for economic development of underdeveloped regions." *Ibid.*

The Battle of Kosovo,
drawing, mixed media,
Vladimir Pajević, 1991

Milošević's speech delivered at the main celebration marking the 600th anniversary of the battle of Kosovo provides an interesting contrast with the event from a hundred years earlier. There was, of course, no emphasis on religious and commemorative aspect of the event with Prince Lazar's sacrifice in the center, but rather the ideal of the legendary hero, Miloš Obilić, was stressed. As was pointed out earlier, in different historical circumstances the ideal of heroic martyrdom or heroic deed would be invoked, and the theme of battle would be contextualized as required by the situation. Thus,

"By the force of social circumstances this great 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo is taking place in a year in which Serbia, after many years, after many decades, has regained its state, national and spiritual integrity. Therefore, it is not difficult for us to answer today the old question: how are we going to face Miloš..." and

"Six centuries later, now, we are being again engaged in battles and are facing battles. They are not armed battles, although such things cannot be excluded yet. However, regardless of what kinds of battles they are, they cannot be won without resolve, bravery, and sacrifice, without the noble qualities that were present here in the field of Kosovo in the days past."[31]

Milošević pointed out himself that "it is difficult to say what is the historical truth about the Battle of Kosovo and what is legend," and he found such questions "no longer important," leaving them to "science and the people" to find answers to them.[32] However, while seemingly putting himself above the scholarly debates ("science") and popular imagination ("people"), Milošević actually correlated (or manipulated) the two by translating the contemporary situation into concepts of the past, and thus putting the whole speech into an atemporal, mythical realm of seemingly unchanging meanings. The battle was fought six centuries ago, and we are in the battle again... Once again, "we" struggle against "them"... However, "we" of Prince Lazar are hardly the "we" of Slobodan Milošević. In his moral frame of reference there is no heavenly kingdom, no "forever," or "until the end of time," but only "small" and earthly—a qualitative difference, indeed. Likewise, six hundred years later, the historical referent regarding "they" is no longer Ottoman Turks but Albanians. But, since the basic symbolism of the initial historical confrontation, "cross versus crescent" has remained the same, it enables the present to be perceived as just another past despite the crucial difference in ethics that frames *seemingly* identical historical situations mentioned above. It is at the level of this deep *symbolism* with its rhetorical and

[31] http://www.slobodan-milosevic.org/spch-kosovo 1989.htm (21/03/04).

[32] *Ibid.*

evocative potential that different aspects of the phenomenon of Kosovo comingle and intertwine: Kosovo as a historical event and more than one historical and political reality, a powerful myth of many realities, an ever-present religious and literary symbol with its existential and ethical dilemma. By being part of national imagination, these aspects of the tradition have proved to be effective as mobilizing agents in varying historical circumstances. Depending on who has been in position to interpret the meaning of Kosovo tradition and its multiple realities, the historical consequences have been either dignified or humiliating, edifying or destructive—but in each case with very real impact on people's life.

In the end, what remains in our view central to Kosovo reality today is no longer, or not as much, Kosovo as a geographic, physical *place* (*mesto*), but Kosovo as a spiritual *space* (*duhovni prostor*) with the metaphor of heavenly and earthly kingdoms that came to us mediated by a blind Serbian woman singer of epic tales. From today's perspective even her blindness appears to us as symbolic as is her message: blind for external, physical world, she sees internally with her spiritual eye what the people she sings to still struggle to understand. Her *in*-sight is presented to us in Lazar's deeply existential and ethical dilemma about heavenly and earthly kingdoms: a Serbian version of "to be or not to be" of sorts.[33] Does this dilemma, which has become the epitome of the whole Kosovo cycle, have any relevance for the Serbs in the 21st century? Yes, if we look past its periodical, short-term appropriations for political purpose, which utterly downgrade and trivialize it by reducing "heavenly kingdom" (*carstvo nebesko*) to "heavenly people" (*nebeski narod*). Yes, if we ignore the rhetoric of religious sentimentalism with its nostalgic gaze into the past, and a chronic lack of discernment for the "signs of the times" in which we live, and where a fresh look at the symbolic and interpretive potential of this moral and existential dilemma is yet to be taken. Born in a poem as metaphor, Lazar's choice actually defies to be finalized in any one single meaning for all times. A simple message that is embedded in his dilemma is often overlooked by religious and intellectual elites: namely, that at every moment *here and now*, as opposed to commonly framed "there and then," we as individual human beings, as well as we as people (in a specific historic rendering, the Serbs), are constantly in position to choose between two sets of values, or two frames of reference: one ephemeral and material ("small" in Lazar words), and the other spiritual ("forever"). It is this uniquely human existential predicament to be able to choose between what we in a given moment perceive to be right even if not immediately profitable ("eternal") and wrong ("small"), that gives Lazar's dilemma a more universal appeal. Likewise, the meaning of the "battle," when internalized, reveals another re-cognition that in the end all true battles take place within us. Such dynamic interpretation implies transformative potential of the idea of heavenly and earthly kingdoms, the potential that cannot be realized by keeping it enclosed in the narrow circle of the Serbian past, which is seemingly repeated in the present, but by releasing it beyond both historical and national boundaries. Because to transform means not to repeat, and because the greatness of an individual, as well as a people is not in what they have produced for themselves, but what they can offer to and share with others in the recognition of common humanity.

Armored knight of Price Lazar, detail,
sculpture by Svetomir Arsić Basara, 1986

[33] To debate whether this Serbian version of "to be or not to be," is historically accurate (that is, what Prince Lazar actually said), or merely a product of imaginary (attributed to him by singers of tales) is irrelevant, because we know that poems, like stories themselves, because of their accessibility to people, do shape their perceptions and view and thus influence history.

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Holy Prince Lazar of Serbia, copperplate engraving by Zaharija Orfelin, 1773,
Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Belgrade

The Battle of Kosovo (1389) and Battle Themes in Serbian Art

Ljubica D. Popović

Even after the concerted efforts of many scholars, the course of the battle which took place at Kosovo Polje on 28 June 1389, remains unfamiliar in its many details.[1] Sources written close to the event offer little information about this military confrontation.[2] They establish that the battle occurred at that particular place and time, and that neither the Ottoman Sultan Murad I (1362–89) nor the Serbian Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović (1371–89) survived it. Beyond these established facts, many uncertainties remain. Therefore, historians studying this battle have had to depend upon later sources in trying to reconstruct the exact course of events. The Serbian people, on the other hand, believe they know the Battle of Kosovo well. This folkloric feeling of familiarity is actually based on popular legends and epic poetry rather than on concrete historical evidence. Consequently, the Serbian national perception of the battle is individual, arrived at through anonymous bards' interpretations of the actual event.

The purpose of this study, concentrating primarily on painting, is twofold: first, to examine how those medieval art monuments and literary texts most nearly contemporary to the Battle of Kosovo can tell us about that event and about the psychological atmosphere after it; second, to examine the themes depicted in Serbian art that were inspired by the events associated with the Battle of Kosovo, and to find the written sources which provided this inspiration. It is neither possible to offer an encyclopedic approach here, which would include all Serbian and other Slavic artists who depicted subjects related to that battle,[3] nor is it possible to offer a lengthy formal analysis of each individual work included in this essay. Other studies will have to examine portraits of historical persons as well as pseudo-historical figures who, according to the legends, participated in the battle. The same is true for those works of art, especially paintings which concentrate on incidental episodes, not particularly connected with a specific event in the popularly accepted chronological sequence of the battle.[4] Moreover, this study will devote only brief attention to the images of women associated with the Battle of Kosovo in order to strengthen the visual perception of this military engagement.[5] Instead,

[1] Numerous scholarly meetings held in Yugoslavia and around the world testify to that effect. These were stimulated not only by the celebration of the six hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, but also by a desire shared by scholars from various disciplines to advance further our understanding of this event and its historical consequences. It is not the purpose of this work to evaluate the enormous existing bibliography pertinent to this subject; only studies relevant to this paper's topic will be cited. However, it is interesting to note several anthological and multi-disciplinary publications aimed at the informed public, as well as popular editions (books and magazines) dealing with the Battle of Kosovo published to satisfy the interest of the public at large, especially in Serbia, in this historical event. As typical examples one can cite the following: Atanasije Jevtić and Živorad Stojković (eds.), *Zadužbine Kosova: spomenici i znamenja srpskog naroda* (Prizren-Belgrade 1987; *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, izbor tekstova Ratko Peković, izbor ilustracija Dr. Nikola Kusovac (Belgrade: "Litera," 1988); "Boj na Kosovu," *Politika*: Intervju, Specijalno izdanje 4 (28 July 1988).

[2] As an example of Serbian sources, the text written by Despot Stefan Lazarević and inscribed upon the marble column at Kosovo Polje can be mentioned as quoted in: A. Jevtić and Živorad Stojković, (eds.), *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 192:

"They attacked the enemies / and they overran the true dragon / and killed the wild beast / and the great adversary / and the never-sated Hades who devours all, / I am saying Amurad and his son, descendent of an asp and a snake, a cub of a lion and of a basilisk, and with them (they killed) not a small number of others. / O, miracle of God's destiny / the courageous sufferer was captured / by the lawless hands of the Agarens / and at the end he suffered / to become Christ's martyr / the great Prince Lazar. / No one else cut him down, O my beloved, / but the hand of that killer, son of Amurad. / And all told above happened in the summer of 6897, 12th indict, in the month of June, day 15, on a Tuesday, and the hour was six or seven, I do not know, God knows. (1403–4). Unless otherwise noted, all translations of Serbian text by Lj. D. Popović.

[3] The number of South Slavic artists who painted themes inspired by epic poetry dealing specifically with Kosovo is not a large one. Among the Croatian painters, Ferdo Quiquerez (1845–93) will be discussed. Others not included in this study are Vladimir Bečić, Josip Lalić, and Ljubo Babić who illustrated subjects from epic poetry; this task was shared by two Slovenian artists, Saša Santel and Hinko Smrekar: Pavle Vasić, *Umetnički život: kritike, prikazi, i članci*, 1961–1970, v. 2 (Belgrade, 1976), p. 667.

[4] For example, the equestrian representation of Miloš Obilić painted in 1861 by Aleksandar Dobrić (1835-?) is not included in this study. For this artist, see; Miodrag Jovanović, *Srpsko slikarstvo u doba romantizma 1848–1878* (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1976), pp. 107–9, pl. II. Also omitted is *Boško Jugović na konju*, created ca. 1900 by Djoka Putnik(?). For this work, see: *Kosovska bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, unnumbered color plate.

[5] Because of length limitations such an important personality as Kneginja Milica cannot form a significant part of this study. Her portrait can be gleaned through literary texts and contemporary

Saint Mercurius, north conch of the naos, Church of the Holy Trinity, Resava (Manasija) Monastery, until 1418

the main emphasis will be on the iconography and messages of selected compositions which seek to depict the Battle of Kosovo as a total concept and on those images which illustrate its crucial episodes. The latter will be presented according to the popularly accepted order of events of this battle, rather than according to the actual chronology of the creation of these works of art.

Is there anything in the visual arts, especially in painting, which can contribute to our better understanding of the battle? The answer to this question is dual in nature but more negative than positive. There is no documentary historical evidence to be discovered in those paintings roughly contemporary with the Battle of Kosovo. Yet, visual art, very much like literature, can contribute in its own way to the conceptualization of the spirit of this era. The portrait of Prince Lazar from his foundation, the Church of the Ascension of Christ at the Monastery Ravanica, helps in the visualization of this Serbian leader at the Battle of Kosovo.[6] The weaponry depicted in the fresco images of the Holy Warriors in such churches as Ravanica, Andreaš, Kalenić, and Resava helps us to imagine the soldiers and the weapons they carried to Kosovo.[7] The representations of saints found on the walls of these churches enable the beholder to visualize the saints whose protection the Christian warriors might have sought before going into this battle. Confirmation of this assumption is found in *Pohvala Svetom Knezu Lazaru* (*Eulogy to the Holy Prince Lazar*), written and embroidered in gold on purple cloth by Prince Lazar's kinswoman, the nun Jefimija in 1402. Seeking spiritual guardianship, the nun beseeches the martyred prince for intercession with the following words:

Call a gathering of your co-speakers, holy martyrs,
and with all of them pray to the glorious God,
inform Georgios,
move Demetrios,
convince (two) Theodores,
take Mercurios and Prokopios
and do not leave out the forty Martyrs of Sebaste,
for whose martyrdom your beloved children
Prince Stefan and Vuk, go to war,
pray that they will be given help from God,
therefore, come to our aid, wherever you might be.[8]

Other Serbian texts written within living memory of the Battle of Kosovo, while providing little specific historical information beyond the basic facts, help us understand

images. For her literary portrait: Konstantin Filosof: *Život Despota Stefana Lazarevića*, in; Lazar Mirković; (trans.), *Stare srpske biografije XV i XVII veka—Camblak, Konstantin, Pajsije* (Belgrade: S.K.Z., 1936), XXXIX, kniga 265, pp. 56, 61, 62, 65, 80, and 88; Patrijarh Danilo III: *Povesno slovo o Knezu Lazaru*, in: *Kosovska bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, p. 72. For Milica's portrait in epic poetry: Vojislav Djurić, *Antologija narodnih junačkih pesama*, 7th ed. (Belgrade: S.K.Z., 1973), pp. 196–200 (Ženidba kneza Lazara); 208–11 (Zidanje Ravanice); 257–60 (Car Lazar i Carica Milica; 274–75 (Carica Milica i Vladeta Vojvoda); 276–77 (Sluga Milutin) and others. As examples of contemporary visual representations of Kneginja Milica one can cite those in Ravanica and Ljubostinja. For Ravanica: Mirjana Ljubinković, *Ravanica* (Belgrade: "Jugoslavija," 1966), fig. 3; for Ljubostinja: Srdjan Djurić, *Ljubostinja: Crkva Uspenja Bogorodičinog* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1985), pp. 90–92. IV. An example of the late Romantic representations of Knjeginja Milica is a painting by Vladislav Titelbach created toward the end of the nineteenth century and now in the National Museum of Kikinda: *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, unnumbered color plate.

6 M. Ljubinković, *Ravanica*, fig. 2; Branislav Živković, *Ravanica. Crteži fresaka* (Belgrade, 1990), drawing on page 51.

7 For Ravanica: M. Ljubinković, *Ravanica*, fig. 12; for Andreas: Vojislav J. Djurić, *Vizantijske freske u Jugoslaviji* (Belgrade: "Jugoslavija," 1974), pp. 86–87 and line drawing on page 86 for Kalenić: Branislav Živković, *Kalenić: crteži fresaka* (Belgrade, 1982), drawings 6 and 12; for Resava (Manasija). Stevan Tomić and Radomir Nikolić, *Manasija: istorija-živopis* (Belgrade, 1964), figs. 29, 30, 31, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, and 92.

8 A. Jevtić, (ed.), *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 188:

Saberi lik svojih sabesednih, svetih mučenik, / i sa vasemu pomoli se proslavaljšomu te Bogu, / vazvesti Georgiju, / podvigni Dimitrija, / ubedi Teodore, / poimi Merkurija i Prokopija / i 40 mučenih sevastijskih ne ostavi, / va njihže mučeniji vojujut čeda tvoja vazljubljena, / knez Stefan i Vlk, / prosi podati im se ot Boga pomošti, / pridi ubo na pomošt našu ideže ašte jesi.

Prince Lazar and his family, lithograph, Historical Museum of Serbia, Belgrade

the mood of the country. Roughly contemporary fresco paintings make this mood almost palpable. Writing forty years after the Battle of Kosovo, Constantine the Philosopher, in his *Life of Despot Stefan Lazarević*, provides some information about this battle. With the help of Biblical quotations his language reflects the sad feelings of the time:

This battle occurred in the year 6897 (1389), in the month of June, fifteenth (day). And he (Lazar) suffered a martyr's death and now can be seen lifelike in the great monastery called Ravanica, which he built himself. He (Lazar) was openly taken by them (martyrs) and he is keeping council with them in the heavens. And then there was no place in that whole country where one could not hear the sad sounds of sobbing and weeping. There was nothing with which to compare it. It was as if the whole air was filled, as if in all those regions Rachel was crying and did not want to be consoled, not only because of her (murdered) children, but because of the God-appointed ruler. For he (Lazar) is no more, and they (the children) are no more. (Jer. 31:15; Matt. 2:18).[9]

One of the best correlations between a text and an image can be found in the comparison of this quotation from the *Life of Despot Stefan* to the somewhat earlier representation of the *Lament of Rachel* from the Monastery of Marko (ca 1376–81).[10] Here, in an expressive, almost surrealistic way, through gestures, composition, and color, the painter eloquently depicts Rachel's grief, cries, and despair. It is as if this Biblical figure lamenting her children had become the personification of either a grief-stricken mother or nation.

[9] L. Mirković (trans.), *Stare srpske biografije*, p. 60: Ova bitka ie bila godine 6897 (1389), meseca junija 15 (dan). A on (Lazar) primi mučeničku smrt i vidi se sada kao živ u velikoj obitelji zvanoj Ravanica, koju sam sazda, javno uzet od njih (mučenika) i s nima zboruje na nebesima. A tada, tade ne beše mesta u celoj toj zemlji gde se nije čuo tužni glas ridanja i vapaj, koji se ne možne ni sa čim uporediti, tako da se vazduh ispunio, tako da je u svim ovim predelima Rahilja plakala i ne htede se utešiti, ne samo zbog (pobijene) dece svoje, no zbog bogoizbomog gospodina, jer ga (Lazara) nema i jer ih (dece) nema (Jerem. 31, 15 Mat. 2, 18).

[10] V. J. Djurić, *Vizantijske freske*, p. 82, and fig. 87.

As the above-cited text demonstrates, the Battle of Kosovo seemed to emerge in the collective consciousness of the Serbian people as perhaps the most tragic event in their long history. At the same time, through the martyrdom of its participants, it signified a spiritual triumph. This perception contributed to the battle's elevation from the earthly domain to the heavenly realm. Through his sacrifice and ultimate martyrdom, Prince Lazar, with his followers, chose the kingdom of heaven. Constantine the Philosopher implied this[11] and one of the epic poems from the Kosovo Cycle, *Propast Carstva Srpskog* (*The Downfall of the Serbian Empire*), explicitly stated it:

"Dear God, what shall I do and how shall I do it?
Which kingdom shall I choose:
shall I choose the kingdom of heaven[?]
shall I choose the kingdom of earth?
If I select the kingdom,
the earthly kingdom,
the earthly kingdom is for a short while,
while the heavenly [kingdom] is forever and ever."
The tsar chose the kingdom of heaven[12]

Considering the socio-political and religio-cultural circumstances in Serbia at that time, a question may be raised as to whether or not there ever existed in monumental painting an iconic representation of the Battle of Kosovo. Before an answer is offered and justified, it is important to underscore the fact that Serbian art in the closing decades of the fourteenth century still fell within the cultural and artistic tradition of the Byzantine empire. Therefore, Serbian art, like that of Byzantium, was primarily religious in character. Historical subjects were occasionally depicted in early Byzantine art on a monumental scale, but the contextual application of such subjects was rather limited, being centered around the emperor and noble. This point can be substantiated through a few examples: historiated reliefs on the spiral column erected in Constantinople by the Emperor Arcadius (395–408)[13] and the mosaic images created under Justinian I (527–65) which decorated the vestibule (the Chalke gate) of the imperial palace in Constantinople. Both were of similar triumphant character. Although lost now, the subjects of these representations are known through a description by Procopius.[14] His description implies that the triumphal-ceremonial nature of these images held greater importance than their narrative explicitness. Also well known, is the literary description of the banquet hall in the imaginary palace built by the Byzantine epic hero Digenis Akritas on the Euphrates River with its specific references to the depiction of the battle between Alexander and Darius.[15]

To enumerate other Byzantine historical representation either mentioned in literary sources or distantly reflected in the preserved monuments of the visual arts would go far beyond the scope of this study.[16] Neverthe-

The Battle of Kosovo, lithograph, Adam Stefanović, 1871

[11] L. Mirković, *Stare srpske biografije*, p. 60.

[12] V. Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 266:
..."Mili bože, šta ću i kako ću? / Kome ću se privoleti carstvu: / da ili ću carstvu nebeskome, da ili ću carstvu zemaljskome? / Ako ću se privoleti carstvu, / privolsti carstvu zemaljskome, / zemaljsko je za maleno carstvo, / a nebesko uvek i doveka." / Car volede carstvu nebeskome.

[13] Stephen R. Zwim, "Drawing the column of Arcadius," in *Age of Spirituality*, Kurt Weitzmann (ed.), (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 79–81 and drawing on page 80.

[14] Procopius, *De aedificiis*, I, x, 5 ff, as quoted in: Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453*, Sources and Documents in the History of Art Series, edited by H. W. Janson (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall Inc., 1972), pp. 109–10.

[15] Denison B. Hull (trans. and intr.), *Digenis Akritas, The Two-Blood Border Lord*, The Grottaferrata Version (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1972), p. 99:
(85) He painted too Achilles' fabled wars,
Agamemnon's beauty, his fateful flight;
And wise Penelope; the suitors' slaughter Odysseus' wondrous daring with the Cyclops;
Bellerophon slaying the dread Chimaera;
(90) Alexander's triumph, Darius' defeat.
The reign of Candace, and her wisdom too.
Reaching the Brahmans, then the Amazons,
And other feats of the wise Alexander,
And many other marvelous kinds of valor:
For the Roman copy of the Battle between Alexander and Darius, see Donald Strong, *Roman Art*, prepared for press by J. M. C. Toynbee (Baltimore: MD Penguin Books, 1976), pp. 36–37, 48, and fig. 30.

[16] The classical work on this subject is: André Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin* (London, 1971; Variorum Reprints of Strasburg, 1936 ed.), passim.

less, the case of the founder of the Serbian medieval dynasty, Stefan Nemanja (c. 1167–96), deserves mention. His attempted bid for independence from Byzantium failed despite his conspiring with Venice and Hungary. Defeated by the emperor Manuel I Comnenus (1143–80), Nemanja was taken to Constantinople to enhance the imperial triumph. Poets eulogized and artists depicted Manuel's victory over Nemanja. Two peristyles of the imperial palace at Blachernae were decorated with episodes representing Manuel's war with the "barbarians" (Nemanja and the Serbs), and scenes from the same war were depicted in a church dedicated to the Mother of God.[17] Since all of these images are lost, no specific information can be gained beyond the fact that a series of episodes, presumably separate compositions, formed these historical cycles illustrating Manuel's victories. These may have been similar in manner to the way religious narratives were told on the walls of the churches.

There are preserved scenes in Serbian medieval religious foundations, which have certain traits of historical illustrations. Among them, one can mention those in the exonarthex of the Mother of God's church at Studenica or those at Sopoćani, but these seem to depict moments of religious character in the life of an historical person more than representing historical events of a truly secular nature.[18] Furthermore, neither Serbian medieval literary sources nor epic poems appear to suggest the existence of historical scenes (battles included) on the walls of Serbian royal residences. All of this leads to one conclusion: the creation of a monumental historical composition depicting the Battle of Kosovo was a cultural and artistic improbability. There is, however, another small pool of representations which may help us imagine certain details and episodes from the Battle of Kosovo. This visual "documentation" is to be found in illuminated manuscripts.

Before examining images from the manuscripts, one must summarize briefly the major episodes of the Battle of Kosovo as reconstructed by various scholars. Until such a time when the Ottoman archives yield late fourteenth or fifteenth century written sources describing this event, historians are compelled to use literary sources which considerably postdate the battle. For example, Petar Tomac relies extensively on Turkish sources from the sixteenth century in his study of the Battle of Kosovo.[19] Thus, the actual location of Murad's *turbe* allows Tomac to describe the overall battle arrangement of the opposing forces with a certain amount of specificity. However, other aspects of the battle, as described in the Turkish sources and used by P. Tomac, seem to be rather generalized. Therefore, this essay will focus on the following features from these descriptions while comparing them to the images in the manuscripts: (1) the meeting and supper of the leaders of the Serbian forces; (2) the organization of the Ottoman center with tents and camels as beasts of burden; (3) the use of archers; (4) the equestrian charge and the main battle; and (5) the many fallen bodies on a very bloody field, to paraphrase written sources.[20]

It is beyond the scope of this study and the expertise of this writer to question either the validity of these late Ottoman sources or the methodology of the historians using them for the reconstruction of the Battle of Kosovo. Rather, this study will focus on another kind of "evidence" and explore the observations and conclusions which may be drawn from it. This "evidence" comes from the visual arts—in this case, miniature painting. The works to be consulted here belong to different genres from illustrated chronicles to Homilies and Psalters. The chosen examples range in date from the ninth to the fifteenth century and originate in locations as far-flung as Sicily and Russia, and as close to the Kosovo field as Serbia and Bulgaria. Certain scenes in three manuscripts in particular will be analyzed here at some length, while others will be used to support and advance the hypothesis that one

[17] Grabar, *L'empereur*, p. 40, note 5, and 41, note 2.

[18] Gordana Babić, "Painting," in *Studenica Monastery* (Belgrade: Jugoslovenska Revija, 1986), pp. 82–86, and figs. 72 and 73; Vojislav J. Djurić, *Sopoćani* (Belgrade: S.K.Z. and Prosveta, 1963), p. 78, and drawing on page 133.

[19] Peter Tomac, *Kosovska Bitka* (Belgrade, 1968), pp. 34–37, 151–68, 193–223.

[20] P. Tomac, *Kosovska Bitka*, pp. 209–10.

can imagine the Battle of Kosovo through the pages of these illuminated manuscripts.

Especially relevant to the topic under consideration are the illustrations from the chronicle written by John Scylitzes. Covering the period of Byzantine history between the years 811 and 1057, Scylitzes wrote the original text in Constantinople toward the end of the eleventh century.[21] Numerous surviving copies affirm its immense popularity. However, a manuscript in the National Library in Madrid is the only fully illustrated one. This manuscript, studied and published not long ago, is believed to have been painted during the second half of the thirteenth century, possibly in Palermo.[22] The illustrations in this manuscript predate the Battle of Kosovo by at least a hundred years and represent the histories of various Byzantine rulers from the Macedonian dynasty. Here, however, one finds images which exactly parallel many military episodes associated specifically with the Battle of Kosovo as described in written sources. Are these verbal-visual coincidences, or, as this author would like to hypothesize, a series of generalized *topoi*, common to this genre of historical writing and illustration? If the latter were true, would such *topoi* be equally applicable to any battle of the medieval period, including the one fought at Kosovo?

Examining specific images from the illustrated Scylitzes Chronicle helps one imagine certain episodes from the Battle of Kosovo. The representation of the feast at Edessa corresponds with the verbal description of the gathering of Prince Lazar's council for dinner on the eve of the Battle of Kosovo.[23] The seated arrangement around the *C*-shaped table is also a common iconographical feature for religious scenes depicting a meal. The same folio provides a vivid image of an Arab camp: men seated on the ground, camels arranged in a tight group, and their unloaded burden on the ground. This illustration is remarkably similar to Konstantin Mihailović's description of the Ottoman supply camp at Kosovo.[24] Numerous representations of tents in this chronicle evoke the images of the sultan's tent at the battle—the tent guarded by foot soldiers—or the one possibly erected to shelter either the mortally wounded Murad I or his remains.[25] In the siege of a city[26] the encamped Arabs could serve as a depiction of the Ottoman forces gathered on the Kosovo field or as an illustration of an epic poem fragment describing the same:

...all was covered with the Turkish army: horse next to horse, warrior next to warrior.

The battle spears were like a dark mountain, and the banners like clouds, and the tents like snow drifts...[27]

Archers and foot soldiers, which, according to Petar Tomac,[28] provided one of the strengths of the Ottoman army at Kosovo, also play a visible part in various battle scenes in the Scylitzes illustrations.[29] This chronicle frequently depicts equestrian clashes which visually evoke the descriptions given by the written sources about equestrian engagements at the Battle of Kosovo.[30] The Scylitzes manuscript graphically renders the gore of battle. Heavily armed horsemen decapitate fallen enemies and the battlefield is a crimson lake of blood, precisely as the Battle of Kosovo was described.[31] This illustrated Byzantine chronicle even depicts the decapitation of a foe,[32] reminding one of Prince Lazar's death.

The miniatures in the Madrid Skylitzes chronicle, which illustrate conflicts of the Middle Byzantine period in a

[21] Karl Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des Ostromischen Reiches* (527–1453), II ed., (München, 1897; reprinted in New York: Burt Franklin Bibliographical Series XIII, n.d.), v. I, № 151, 365–68.

[22] André Grabar and M. Manoussacas, *L'illustration du manuscrit de Skylitzes de la Bibliotheque National de Madrid* (Venice, 1979), passim.

[23] Grabar and Manoussacas, *L'illustration*, p. 110, pi. XXXVIII and fig. 250.

[24] P. Tomac, *Kosovska Bitka*, p. 144.

[25] Grabar and Manoussacas, *L'illustration*, fol. 97 a: 61, pi. XVI, and fig. 98; fol. 163: 92, fig. 212; fol. 2olv.: 104, fig. 238; fol. 153: 88, fig. 196. It is also interesting to note the similarities of topics found in Western illustrated chronicles in spite of the differences in the style of paintings. An illuminated Hungarian Chronicle can be cited as a typical example. The manuscript which dates from the second half of the fourteenth century is now in the National Szechenyi Library (Clmae 404), in Budapest. See Marcus de Kalt, *The Hungarian Illuminated Chronicle* (Chronicle de Gestis Hungarorum) Budapest: Corvina Press, 1969), where one finds various representations of battle scenes (fol. 44), and most interestingly, a depiction of a dead ruler under his tent (Ladislas the Kumanian) with his assassins (fol. 129). The latter, except for the style, could have served as a depiction of the Death of Sultan Murad I.

[26] Grabar and Manoussacas, *L'illustration*, p. 214, fig. 254.

[27] V. Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 263: *Kosančić Ivan Uhodi Turke* (odlomak) (Kosančić Ivan Scouting the Turks) (fragment):

..."sve je turska vojska pritisnula: / konj do konja, / junak do junaka, / bojna koplja kao čarna gora, / sve barjaci kao i oblaci, / a čadori kao i snjegovi..."

[28] Tomac, *Kosovska Bitka*, pp. 73–76; 195–98.

[29] Grabar and Manoussacas, *L'illustration*, archers and foot soldiers fol. 32vb: 35, fig. 21; fol. 97a: 61, pi. XVI. fig. 98; fol. 135a: 79, pi. XXVIII, fig. 165; fol. 217vb: 112, fig. 259; fol. 220: 113, fig. 260; fol. 220va: 114, pi. XL, fig. 261; equestrian clashes fol. 19: 28, pi. III, fig. 8; fol. 30: 33, pi. IV, fig. 16; fol. 54v=45, fig. 57; fol. 217b: 111, fig. 257.

[30] One can imagine the equestrian forces of Prince Lazar through the poetic text inscribed on the marble column at the Kosovo battlefield, as quoted in: Jevtić, *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 190:

Mužije dobri, mužije hrabri, / mužije, vaistinu, va slave i va dele / jakože zvezdi svetli blstešte se, / jakože zemlja cvetci preispaštreni, / odejani zlatom i kamenijem častnim ukrašeni, / množajši konji isabrani i zlatosedlani, / vasedivni i krasni vasadnici ih.

Good men, courageous men, / men who truly in words and deeds / shone like bright stars, / or like earth covered with multicolored flowers, / dressed in gold and decorated with precious stones; / many chosen horses with golden saddles, / and their admirable and beautiful riders. Also: Tomac, *Kosovska Bitka*, pp. 195–96; 203–4.

[31] Grabar and Manoussacas, *L'illustration*, p. 33, pi. V, fig. 19. Descriptions of the bloody Battle of Kosovo are found, for example, in fifteenth-century Turkish (Oruç) and Persian (Sukrullah) sources as quoted in: *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, pp. 80–81.

[32] Grabar and Manoussacas, *L'illustration*, p. 61, fig. 99.

thirteenth-century provincial work, naturally cannot be directly connected to later historical events. The images examined here serve only to demonstrate the existence of a generalized art genre depicting military conflicts. Battles could be described either verbally or visually. Through this common tradition, the *topoi*, the earlier (Byzantine) and later (Turkish) chronicles seem related. Therefore, in any attempt to reconstruct the Battle of Kosovo one must firmly separate that which is common and general from that which is specific and exclusive to this battle.

Generalized battle themes can also be seen in an illustrated World Chronicle written in verse by Constantine Manasses.[33] The codex in question, now in the Vatican Library (Cod. vat. slav. II), was copied in Cyrillic and decorated with sixty-nine miniatures for the Bulgarian Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331–71) around the middle of the fourteenth century.[34] These miniatures illustrate battle scenes from the Trojan war through the conflicts between the Byzantine Emperor Basil II and the Bulgarian Tsar Samuel in 1014 (fols. 41–183). However, some of those images, the banquet scene included, could serve as illustrations for the events at Kosovo as described by various chroniclers.[35] A very similar claim can be made in regard to some illustrations from the Russian Radzivil Chronicle of the fourteenth century, especially the scene in which the Kuman forces attack the army of Prince Igor.[36] This type of military illustration is reflected in the famous fifteenth-century Russian icon depicting the battle between Novgorodians and the army from Suzdal.[37] This representation includes all the typical elements of this genre, from the processional carrying of icons and angelic protections, to the call of the trumpet, the wind-blown standards, the archers and the cavalry charges, including riders on the obligatory white horses.

Even when battle scenes are illustrated in a religious text, their ferocity and bloodthirstiness are by no means mitigated. Some of the military scenes from the famous ninth-century Chludov Psalter in Moscow[38] and also those from the eleventh-century Homilies of Gregory Nazianzinus[39] could be easily removed from their context and used to illustrate a secular history detailing a military campaign. Such representations share so many features that they appear almost prototypical and, therefore, applicable to any battle scene, be it within a secular or a religious context.

Despot Stefan Lazarević, Church of the Holy Trinity, west wall, Resava (Manasija) Monastery near Despotovac, until 1418

An illustrated Alexandriad is another manuscript of interest here, particularly in regard to its images and their possible visual parallels to episodes from the Battle of Kosovo. This romanticized story of Alexander the Great by pseudo-Callisthenes was popular during the Middle Ages both in the East and the West.[40] The codex in question was created in the artistic milieu of post-Kosovo Serbia (Moravska Srbija). It is written in Cyrillic and its decoration is attributed to the second quarter of the fifteenth

33 Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur*, pp. 376–80.

34 Ivan Dujčev, *The Miniatures of the Chronicle of Manasse* (Sofia: Bulgarski Houdozhnik Publishing House, 1963), passim.

35 Dujčev, *The Miniatures*, № 17, fol. 41; № 65, fol. 183, № 60, fol. 172. For examples of written sources mentioning the meal of Prince Lazar on the eve of the battle, see: Milivoje M. Bašić (trans.), *Iz stare srpske književnosti* (Belgrade: S.K.Z. № 137, 1911), p. 184 (from: "Boj na Kosovu" iz Letopisa Josifa Tronošca, pp. 183–87); also: *Boj na Kosovu: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, p. 96; Tomac, *Kosovska Bitka*, p. 187.

36 Serge A. Zenkovsky (ed.), *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles and Tales* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc, 1974), figure on page 177.

37 Tamara Talbot Rice, *A Concise History of Russian Art* (New York-Washington: Frederick A. Praeger, Publ, 1965), p. 71, fig. 56.

38 M. V. Shchepkina, *Miniaturi Hludovskoi Psaltiri* (Moskva: "Iskusstvo," 1977), fol. 3, Ps. 3:1; fol. 50, Ps. 50:16; fol. 58, Ps. 59; fol. 58v, Ps. 59:6; fol. 78v, Ps. 77:58; fol. 110, Ps. 105:38.

39 *Byzantine Art, An European Art*, Exhibition Catalogue, II ed. (Athens, 1964), p. 334, № 345, fol. 111v or fol. 111r.

40 As a typical fourteenth-century Western illuminated manuscript of the Romance of Alexander, the example preserved in the Bodleian Library can be cited: A. G. and Dr. W. O. Hassall, *Treasures from The Bodleian Library* (Hew York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 101–4, and pi. 23. As an Eastern example, the Turkish version of the Alexandriad, *Iskendername*, can be mentioned. It was composed as an epic poem by Ahmedi for emir Jacub II in Kutahia in Anatolia and finished in 1390; Tomac, *Kosovska Bitka*, p. 32.

Princess Milica Hrebeljanović, by Vladislav Titelbah, ca. 1900, National Museum, Kikinda

century.[41] During that period in Serbia, the commission of a work such as an illustrated Alexandriad required an especially sophisticated patron. It is beyond the scope of this study to try to solve the patron's possible identity. It suffices to mention here that the ruler Despot Stefan (1389–1427) was one of the most cultured men of his time. He not only had a circle of learned theologians and authors around him, but he was also a sponsor of art and a writer as well.

Constantine the Philosopher, in his biography of Despot Stefan Lazarević, compares the despot on at least four separate occasions with Alexander the Great.[42] An illustrated book about Alexander would not be out of place at the court of this ruler, since the copy in question still falls chronologically within the last years of his reign.

If separated from their explanatory inscriptions, some of the illustrations from this book, could be, as details, easily related to the Battle of Kosovo. When Alexander receives his generals, it could as well be Prince Lazar receiving his allies; when two horsemen prepare for the Battle of Athens, they could as well be any of Lazar's standard-bearers. Alexander himself, on Bucephalos with his escort-guard of spear-carriers in the Battle with the Indians, could be used to represent Lazar and his troops. The duel between Alexander and Porus[43] might serve as an illustration of heroic combat as described in the epic verses dedicated to Kosovo. In *Sluga Milutin* (*Milutin the Servant*), for example:

Only Boško Jugović still survives,
his flag with a cross bellowing through
the field of Kosovo;
his is still dividing the Turks into groups,
like a hawk-bird a flock of doves.[44]

Especially interesting are the scenes of Lamentation and Death, which also offer a reflection, if nothing more, of the feelings evoked by almost contemporary historical events. Over the bier of Porus (fol. 135v) stand four grieving women, one of whom wears a tall crown and prominent earrings, adornments similar to those worn by Princess Milica herself in her fresco portraits in Ravanica and Ljubostinja[45] Through this illustrated scene one can almost visualize the words of the Serbian patriarch Danilo III. In his *Povesno slovo o knezu Lazaru* (*An Historical Word about Prince Lazar*) he describes Princess Milica's grief over the body of her martyred husband:

...as if she awakened from a deep sleep, she (Milica) lamented with a wailing cry: "Woe to me, what has happened to me! All of a sudden a sharp weapon pierced my soul. Did it come upon me similarly as it did to Jeremiah? Hear me how I sigh, how I lament, but my consoler is no more! My young girls and young men were taken into slavery."[46]

Lamentation over the body of Alexander is visually even more formal. Only two women are present; both wear royal crowns and prominent, round earrings. A precious green cloth covers the body on the bier which rests beneath a porphyry ciborium, lending to the scene an almost Christian religious character. Finally, by looking at the illustration of the *Translation of the Body of Alexander the Great*, one can almost envision the *translatio* of the body of Prince Lazar. The bier with Alexander's body, carried on the shoulders of four attendants and escorted by a rider and soldiers, could easily be visualized as that of Prince Lazar. It is known that after his death on Kosovo Polje, Prince Lazar was buried in the vicinity of Priština. A year after the Battle of Kosovo, following a liturgical ceremony conducted by the Patriarch Danilo III, the body of Prince Lazar was escorted from the Kosovo region by his daughter Mara and her husband Vuk. It was brought

41 Today this manuscript is in The National Library of Sofia, Bulgaria, NBKM 771. See: Jovanka Maksimović, *Srpske srednjevekovne minijature* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1983), pp. 49, 75, 131–32 with bibliography.

42 Mirković, *Stare srpske biografije*, pp. 47, 63, 71, and 74.

43 For the illustration of the Romance of Alexander, see: J. Maksimović, *Srpske srednjevekovne minijature*, 1983, fol. 23, fig. 67; fol. 37v, fig. 66; fol. 127v, fig. 69; fol. 135, fig. 72.

44 V. Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 277: selected verses from the poem *Sluga Milutin*:

..."još ostade Boško Jugoviću, / krstaš mu se po Kosovu vija; / još razgoni Turke na buljuke, / kako soko tica golubove..."

45 Ljubinković, *Ravanica*, fig. 3; S. Djurić, *Ljubostinja*, 1985, p. IV.

46 Dragoljub Pavlović i Radmila Marinković, *Iz naše književnosti feudalnog doba* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1968), p. 50:

...i probudivši se kao iz sna duboka, velikim jaukom plakajuci vapijaše / "Avaj meni, šta mi bi! Iznenada ljuto oružje prodje dušu moju. / Da li kao na Jeremiju na mene dodjoše? Čujte kako uzdišem, kako tužim, i nema mi utešitelja! Devojke moje i momci / moji u sužanjstvo podjoše."

to the Monastery of Nova Pavlica, the foundation of Lazar's nephews in the I bar valley. There it was met by Lazar's widow, Milica, and their two sons, Stefan and Vuk. Finally, Lazar's body was taken to his foundation, Ravanica, where it remained until the end of the seventeenth century.[47]

It is not my purpose to suggest that the illustrations of the Alexandriad are disguised depictions of some of the events that took place before, during, and after the Battle of Kosovo. Rather, these images are used to point out certain iconographic traditions, which, due to their stereotypical nature, give a general pictorial idea about an event or period without providing the viewer with specific historical documentation. Although the historical chronicle was developing as a literary genre in Serbia in the fourteenth century, there is no documentation indicating that an illustrated chronicle of the period of the Battle of Kosovo ever existed. Therefore, what contemporary medieval monuments offered in the field of visual art was a clear departure from the physical actuality; by means of artistic concepts and imagination, one achieves an insight into a realm where ideas rule supreme. At the same time, the lack of an iconographically standardized cycle of Kosovo themes during the Middle Ages[48] opened up possibilities unencumbered by visual tradition for the Serbian artists of the modern era.[49]

The historical gap which separates the actual date of the Battle of Kosovo (1389) and the first known representation of the event in Serbian art (1771–76) results from historical circumstances. When the medieval Serbian state lost its independence after the Ottoman conquest (1459), great political and sociological changes occurred. The members of the feudal class were either destroyed or displaced by emigration. The church, too, lost de facto its national independence when, after the death of the Serbian Patriarch Arsenije III in 1463, his seat was left vacant. The ecclesiastical center in Ohrid subordinated the Serbian independent church and started replacing Serbian churchmen with Greek clergy. The uneducated masses of people, thus, became virtual slaves of the Ottoman conquerors. Consequently, cultural life was diminished although not totally extinguished. Various artistic manifestations lost their most powerful donors: the ruling family, the nobles, and the prosperous national church.

Miloš Obilić depicted as a Saint, exonarthex, Hilandar, 1803

Those monuments built during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were on a scale much smaller than their medieval counterparts and resulted from a collective *ktitorship* of villagers and monks or priests. As might be expected, such monuments were tradition-bound and introspective.[50] In the iconographic programs of these churches, historical compositions depicting the national past had no place. Only portraits of Prince Lazar and other individual participants of the Battle of Kosovo found places among the saints; thus they became popularly sanctified. The representation of Miloš Obilić provides an example of this tradition.[51] A new national art emerged only after politically tragic events at the end of the seventeenth century caused the great migration of the Serbian people from their ancient heartlands to the regions beyond the Sava and Danube rivers and into the domain of the Habsburg monarchy. There, under new political circumstances and religious leadership, new art forms and new subjects were introduced into the art sponsored by and made for the Serbs.

47 J. Maksimović, *Srpske srednjevekovne minijature*, 1983, fol. 191, fig. 70; fol. 191v, fig. 68; Patriarch Danilo III described in his already mentioned *Povesno slovo o knezu Lazaru*, how his body was moved from Kosovo and where, and who accompanied its departure and who received it. As quoted in: *Intervju*, 4., (28. July 1988):61.

48 It is also worth mentioning a very large illustrated chronicle covering the history from the creation of the world to the time of Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible [1533–1570]), commissioned by that tsar (Ostermann's Codex). It has nine drawings depicting the events associated with the Battle of Kosovo. Since a codex of this nature did not have a wide circulation, its images had no way of influencing the evolution of the Kosovo themes in Serbian art. Sretan Petković, "Ivan Grozni i kult kneza Lazara u Rusiji," *O knezu Lazaru*, Naučni Skup u Kruševcu 1971 (Belgrade, 1975), pp. 313–14.

49 It is believed that the oldest preserved representation of episodes from the Battle of Kosovo comes from a brass plate now in the City Museum of Šibenik, executed by Oratio Fortezza ca. 1570. In three oval frames in the center of the plate, Fortezza engraved three crucial episodes: the Feast of Prince Lazar, Miloš Obilić killing Murad, and the Death of Miloš. An accompanying Latin text explains each scene. See. Jevtić (ed.), *Zadužbine Kosova*, figures on page 563.

50 Vladimir R. Petković, *Pregled crkvenih spomenika kroz povesnicu srpskog naroda* (Belgrade, 1950), *s. n.*

51 Rade Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role of the Motif of Heroism," *Homeland*, Nos. 344–47 (1989):23–25, and fig. on page 24 also, *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, p. 22, where a list of monuments is given in which "portraits" of Miloš Obilić are represented and designated as "sveti" (holy) by inscription.

The first known Serbian representation of the Battle of Kosovo was painted in the refectory of the Vrdnik Monastery by Ambrozije Janković (1731-?).[52] This master-zoographer painted Biblical scenes on the ceiling of this structure, and on the wall in the western lunette he executed a multi-figured composition of the battle. This work, painted between 1771 and 1776, suffered excessive damage from the Austrians in World War I. In his study of the remains of this painting and of the subsequent, rather interpretative graphic copies, Pavle Vasić established the basic features of the composition.[53] The almost destroyed south (left) side contained Ottoman forces and showed compositional fragments of tents, turbans, and horses. On the north (right) side were Serbian riders organized in zones by the red or blue color of their hussar hats. They wore multi-colored cloaks and carried sabers in their hands. Prince Lazar with his flag-bearers, all mounted on powerful chargers, occupied the center. This artist's formal orientation oscillated between medieval and contemporary styles. From the tradition of the former come such elements as simultaneous narrative, isocephalic arrangement of the figures, inverted perspective, stylization of horses and frontality of faces. The baroque style inspired decorative illusionism, as well as contemporary details of arms, armor, and clothing. In this composition the mounted riders with Prince Lazar are young Serbs, contemporaries of the painter, who, as an ethnically identified nationality, served the Habsburg monarchy by defending its borders against the Turks. David Racković, the donor of the Battle of Kosovo painting in this refectory, was not a nobleman but an ordinary citizen of Novi Sad.[54] This fact indicates the shift in art sponsorship from the nobility to the citizenry.

While the literary inspiration for the painting came directly from the epic poem *Boj na Kosovu* (*The Battle of Kosovo*), a specific formal source of inspiration has not been established. Pavle Vasić assumes that Janković may have seen some of the Austrian prints depicting military campaigns against the Turks. In general, this scene is considered an original composition and the first historical painting of this subject in Serbian art.[55]

One may wonder if a monastic refectory was not an unusual place for a historical composition. To understand this location one must remember that between the fall of Smederevo in 1459 and the conclusion of the Insurrection Wars of the early nineteenth century, the Serbian people lived without their own independent state. They were divided by two empires, the Ottoman and the Habsburg. Consequently, there were no royal palaces or public places which would have afforded a natural setting for historical compositions inspired by the nation's past. The church was the only independent organization that the Serbian people had to provide both the setting and the stimulation for such compositions. The Battle of Kosovo was not depicted inside the catholicon of the Monastery Vrdnik, where the body of Prince Lazar was kept and from which his cult emanated.[56] However, because the subject of this painting was appropriate to the monastic complex which was the center of the veneration of the prince martyred at Kosovo, it was fitting to place the scene of the Battle of Kosovo in the monastery's second most important ceremonial place—the refectory.

Several times in the course of the nineteenth century a historical composition inspired by the theme of the Battle of Kosovo was painted inside a church building proper. Around the middle of that century, anonymous zoographers painted the *Battle of Kosovo* in a rather naive manner in the Serbian churches in Tovariščevo (Bačka) and Šarengrad (near Ilok, Srem).[57] Somewhat later, N. Aleksić painted the scene of *Miloš Killing the Turkish Sultan Murad* on the vault of the Serbian church in Ostojićevo (Banat), which will be discussed with the other compositions depicting episodes from the battle.

Among rare modern works dealing with an historical theme, one can cite Peter Lubarda's rendering of the Battle of Kosovo (1953).[58] A lack of narrative elements seems to purify this expressive painting elevating it to the level of heroic type works, among which Picasso's *Guernica* comes to mind.[59] In Lubarda's painting, the observer senses more than sees the dramatic charge of the mounted warriors. The subtle suggestions of rearing white horses, bold strokes of the brush, and a carefully selected palette seem to evoke fresco representations from the medieval period. In a true sense this modern painter transcended the narrative subject of the Kosovo battle and created an icon of war. In this manner Lubarda joins past with present, making his vision of the Battle of Kosovo a symbol of all other battles that the Serbian nation had to wage.

Any significant commemorative celebration stimulates the interest of both scholars and artists in the given

52 *Enciklopedija Likovnih Umjetnosti*, III, 60 s.v. "Janković, Ambrozije."

53 Pavle Vasić, *Doba baroka* (Belgrade: Umetnička Akademija, 1971), p. 11.

54 Vasić, *Doba baroka*, p. 10.

55 Vasić, *Doba baroka*, p. 13.

56 The body of Prince Lazar was taken from his foundation, Monastery Ravanica, to the city of Budim (Hungary) in 1690 during the Great Serbian migration; and in 1697 it was deposited in Monastery Vrdnik-Ravanica (Srem), where it rested until 1941. At that time it was brought to Belgrade's cathedral for safekeeping. Finally in 1989 the body of Prince Lazar made its pilgrimage through Serbia, on its way once again to the Monastery Ravanica where it found its permanent rest. For information on the cult of Prince Lazar, see: Dejan Medaković, "Kult kneza Lazara u srpskom baroku," *O knezu Lazara*- Naučni Skup u Kruševcu, 1971 Belgrade, 1975), pp. 321–35, and figs. 1–8.

57 *Enciklopedija Likovnih Umjetnosti*, III, 60, s.v. "Janković, Ambrozije."

58 Jevtić (ed.), *Zadužbine Kosova*, plate on page 202.

59 Frank D. Russell, *Picasso's Guernica: The Labyrinth of Narrative and Vision* (Montclair, N.J.: Allanheld, Osmund & Co. Pub., Inc., 1980), figure on page 1; for the horse: study 4, fig. 5.

event. The same holds true for the six hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo. Only three other paintings dealing with that subject will be briefly mentioned in this study. M. Djilas' approach to the theme portrays the most traditional of the three and, above all, is pseudo-Romantic in spirit.[60] Two horsemen, mounted on rearing horses and engaged in mortal struggle, dominate the center foreground. They obviously symbolize the two opposing forces—the Turks, represented by a turbanned warrior on a black horse, and the Serbs, personified by an armored, helmeted knight riding a white charger. The latter, who lunges with his spear at the Turk, is further identified by a shield hanging from the saddle and bearing in a cross field the four S's, the motto of the Serbian nation—"Samo Sloga Srbina Spasava." In the center foreground of the composition, parallel to the picture plane, the body of a fallen Turk and his horse visually separate the two mounted warriors. Ranks of charging horsemen occupy the middle ground, their nationalities identified through their garments, cross-bearing flags, and other similar devices. The sky zone is visually one of the more interesting parts of this composition. Its delicate tones of orange and blue contrast clearly with the earthly realm of the battle, appropriately colored in browns, ochers and greys. A skull, the symbol of death, emerges from the orange smoke and fire filling the right hand side of the sky. In its placement directly above the Turkish forces, its implied symbolism is clear. Contrasting with the dark colors of the smoke and fire, a much lighter pale blue and pale orange tint the sky on the left hand side. Against this background, an army of darker blue, ghost-like figures stand directly above the Serbian side of the battlefield. The allegory of the artist is clear. They represent the army of resurrected Serbian warriors. Although the actual Battle of Kosovo resulted in the defeat of the Serbs, the painter depicts here the hope of ultimate victory.

Another interesting work depicting the battle resulted from competition initiated by the gallery "Vid." The painting by Ž. Vukelić is very different in nature from the expressive Romantic images already discussed. In his representation of the *Battle of Kosovo*, Vukelić uses contemporary art forms to express his feelings.[61] Silhouettes of monsters, men, and a horse's head dominate the foreground, enhanced by colors of deep violet and purple with touches of blue, red and white. The open mouths of the figures seem to be shrieking. The upper register of the foreground, much paler in color, permits the gaze to penetrate into the far distance through the tall poles bearing crosses and standards. The middle distance plays a lesser role in this painting since Vukelić shows only one part of it—the battling warriors. Atmospheric colors of pale buff, orange and green suggest the far distance. On the right hand side, a dragon sits before a tent and, on the left, foot soldiers led by a mounted standard bearer seem to fade into the mist. The cross on the flag identifies this group as the Serbian warriors. Vukelić's work goes beyond the description of a narrative and, very much like the painting of this subject by Lubarda, becomes a modern icon of war horrors.

Similar feelings are expressed by a surrealistic painting *Kosovo* done by Radomir Mudrinić in 1989.[62] The horizon is high in this impressive image. Between it and the foreground a fierce battle wages between the Serbian and Ottoman equestrian forces and bodies crowd the field. In the foreground representations of the fallen warriors, depicted in a neo-Realistic style, seemingly break the picture plane and produce a stunning visual effect as if falling from the illusion of the pictorial space into the actual physical space occupied by the beholder. On the right hand side, an apparition of a mounted warrior rises above the battle field. The laid-back ears and bared teeth indicate the ferocity of his white charger, while the powerful rider in armor is depicted faceless. His head is hidden by a bird-like helmet, which may represent either a grey falcon or an owl. In the far distance on the left horizon, two black ravens fly toward the rider. Each of these images is enveloped in a coloristic atmosphere of its own: ravens in dark, smokey greys, the rider in the pale blue, yellow and orange of a sunset sky. Below them the battle field is much darker with tones of ocher, burnt umbra and greys predominating and contributing effectively to the symbolism and mood of this work.

In the earlier works by the Serbian artists inspired by the Kosovo themes, it is important to remember that a great majority of Serbian artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries primarily executed religious commissions because these were more lucrative than portrait painting.[63] Such commissions were primarily icons for large iconostases. To execute these the painters had at their disposal not only a varied repertory of appropriate subjects and acceptable styles but also a wealth of compositional solutions, which were frequently quite standardized.

An interesting question is whether or not such compositional formulae had iconographic applications outside the realm of religious painting. If this proves to have been the case, could it be demonstrated through works which specifically depict the Kosovo themes? This formal migration from the genre of religious to the genre of sec-

[60] Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role," 344–47, figure on page 87.

[61] Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role," figure on page 131. Among other representations of the Battle of Kosovo is the work by František Maly. Instead of the more common format in which the two armies confront each other in a side view, Maly portrays a frontal cavalry attack with the horses and riders charging directly at us. Thus, the viewer becomes more psychologically involved with the image. Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role," figure on page 101.

[62] Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role," figure on the back of the cover.

[63] Veljko Petrović i Milan Kašanin, *Srpska umetnost u Vojvodini od doba despota do ujedinjenja* (Novi Sad: Matica Srpska, 1927), p. 72.

ular painting may have happened either consciously or unconsciously on the part of the artist. Whenever such formal transformations took place, they served to facilitate the visual recognition of a given pseudo-historical image by a public cognizant of religious iconography. At the same time, such formal migrations from one genre of painting to another may have stimulated in the mind of the beholder the transfiguration of an illustrated historical scene into an exalted, semi-devotional image.

During the Baroque phase of Serbian painting, historical compositions inspired by the national past served primarily didactic purposes.[64] Artists in the Neoclassic period, however, had little use for such a genre and focused their efforts in other directions.[65] With the advent of the Romantic movement in Serbia (1848–78),[66] which in Serbian painting outlived its counterpart in Western Europe, the spirit of the time and the subjects inspired by the national past forged a fruitful union. While the famous European masters of this period frequently sought inspiration in "exotic" lands outside their own countries— those inhabited by the Arabs or Turks[67]—to Serbian painters, good or modest, such exotic imagery was an inseparable part of their own heritage.

What are, then, the general impressions about Serbian painting of the second half of the nineteenth century? Although every generalization falls short of the absolute truth, Serbian painting seems to assume a dual character when dealing with historical compositions. It is both narrative and metaphysical. When narrative, it evokes visual impressions not only through colors, but through the stories told. Such an artistic approach reflects the gregarious nature of the Serbian people and their strong tradition of oral literature. Above all, this narrative approach springs from the same source that inspired Vuk Karadžić's publication of Serbian epic poetry and from the acceptance of the people's spoken language as the literary language. The visual tradition of sacred art inspired the metaphysical nature of the painted scene which was calculated to appeal to the innate religious sentiment of the beholder.[68]

Thus, very meager historical facts and, more specifically, poetical fiction, became sources of inspiration for the painters of the Romantic period who represented historical subjects in general and Kosovo themes in particular. These artists combined formal elements borrowed from various styles—contemporary and traditional. The latter, based on religious images, often bordered stylistically on the folkloric.[69]

Such literary and visual mixtures occur mostly in the works of artists desiring to popularize episodes from the Kosovo themes through consumer- oriented media such as engravings. These works were of a primarily illustrative nature. Their creators used carefully chosen, familiar quotations from the Kosovo Cycle of epic poetry as the starting point of inspiration. These together with well-known formal borrowings from traditional painting had an irresistible popular appeal. These prints are artistically rather naive, appropriate for an art medium specifically designated for home consumption by the visually unsophisticated citizens of nineteenth-century Serbia.

Among the Serbian painters of the Romantic period, some either planned or executed a number of works depicting a subject inspired by the Kosovo events. A few of these works will be explored in this paper by introducing the subjects as they relate to the popularly accepted sequence of the Battle of Kosovo. In this manner, it is the author's hope to recreate in the mind of the contemporary viewer the visual concept of that event as perceived during the second half of the nineteenth century. Artists of various abilities and training created the images in question. Some of these works, the products of mediocre artists, border on the naive. Such paintings are even more interesting than those by well-trained masters, since they most clearly reveal not only literary but also visual sources of inspiration.

For example, when depicting *Prince Lazar sa porodicom* (*Prince Lazar and his Family*) (1870–71) as a group portrait, Adam Stefanović (1832–77) and Pavle Čortanović (1830–1903) imply a sacrificial theme by placing an altar-like table in the center of the composition.[70] Its cov-

64 Dejan Medaković, *Tragom srpskog baroka* (Novi Sad, Matica srpska, 1976), p. 193.

65 For the preferred subjects among Neoclassical Serbian artists, see: Miodrag Kolarić, *Klasicizam kod Srba* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1965), passim; as a typical composition which combined classical inspiration with a national subject, *Apoteoza Lukijana Mušickog* [*The Apotheosis of Lukijan Mušicki*), painted in 1840 by Dimitrije Avramović (1815–55), can be cited. For this work, see: Dejan Medaković, *Srpska umetnost u XIX veku* (Belgrade: S. K. Z, 1981), pp. 99–107, fig. 26.

66 Miodrag Jovanović, *Srpsko slikarstvo u doba Romantizma 1848–1878* (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1976), passim.

67 For European painters whose works were inspired by the people, costumes and animals of North Africa and the near East, see: Mary Anne Stevens (ed.), *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse: The Allure of North Africa and the Near East*, Exhibition held 1 July-28 October 1984 (Washington: National Gallery, 1984), passim. For the work of Delacroix with such motifs, see: Rene Huyghe, *Delacroix* (New York: Harry A. Abrams, Inc., 1963), pis. Ill; V; XI; XVIII; XXI; XXII; XXV; XXVII; XLVII and figs. 48; 52; 140; 204; 206; and 207.

68 The publication of epic poetry by Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, *Mala prostonarodna slavenoserbska pesnarica* (Vienna, 1814), and Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, *Srpske narodne pjesme*, v. IV (Vienna, 1862). For the language reform and the ensuing struggle, see: Jovan Skerlić, *Istorija nove srpske književnosti*, 2nd ed. (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1967), pp. 236–37.

69 Excellent examples of traditional iconography and folkloric style are to be found in many of the paintings produced by master zoographers working in the territories of the Serbian Dukedom. See: Branko Vujović, *Umetnost obnovljene Srbije 1791–1848* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1986), pp. 239–67, figs. 36, 40, 49, 67, 68, 75, 83, 84, 88, 102, 106, 108, and many others.

70 Miodrag Kolarić, Nikola Kusovac, and Vera Ristić, *Srpsko slikarstvo XIX veka* (Zagreb, 1965), pp. 25–35; Miodrag Jovanović, *Srp-*

er bears the symbol of the state, the double-headed eagle, while on the table, very much like liturgical implements, lie the insignia of power—the scepter and the orb. Members of Prince Lazar's family flank the table, men to one side and women to the other. They wear elaborate pseudo-medieval costumes, with *loroi* and ermine-lined capes. Two columns and hanging curtains lend a theater-like formality to this scene while, through the intercolumnar openings, one glimpses a monastery and a citadel upon a hilly landscape. The formal placement of figures and certain elements, such as frontality, elaborate crowns, *loroi*, and scepters, are reminiscent of the representations of Old Testament high priests. One thinks of Melchizedech or Aaron,[71] who, clad in their sacerdotal garments, stand ready for a sacred ceremony. While the nineteenth-century beholder understood this illustration primarily as a portrait of Prince Lazar and his family, the implied sacred nature of this image could not have escaped him.

A similar principle operates within another group portrait depicting the legendary participants of the Battle of Kosovo known only through epic poetry. Pavle Čortanović, a very popular but mediocre artist, provides an interesting interpretation of a religious formula in his lithograph of *Jug Bogdan i devet Jugovića* (*Jug Bogdan and the Nine Jugović*).[72] The interior setting, with its columns and vaults, is reminiscent of the monastic buildings preserved in the Vojvodina region.[73] Richly clad, Jug Bogdan is the focal point of the group. As the father, he assumes the sacerdotal gesture of blessing as he lays his hand upon the head of one of his sons, identified as Boško Jugović by the flag he carries. The sons, in spite of many formal changes and adaptations, iconographically resemble the Holy Warriors as depicted in Serbian medieval churches.[74] The visual association in this case is logical: like the Holy Warriors, the Jugovići were defenders of the Christian faith. Since such prints were aimed at the general public, the compositional schemes were borrowed from religious art. Their proven formal simplicity provided for easy recognition. Moreover, the iconography borrowed from religious images imbues an historical portrait or composition with a feeling of national piety.

A recent mosaic by M. Srbinović treats the same theme in a completely different manner.[75] The narrative and descriptive completely gone, in its simplicity this image, entitled *The Jugovići*, becomes symbolic. The mosaic occupies a lunette, its center dominated by two half-figures. Nine swords with glistening blades and bejewelled handles, symbolizing the nine Jugović brothers, fill the two sides. In the foreground the woman with long white hair and hands closed in tight fists before her chest is easily recognized as the Mother of the Jugovići. Large staring eyes seemingly veiled in a mask-like blue shadow mark her oval, idealized and ageless face. Behind and slightly to her side stands an old warrior in a mail shirt, easily identified as Jug Bogdan, the father of the nine Jugovići. His eyes, too, are very large, his bushy white hair and beard appear wind-blown. He raises his right arm, the index finger pointing heavenward. Whether consciously or not, this contemporary artist seems to have been inspired by Serbian medieval frescos representing the prophets, especially Isaiah, in creating the face and gesture of Jug Bogdan. In this way, Srbinović establishes a sense of continuum between the past and present. He, too, creates a modern day icon whose meaning its audience easily grasps.

A very similar approach can be observed in scenes depicting narrative episodes from the Kosovo Cycle. Adam Stefanović executed many of these historical compositions in 1872 and 1873.[76] They are Romantic in content, partially realistic in the execution of details, and somewhat primitive in the quality of drawing. They still seem to follow traditional iconographic schemes giving them strong religious overtones. Thus, Stefanović's color lithograph of *Kneževa Večera* (*The Feast of the Prince*), although a specific visual allusion to the composition of the Last Supper, portrays *de facto* the gathering of the participants of the Battle of Kosovo.[77] At a TT-shaped table placed under a tent, Serbian noblemen surround Prince Lazar, while the eldest among them, Jug Bogdan, shares the head of the table with the prince. Prince Lazar has just finished his toast and offers a cup of wine (*pehar*) to "the bravest of all the brave Serbs," Miloš Obilić. Miloš, however, has been denounced to the prince as the one who will betray him during the battle with the Ottomans on the field of Kosovo. Stefanović chose to depict the most dramatic moment in the poem when Miloš rises, approaches the prince, and responds to his words of praise and his offering of the cup of wine;

Miloš jumped on his light feet, and he bowed to the black earth:

'Thank you, glorious Prince Lazar!

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sko slikarstvo i grafika u doba romantizma (Novi Sad: Galerija Matice srpske and Beograd: Narodni muzej, 1976), p. 59, № 68; also, *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, fig. 28. It is interesting to note that this print served as a direct source of inspiration for a painting executed in 1892 by an anonymous artist, and now in the Gallery of Matica Srpska in Novi Sad see: *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, unnumbered color plate.

71 These figures are often depicted in medieval fresco paintings in Serbia: as representative examples of the images of the Old Testament high priests, those from the Monasteries Sopoćani and Arilje can be cited: V. J. Djurić, *Sopoćani*, drawings on pages 122–23; Branislav Živković, *Arilje* (Belgrade, 1970), p. 6, drawing 10.

72 M. Jovanović, *Srpsko slikarstvo i grafika*, 1976, 59, № 66; also, *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, fig. 34.

73 V. Petrović and M. Kašanin, *Srpska umetnost u Vojvodini*, 1927, fig. 34.

74 See above, note 7.

75 Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role," pp. 344–47, figure on page 83.

76 Nikola Kusovac, "Adam Stefanović (1832–1887)," *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti Matice srpske*, 2 (Novi Sad, 1966): 329–41.

77 M. Jovanović, *Srpsko slikarstvo i grafika*, p. 59, № 67 *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, fig. 31.

Monument to Kosovo Heroes, Kruševac. It was made by Serbian sculptor Djordje Jovanović. It was unveiled on Vidovdan in 1904 in the presence of King Petar I Karadjordjević. Photo M. Miletić.

Thank you for your toast,
for your toast and for your gift,
but I do not thank you for such words!
So help me God,
I was never unfaithful, neither was I, nor shall I ever be,

therefore I am planning to die tomorrow for the Christian faith on the Kosovo field!'[78]

What this engraving lacks in pure formal merit it abundantly provides in clarity of presentation. Imitating a theatrical tableau in which the action is temporarily frozen, the scene also evokes the image of the Last Supper.[79] The luminosity which surrounds Prince Lazar renders him Christ-like in appearance. His vassals, although more numerous than the original twelve, resemble the apostles. The accused traitor, Vuk Branković, is obviously likened to Judas by his physical and psychological isolation. Miloš, the hero of the drama, is formally isolated as well; but by his placement in the center of the composition, he commands the attention of all. The most dramatic moment of the scene, the accusation and the response, parallels a similar moment in the Last Supper. The nineteenth-century Serbian public was, however, most likely more familiar with the verses of the poem *Kneževa Večera* than with the Biblical text.[80] Therefore, the beholder knew that the role of Miloš at the Kosovo Battle was not that of a Judas, but that of a hero. The popularity of this subject matter and the simplicity of its illustration certainly made this and similar works appealing to the public.

Anastas Jovanović (1817–1899), an accomplished painter and engraver, should also be mentioned among the Serbian artists who depicted Kneževa Večera.[81] Although he chooses the same moment from the poem as Adam Stefanović, Jovanović changes the formal and psychological emphasis in his preliminary drawing and in the subsequent work. The face and figure of the standing Miloš Obilić occupy the center of the composition (drawing); and, in the next stage of this painting's evolution, the seated prince and standing Miloš face each other, well-balanced and surrounded by other nobles. Jovanović adds another narrative detail: from the shadowy background emerge the faces of two women, undoubtedly daughters of Prince Lazar and the wives of the two opponents, Miloš and Vuk.[82]

Among these visual descriptions of the Kosovo episodes, some scenes resulted from the artist's imagination, since neither historical texts nor epic poetry provides a verbal image. To this category belongs the lithograph by Adam Stefanović representing *Miloš Obilić posle zavere pred Muratovim šatorom* (*Miloš Obilić in front of Sultan Murad's Tent*).[83] On the left sits the sultan on an elaborate cushion in front of his richly decorated tent and flanked by his court dignitaries, military leaders, and his spear-carrying personal bodyguard. Miloš, in full armor, approaches from the right on foot, leading two spirited horses and accompanied by one of his *pobratim* (blood-brothers), most likely the legendary Ivan Kosančić. The two wear classical- type military garments, more closely resembling

[78] V. Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 262.

"Skoči Miloš na noge lagane,/ pa se klanja do zemljice crne / "Vala tebi slavni knez-Lazare! / Vala tebi na tvojoj zdravici, / na zdravici i na daru tvome, / al' ne vala na takvoj besjedi! / jer, tako me vjera ne ubila / ja nevjera nikad bio nisam, / nit' sam bio, niti ću kad biti, / nego sjutra mislim u Kosovu / za rišćansku vjeru poginuti!..."

[79] For the iconographic studies of the Last Supper, see: Gabriel Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'Evangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles d'apres les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont-Athos*, 2nd ed. (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1960), pp. 286–309, figs. 268–95; Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. 2, *The Passion of Christ* (New York: Graphic Society, 1972), pp. 24–38, figs. 67–116.

[80] The Biblical texts pertinent to this event are: Matt. 26:20–30; Mark 14:17–25; Luke 22:14–23; John 13:18–30.

[81] *Enciklopedija Likovnih Umjetnosti*, s.v.: "Jovanović, Anastas"; Pavle Vasić, *Anastas Jovanović, 1817–1899*, Katalog radova (Novi Sad, 1964), passim; *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, figs. 57 and 60, respectively.

[82] Concerning the legendary quarrel of these two daughters of Prince Lazar, see: G. A. Škrivanić, *Kosovska bitka 15. juna 1389* (Cetinje, 1956), pp. 79–80; Tomac, *Kosovska Bitka*, pp. 171–73.

[83] *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, fig. 19. For the attribution of the print to V. Katzler, see Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role," pp. 344–47, figure on page 41.

the Roman Horatii[84] or the Greek Dioskouroi (because of the horses)[85] than Serbian medieval noblemen. The theme here is a confrontation without any further hint of what would follow. Stefanović dramatically suspends this meeting with destiny, leaving its visual resolution to other images.

In view of the history of the Serbian people, it is not surprising to find occasional depictions of battles rather than Cupid-like angels on the vaults of their churches. Such is the case with the previously mentioned painting by Nikola Aleksić (1808–73) dating ca. 1871.[86] Depicted on the vaulted ceiling of the Serbian church in Ostojićevo, it represents one of the two most dramatic moments of the Battle of Kosovo, *Ubistvo Murata* (*The Killing of Murad*). In the center of the composition sits the elaborate, already empty, throne. The body of the dead sultan occupies the foreground and creates the illusion that it will fall over the painted cornice and tumble down into the actual space of the church. Groups of Turks flank both sides of the throne. The figure of Miloš forms the apex of this pyramidal composition. With one foot defiantly placed on the dead sultan's body, he brandishes his saber and dagger to combat an attacking janissary. Upward-gazing angels would have seemed superfluous to the battle-tempered warriors of the *Vojna Krajina* (the Military Frontier of the Habsburg Empire). Instead, Serbs may have found the forceful yet rhythmic movements of warriors with sabers a more appropriate subject for their churches, since such battle scenes represented a part of their history.

Other Serbian artists explored the theme of Miloš killing Murad. Anastas Jovanović depicts the moment when Miloš plunges a dagger into the abdomen of the enthroned sultan while two Ottoman viziers view the scene with horror.[87] Folds of tent drapery frame this scene in which Miloš is given visual prominence, his outstretched body placed in a long diagonal close to the foreground of the picture.

In his 1904 *Kosovski Spomenik* (*Monument to the Heroes of Kosovo*) in Kruševac, sculptor Djoka Jovanović (1861–1953) represents in bronze relief, among a number of episodes, the moment when Miloš draws his dagger, ready to kill the astonished sultan seated amidst his courtiers.[88] Since primary sources do not give a specific account of Miloš's assassination of Sultan Murad I, the sequence of events which took place in the sultan's entourage is left open to artistic imagination, as documented by the examples discussed above.

The second dramatic moment of the battle, according to the chronicles, occurred when Prince Lazar's horse is killed.[89] Adam Stefanović treats the subject in his color lithograph, *Caru Lazaru konja ubiše* (*The Killing of Prince Lazar's Horse*), created in 1870–71.[90] The fierce clash of the two equestrian armies fills the entire pictorial space, from the foreground where men lie dead and wounded, to the distant horizon marked by gently sloping hills. The attack of the Serbian cavalry is led by the rider on a white charger as if to disguise through this powerful symbolic element (the man on a white horse) the dangerous moment when the horse falls beneath the Serbian leader. The dark color of the fallen horse, also symbolic, foretells the tragedy yet to come. A warrior gently lifts Prince Lazar from his fallen charger, compositionally emulating the Descent from the Cross.[91] This pair is visually inconspicuous, as if to remain hidden from a casual observer.

There is perhaps only a slight difference in definition between a hero and a martyr. The first fights for his beliefs while the second more submissively accepts God's will. Prince Lazar belongs to both of these categories since he fought as a hero on the field of Kosovo but also accepted a martyr's death there. Quite interesting iconographically is the image painted by Djordje Krstić (1851–1907), in *Smrt cara Lazara* (*Death of Tsar Lazar*). Executed in 1885 as a painting destined for an iconostasis, it was rejected amidst controversy.[92] The artist does not portray the actual decapitation, the field of Kosovo and its many dead, the sounds and fury of the raging battle, or the sultan's tent and the figure of Bajezid, Murad's successor. Instead, he depicts a solitary moment when heavenly rays illuminate the slain leader while a winged figure floats above the ground and gently supports Lazar's body. The angel leans forward as if to kiss Lazar's forehead and accept his departing soul. This scene also evokes strong religious feelings because of its compositional association with the depiction of the Lamentation.[93]

Certain descriptive narratives found in epic poetry were easily translated into an equally illustrative pictorial

84 Fritz Novotny, *Painting and Sculpture in Europe 1780–1880*, The Pelican History of Art (Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books, 1960), fig. 1-B; Jacques-Louis David: The Oath of the Horatii, 1784, Paris, Louvre.

85 Pierre Grimal, *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, translated by A. R. Maxwell-Hyslop (Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell Publisher Limited, 1985): s.v. "Dioscuri," pp. 140–41.

86 Dejan Medaković, *Putevi srpskog baroka: Nacionalna istorija Srba u svetlosti crkvene istorije našega doba* (Belgrade, 1972), pp. 82–84 M. Jovanović, *Srpsko slikarstvo u doba romantizma*, p. 248.

87 *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, fig. 37.

88 Miodrag Protić, et al., *Jugoslovenska umetnost XX veka: skulptura 1870–1950* (Belgrade Muzej Savremene umetnosti, 1975): Djordje Jovanović, nos. 59–60; *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, fig. 51.

89 M. Bašić, *Iz stare srpske književnosti*, 1911: "Boj na Kosovu" iz Letopisa Josifa Tronošca (183–187), p. 186.

90 M. Jovanović, *Srpsko slikarstvo i grafika*, p. 60, № 69; about the episode of Prince Lazar and his fallen horse: Tomac, *Kosovska Bitka*, p. 205.

91 G. Millet, *Researches sur l'iconographie*, pp. 467–88, figs. 492–521. G. Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, v. 2, 1972, pp. 164–68, figs. 543–64.

92 Miodrag Kolarić, *Djordje Krstić* (Belgrade: Jugoslavija, n.d.), p. 16, and figure on page 47; Dejan Medaković, *Srpski slikari XVIII-XX veka: likovi i dela* (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1968), p. 245.

93 Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie*, pp. 489–516, figs. 522–62; G. Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, pp. 174–79, figs. 575–621.

language. Some poems, however, besides describing events from real life, also dealt with the supernatural.[94] These types of verbal images did not lend themselves to easy visual translations. Among the moving epic poems of the Kosovo Cycle which describe heroic sacrifices and a martyr's death, there is one poem with unique content. It is the poem called *Obretenije Glave Kneza Lazara*, the title inadequately translated as *The Finding of Prince Lazar's Head*.[95] Such a prosaic translation may indicate the subject of the poem but loses true mystical meaning. The story tells how the head of Prince Lazar, severed after the leader's capture during the Battle of Kosovo, was dropped into a well. It was wondrously preserved intact in the well's cold water and discovered after forty years. At this time, the head miraculously joined the body once again. This miracle took place during the night, and the "shining head" seen in the well was considered to be the "shining moon" by its discoverer, the young son of a Turk by an enslaved Serbian girl. The epic verses describe this supernatural happening in the following manner:

..."help us, O God and Holy Saint!"
Into the spring the third youth steps,
And from the spring he lifts the head,
The head of Serbian Saint Lazar.
He places it upon green grass.
With water then, he fills his jug.
When thirsty men had quenched their thirst.
And looked again upon black earth.
Upon green grass, the head was gone.
Alone it moved across the field—
Toward sacred form moved sacred head—
To join together, as before![96]

Such a rare and unusual theme inspired an iconographically unique subject in the Serbian art of the post-medieval period. Understandably, it has no parallels in European art of the same era. To the best of this author's knowledge, it was represented only twice in Serbian painting during the early decades of the twentieth century, and once, more recently, in 1971.

In 1905, Djordje Krstić painted the earliest of the versions of this subject.[97] At that time this realist painter still treated some of his subject matter in the spirit of Romanticism. The severed head of Prince Lazar dominates this rather small, vertical canvas (52 x 80 cm). The head seems enormous as it appears to emerge from a clouded but dramatically lit sky. It levitates above the night landscape, illuminated by a fire. Darkness obscures the earth, thus allowing the artist to omit detailed descriptions of the happenings on the ground. The head is nimbed, the circular light symbolizing the sanctity of Prince Lazar. The image of the face, with its sunken cheeks, closed eyes, high forehead, and long hair and beard, emanates a powerful but calm expression. Typo logically, the head of Prince Lazar can be related to the exalted image of St. John the Baptist, represented frequently in medieval and post-medieval art.[98] Once again, an artist of the modem era imbues an image with a sense of sanctity by using visual associations with the iconographic features of religious art.

Marko Murat (1864–1944), an artist stylistically oriented toward the Secessionist movement and consequently inclined toward heavy symbolism, created the second version of this miraculous happening in 1912 or 1914.[99] His large representation (220 x 150 cm) clearly superimposes two different worlds, the real and the mystical. Murat also depicts a night scene, clearly respecting the words of the poem. In the center of the composition the body of a young man, his head inclined toward his left shoulder, assumes the pose reminiscent of a crucified figure. His reflection seen in the water of the well, shows in the foreground. Above the youth as if emerging from his body, appears the head of Prince Lazar, mysteriously lit. Surrounded by a large nimbus represented only as an outline, the head itself is so highlighted that it seems to radiate light from within. Crowned with the wreath of martyrdom, this image of Prince Lazar, as those already mentioned, assumes a Christ-like quality. In the foreground two youths, one kneeling, the other standing, witness the event. They flank the central figures while the moonlit landscape of Kosovo unfolds behind them.

Milić of Mačva (Milić Stanković) painted the third, more recent work depicting this subject in 1971.[100] The year coincided with that in which Kruševac, the capital

[94] To such a category belong, among others, the poems *Smrt Majke Jugovića*, *Ženidba kralja Vukašina*, and *Početak bune protiv dahija*; see: V. Djurić (ed.), *Antologija*, pp. 285, 181, and 651, respectively.

[95] Zora Devrnja Zimmerman, *Serbian Folk Poetry: Ancient Legends, Romantic Songs* (Columbus, Ohio: Kosovo Publishing Co., 1986), p. 195.

[96] A. Jevtić (ed.), *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 213. For the English translation, Z. Devrnja Zimmerman; *Serbian Folk Poetry*, p. 197:

"Pomoz', Bože, i oče Nikola!" / Pa zagazi u vodu kladenca, /Te izvadi iz kladenca glavu Svetitelja Srpskoga Lazara, / Pa je meće na zelenu travu,/ I zaiti vode u kondiru. / Dok se žedni vodom obrediše, / Kad su crnoj zemlji pogledali, / Nesta glave sa zelene trave, / Ode glava preko polja sama, / Sveta glava do svetoga tela, / Pripoji se kako što je' i bila."

[97] D. Medaković, *Srpski slikari XVIII-XX veka*, p. 252; M. Kolarić, Djordje Krstić, fig. on page 92; *Kosovska Bitka: mit, legenda i stvarnost*, unnumbered color plate.

[98] Svetozar Radojčić, *Staro srpsko slikarstvo* (Belgrade: Nolit, 1966), pi. 63; B. Vujović, *Umetnost obnovljene Srbije*, figs. 72, 98, 103, 110, 112 and 113.

[99] D. Medaković, *Srpski slikari XVIII–XX veka*, pp. 303–14. D. Medaković judges the painting *Obretenije Glave Kneza Lazara* unsuccessful due to its heavy dependency on literary sources of inspiration and gives the year 1912 as its date (p. 311). However, Vera Ristić indicates that this painting was signed and dated 1914 in *Marko Murat* (Belgrade: Narodni muzej, 1969), p. 21 and catalogue № 30.

[100] Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role," pp. 344–47, figure on page 24.

of Prince Lazar's state, celebrated its six hundredth anniversary. This painter, remaining true to his style, offers a surrealistic interpretation of the supernatural theme in *Obretenije glave kneza Lazara*. An opening, framed by elements of contemporary architecture—a column, ceiling and wall—appears to draw the observer into the space of the image. Beyond this two lines divide the square image. A curvature of the earth forms the horizontal line while two buildings and the severed head of Prince Lazar form the vertical. Thus, Milić achieves a clear division of the earthly and heavenly realms, each of these domains further symbolically enhanced by the artist's choice of color. He uses many shades of blue for the sky, while ochers and burnt umbra predominate the earth. Deep canyon-crevices gouge the earth. On its crust one recognizes the outline of the ground plan of a church, most likely Gračanica on the Kosovo Polje, but with modifications. However, the church building itself is turned upside-down as if swallowed by the earth. It simultaneously breaks apart as if thrown by a violet earthquake. Trees growing within the church seem to further its ruination. In the canyons and within the ruins, armed, mailed warriors gather. The church foundations also shelter a well, its stone walls fracturing and the water spilling out in jets. From the well rises the severed head of Prince Lazar. Pale orange flames form a nimbus around it; spears project from the hair. The gaunt face is certainly inspired by the portrait of Prince Lazar from his foundation the Monastery Ravanica. The skin tones, dark with some bright highlights, may have been inspired by the actual color of the preserved body of the martyred prince. The eyes, however, are not lifeless balls in the sockets. Instead of iris and pupil, the artist depicts two tiny heads, facing outward toward the world. Unlikely parts, upside-down human bodies with arms thrust forward as if plunging back into the deep well, form the beard as well. On either side of the head objects fly into space. On the right, Milić of Mačva inserts tree trunks, a theme frequently found in his other paintings; and, on the left, he places a steel dragon with bird-like heads and human hands instead of talons. Above the head of Prince Lazar is another representation of a medieval church. In this case the building is complete and possibly represents Ravanica, the foundation of Prince Lazar. It certainly symbolizes the "kingdom of heaven" chosen by Lazar before the Battle of Kosovo[101] as well as the resurrection theme implied in the poem which served as this painting's inspiration.

All three artists obviously used the poem *Obretenije glave kneza Lazara* as the starting point for their inspiration, but none approached this subject from a descriptive point of view. Each painter, Krstić, Murat, and Milić of Mačva, created his own version of the miraculous happening. One can understand these three paintings better

Finding of the Relics of Saint Lazar,
Milić from Mačva, 1989

after considering the deeper meaning of the poem Obretenije glave kneza Lazara. Commenting upon this poem, Z. D. Zimmerman offers the following insight

"In this song the historical beheading of Tsar Lazar is often equated with the political and sociological destruction of an entire people. The reunification of his severed body symbolizes the rebirth of the Serbian nation. Through a metaphorical process, Lazar's head represents the spirit of the nation, while his body stands for the nation itself.

The major miracle (the head moving itself to the body), and the secondary miracle, in which both head and body do not decay for forty years, are, along with most miracles in Serbian narratives, symbolic rewards from God for purity, goodness and obedience. Metaphorically, the miracles also express the eventual reunification, and ultimately, the preservation of the Serbian nation."[102]

In their paintings, Krstić, Murat, and Milić of Mačva seem to equate this symbolic scene with the image of the Resurrection, thus carrying visually the interpretation of the poem one step closer to the ultimate symbol of salvation, undoubtedly with a veiled reference to a nation as a whole.

In a patriarchal society one can expect to find the praise of heroes and the glorification of martyrs easily detected in literature and the visual arts. Nevertheless, both literature and art give a certain tender attention to the legendary heroines of the Kosovo poems: *Majka Jugovića* (*The Mother of the Jugovići*) and *Kosovka Devojka* (*The Maiden of Kosovo*). These two were created out of the imagination, experience, wisdom, and insight pertinent not only to the Serbian people, but relevant on a universal level to any time and place. However, when a figure or idea is lifted from the realm of the specific to the realm of the universal, one encounters certain difficulties in visualization.

[101] See above, notes 9 and 12.

[102] Z. Devrnja Zimmerman, *Serbian Epic Poetry*, pp. 205–6.

strewn, one bearing the heraldic emblem of Prince Lazar. In the far distance one sees a fallen hero, his faithful steed, and a riderless horse—all symbols of death. The somber coloring of this painting, predominantly blue and purple, reinforces the sense of tragedy.

A second female character bearing the tragic consequences of the battle also exists in Serbian poetry. She is known as *Kosovka Devojka* (*The Maiden of Kosovo*), a bride-to-be who lost her beloved at Kosovo and, with him, her future. She, too, plays a specific role in the epic poetry of the Kosovo Cycle. In the poem, Musić Stefan, she offers evidence to one of the noblemen about the losses of the Turks and the Serbs at the battle:

…when I came to the river Sitnica,
Sitnica was muddy and inundated,
it carried, my brother, horses and warriors,
Turkish hats and white turbans,
and beautiful Serbian white headgear…[113]

Furthermore, she visits the field of Kosovo after the battle and searches for her promised groom, Toplica Milan. There, she administers to the wounded, as described in the poem *Kosovka Devojka*:

She went to the plains of Kosovo,
and this young maid traversed the battle field,
the battlefield of the honorable knez,
and she was lifting the heroes from the pools of blood.
Whenever she found a hero alive,
she washed his face in cold water,
and gave him red wine, like communion
and she fed him with white bread.[114]

In the search for her betrothed, she finds a young flag-bearer, severely wounded but still alive. Through their dramatic dialogue, the epic poem informs the listener about the results of the Battle of Kosovo, the fallen heroes, and the death of the Maiden's beloved. These moving verses become almost prophetic as one regards the fate of Serbian women who would lose their men in battles for generations to come:

When the maiden heard his words,
her tears ran down her white face,
and she returned to her white home
lamenting from her white throat
"Woe to poor me, I have bad luck!
If poor I touch a green pine tree,
even that green tree would dry up!"[115]

According to scholars this dramatic poem may have been first realized visually during the Romantic period of Serbian art. The poet-painter Djura Jakšić (1832–76) wrote a poem in 1856 in which he declared that he was in the process of creating a representation of *Kosovka Devojka*. This work, if ever finished, is not known to be in existence today. Nevertheless, through Jakšić's verses, one can glimpse that now lost image:

… In it (the painting) I would have to finish
the dress of the maiden (of Kosovo),
And after that the mist in the distance
A mist which conceals much blood…[116]

From these lines it is obvious that the dress of the Maiden remained unfinished, and that the painter planned a misty distance to conceal much of the spilled blood on the field of Kosovo. In his second verse, the painter implies that this painting, when finished, would have a tearful impact upon any Serb who beheld it. The dramatic effect and the sentimental mood reflect exactly the Romantic spirit of the period.

Several other artists after Jakšić used the theme of the Maiden of Kosovo as the subject of their works, but only four of these will be included in this discussion. In 1883, a Croatian painter of French ancestry, Ferdo Quiquerez (1845–93), painted his version of *Kosovka Devojka*. One of many pseudo-historical compositions painted by Quiquerez, it documents this artist's interest in subjects inspired by events from the history of the South Slavic nations.[117] This artist planned to reproduce his painting of *Kosovka Devojka* as a color lithograph, hoping that the popular appeal of this subject and the approaching five hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in 1889 would create a large interest for the print.[118] The painting is illustrative in character and the artist exhibits a special preoccupation with ethnic costumes of a highly romanticized nature. Quiquerez based his composition, consciously or unconsciously, on the traditional iconography of the Lamentation,[119] while the epic poem directly inspired the narrative details. The painter offers the viewer a truly romantic interpretation of these epic verses, and artfully chooses the depicted moment for its dramatic quality:

… [she] gave him red wine, like communion,
and she f ed him with white bread…[120]

These lines should certainly be equated with the giving of the Last Rites to a dying person—in this case, a hero from Kosovo.

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113 Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 272 … kad ja dodjo na vodu Sitnicu, / al' Sitnica mutna i povodna, / nosi, brate, konje i junake, / turske kape i bijele čalme, / krasne srpske bijele klobuke…

114 Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 281: Ona ide na Kosovo ravno, / pa se šeće po razboju mlada, / po razboju čestitoga kneza, / te prevrće po krvi junake. / Kog junaka u životu nadje, / umiva ga ladjanom vodicom, / pričešćuje vinom crvenijem, i zalaže lebom bijelijem.

115 Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 284: Kad devojka saslušala reči, / proli suze nis bijelo lice, / ona ode svom bijelu dvoru / kukajući iz bijela grla: / "Jao, jadna, ude ti sam sreće! / Da se, jadna, za zelen bor vatim, / i on bi se zelen osušio!"

116 M. Jovanović, *Srpsko slikarstvo u doba Romantizma*, p. 251. "Tu bih moro' dovršiti / Na devojci još haljinu,/ Posle maglu i daljinu, / S maglom krvcu mlogu skriti…

117 *Enciklopedija Likovnih Umjetnosti*, s.v. "Quiquerez, Ferdo."

118 Srdjan Jokanović, "Tajna 'Kosovke Devojke'," *Ilustrovana Politika*, № 1571 (13.XII, 1988), 3, and figures on pages 27–28.

119 See above, note 84.

120 V. Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 281, verses 16 and 17: …pričešćuje vinom crvenijem / i zalaže lebom bijelijem…

More familiar is the twentieth-century version of this subject, painted in 1919 by Uroš Predić (1857–1953).[121] Obviously directly inspired by Quiquerez's painting, Predić's work shows some alterations in details, the result of a somewhat greater theatricality of representation. The horizon is lower, while the Kosovo field is flatter and covered with the bodies of men and horses. The artist skillfully describes every detail in the neo-Romantic spirit and in realistic terms. From thistle and poppies to the clothes, arms and atmospheric rendering of the distance, everything is included, even the "two golden pitchers."[122] Unfortunately, one of the latter, by its placement near the center of this pyramidal composition, seems to detract from the protagonists of the drama.

When viewed from a Western European perspective of artistic development, this romantic-realistic work is both stylistically and thematically anachronistic. Taken within its historical context, the painting is more understandable. Predić created his *Kosovka Devojka* in 1919, immediately following the conclusion of World War I, a war in which the Serbian people sustained heavy losses. Could this image be interpreted as an allegorical representation of these losses exalted through a Kosovo theme and inspired by epic poetry? This painting had tremendous popular appeal, and its reproductions could be found in the homes of many Serbian families between the two great wars.[123]

Sculptors also treated the subject of Kosovka Devojka. For Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962) the maiden was a part of a much larger iconographic project for his Vidovdan Temple. He created this low relief in 1908 in the clear stylistic terms of Central European Secessionism.[124] The heroically-treated nude body of Orlović Pavle, "the brave," as he is called in the epic poem, dominates the foreground. He is supported by the Maiden of Kosovo, who occupies the second plane and holds an elaborate vessel as her attribute. Their faces are rendered in profile, eyes apparently gazing toward the unknown. By its very nature, the medium (a relief) cannot be as explicitly detailed as a painting; nevertheless, Meštrović visually quotes another specific verse from the poem *Kosovka Devojka* when he represents Orlović Pavle;

His right arm was severed,
and his left leg up to the knee;...[125]

A Slovenian sculptor, L. Dolinar, also created a work inspired by this theme. He made this *Maiden of Kosovo* group in the very spontaneous medium of clay in 1925.[126] Being a free-standing sculpture, it is the least descriptive of all the works mentioned in this study representing this subject. Dolinar conveys a feeling of tragedy through compositional means. The seated young woman supports the prone figures of the dying hero. His head falls back while hers is gently inclined; their counter-poised faces express the pathos of the situation, reminding the beholder of the *Pieta* compositions.

In spite of differences in media, styles, and dates, all these works share a certain formal element: the basic composition of a female supporting a male figure. Through the visual association with the Lamentation scene and a sentimental subject selected from a well-known poem of the Kosovo Cycle, these and similar works were assured immediate recognition and wide popular appeal.

Although this study does not include all of the images in Serbian art depicting Kosovo themes, it still allows certain broad observations to be made. During the medieval period, including the time of the Battle of Kosovo, the visual arts almost mirrored the nature of written sources. Both dealt selectively with the reality of the physical world, a lesser concern in both literature and images. Just as there was no detailed written account of the Battle of Kosovo, there was also no visual rendition of it either.

In the post-medieval period of Serbian art, the social and political needs absolutely unique to the Serbian people dictated the emergence of the depiction of the Battle of Kosovo. During the Baroque period, historical compositions were used for didactic purposes, like religious art. During the Romantic era, however, one finds a proliferation of historical subjects in art. In Serbian painting these compositions depicting Kosovo themes were not inspired directly by history, but by a much more powerful source—the national epic poetry. In order to achieve their goal—illustrative and easily comprehended compositions—the artists used various and often traditional formal means.

A certain amount of historicity, if not history, is present either explicitly or implicitly in almost every work of art. A work might be a rendition of a prehistoric hunt as envisioned by the artist or an image so totally abstract that it is denied even a title.[127] Yet, none of these representations can belie their own periods. Within this broad concept of the historicity of images, there is a sub-category of historical compositions which, from the beginnings of recorded history, seem to have been used in a programmatic way. Their purpose, above all, was glorification, pri-

121 D. Medaković, *Srpski slikari XVIII-XX veka*, pp. 317–33; S. Jokanović, "Tajna 'Kosovke Devojke'," *Ilustrovana Politika*, № 1571 (13. XII, 1988), 3, and figure on page 3.

122 V. Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 281, line 7.

123 For example, this author recalls seeing a small replica of this painting hanging in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Janko N. Janković, a lawyer from Šabac in Serbia.

124 M. Ćurčin, et al., Ivan Meštrović (London: Williams and Norgate, 1919), p. 62, pis. I and II (Vidovdan Temple), and pi. XVIII (The Maiden of Kosovo).

125 V. Djurić, *Antologija*, p. 281: Desna mu je ruka osečena, / i lijeva noga do kolena...

126 Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role," pp. 344–47, figure on page 139. Among other representations of the Maiden of Kosovo is a drawing by Lazar Vozarević (1925–68): Mihaljčić, "The Historical Role," figure on page 71.

127 Elizabeth Frank, *Jackson Pollock* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1983), figs. 56, 57, 62–68, 70, 74, 79, 84, 85, 87, and 88.

marily of a ruler. Such a tradition can be followed from ancient Egypt almost to the art of our own time.[128] Among these historical compositions are those rarer ones commissioned to glorify through a specific event a city-state or a republic,[129] rather than a ruler.

The historical compositions in Serbian art depicting Kosovo themes were not intended primarily for glorification of the ruler. When judged by European standards, some of these historical scenes dating from the Romantic and post-Romantic periods are modest in size, often provincial in style, and even anachronistic. Created long after the given event had taken place, they are by definition pseudo-historical scenes. Due to their historical distance, they are free from the need to flatter a ruler or the state. Instead, they glorify martyred heroes, many of whom are legendary rather than real.

Through these heroes, the artists celebrate in their works, not an individual, but the personification of a nation, its courage, its ethical standards, and, finally, its history.

While the majority of historical compositions deal with national themes, the question remains as to whether or not all of these scenes should be understood in purely ethnic terms. Or, do some of these images transcend the most visible, outward signs of that which is regional or national, and reach into something that can be termed universal? Indeed, all battle scenes can qualify as universal, since they deal with the theme of human conflict. Most scenes of battle celebrate the aggressor. In scholarly treatment of these works, the question of aggression versus defense is generally overlooked, resulting in scarce attention to ethical issues in military conflict as rendered in art.

Where pictorial subject matter treats a battle as the defense of a nation rather than the aggression of one nation against another, and where it glorifies tragedies through which the spirit triumphs rather than temporal victories of arms, then historical compositions are elevated beyond mere descriptions of war to another realm. In these respects the Kosovo themes touch upon moral issues and teach more than history: they deliver a message and exalt old-fashioned virtues such as sacrifice, love, and compassion.

Miloš Obilić may have reached the presence of Sultan Murad by deceit, but it is impossible to call him an assassin. His cause was just; he fought for the freedom of his people and his faith and atoned for his act with his own life. His deed becomes purified, a symbol of the eternal struggle of good and evil, of the aggressor and the defender. Thus, the image of Miloš and Murad can be equated with the struggle between Theseus and Minotauros, the Lapiths and Centaurs, and with that of many other heroes and anti-heroes.[130] In this manner they all merge to become a concept or a prototypical image, a universal personification of a cosmic struggle between known and unknown forces.

At the time of their creation, the scenes of *Miloš Killing Murad* must have been understood first and foremost as illustrations of a historical event. With the passage of time perhaps our understanding of such images ought to be different. Now the meaning of such scenes can be interpreted first from a universal point of view and, secondly, from that view particular to a given ethnic group or individual.

The legend and reality of the Battle of Kosovo lived inseparably intertwined in the memory of the Serbian people, who were stimulated by the ever-present epic poetry. Likewise, individual Kosovo subjects existed on the walls of religious institutions, in panel paintings, on graphic leaves, and, finally, in sculpture. Yet these post-medieval images, like their medieval textual[131] and visual antecedents, remained fragmentary. In spite of some attempts a single iconographically complete cycle of Kosovo subjects was never created, which, in the final analysis, is as it should be. A national event of such historical magnitude and spiritual power ought not be confined to the physical boundaries of man-made images, but should transcend them and live eternally in the collective hearts and minds of a nation and its people.

Thomas Emmert/Wayne W.S. Vucinich (eds.),
Kosovo: Legacy of Medieval Battle, Minnesota Mediterranean an East European Monographs,
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN., 1991, pp. 227–266.

128 W. Stevenson Smith, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt*, revised with additions by William Kelly Simpson, 2nd. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 32, and figs. 13–14 (Palette of Narmar); pp. 257, 273, 357, 358, 359–61, 370, 372, and illustration 351 (Battle of Kadesh). For the vestiges of the glorification of a ruler as a military leader one can mention the case of Queen Elizabeth II: Serge Lemoine, *Silver Jubilee Year: A Complete Pictorial Record* (London: Colour Library International, 1977), photographs on pages 118 and 119.

129 For the battle scenes planned to decorate Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, see Carlo Pedretti, *Leonardo: A Study in Chronology and Style* (New York, London: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Publ., 1973): Johnson Reprint Corp., 1982, pp. 81–83, 89, 95 Charles de Tolnay, Michelangelo. Sculptor. Painter. Architect. (Princeton, London: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 20–22, fig. 366. For the Palazzo Ducale in Venice, see Alvize Zorzi, Elena Bassi, Terisio Pignati, and Camillo Semenzato, *Il Palazzo Ducale di Venezia* (Torino: ERI, 1971), pp. 109, 110, 121–23, 130, and 148, figs. 82, 83, 122, 125, 131, 135, and 136.

130 P. Grimal, *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, 1985, s.v. Theseus: 445–52; s.v. Minotaur: 292–93; s.v. Lapith: 251; s.v. Centaurs: 94–95.

131 For example, a series of lithographs illustrating episodes from the Battle of Kosovo, was prepared by Adam Stefanović, see: *Enciklopedija Likovnih Umjetnosti*, s.v. "Stefanović, Adam"; also *Ivan Meštrović*, see M. Ćurčin, Ivan Meštrović, 1919, pis. I and II, and nos. 81–87, 99–107, 117–18, and 151, among other artists.

The Feast of Herod, detail: Salome with the head of Saint John the Baptist, vault of the diaconinicon, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

III

THE BATTLE OF KOSOVO

The Kosovo Battle, Petar Lubarda, 1953
Painted during Lubarda's best period, The Battle of Kosovo is considered the crown of his poetic and mythical evocation of the past.

It is undeniable that the Battle of Kosovo was exceptionally significant not only for Serbia, but also for Europe and European Christian civilization. It is a fact that on St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan), June 15, 1389, the Serbs, without help from a single European nation, defended on Kosovo Field not only the frontiers of their own territory and the lives of their people, but, at the risk of losing their national independence, they also defended the interests and security of Christian Europe. In the conflict of two rival civilizations, the Muslim and the Christian, the Serbs checked the wave of the Ottoman invasion, interposed themselves as a wall between the Turks and Europe, and enabled Europe to make preparations for its own defense. It is questionable whether the history of Europe would have been the same without the Battle of Kosovo and the sacrifice of the Serbian nation.

Prologue to Kosovo: The Era of Prince Lazar

Thomas A. Emmert

There is a lovely stone monastery in a lonely, wooded river valley of Serbia about halfway between the northern border with Hungary and the southern border with Greece. Today, like 603 years ago, it is not terribly convenient to get to this place called Ravanica. A train from Belgrade disgorges its monastic pilgrims in the small town of Ćuprija on the banks of the Morava River. In Roman times the site of this town was occupied by a fortified civil settlement called Horeum; and in the early medieval period the town gained the name Ravno or flat, and it was here in 1189 that envoys of the Serbian ruler Stefan Nemanja and the German Emperor Frederick Barbarossa met as the German emperor and his forces passed through the area on their way to the Third Crusade. In the second half of the 17th century the town acquired its present name of Ćuprija when Grand Vizier Mehmed Pasha Ćuprilović had a bridge (ćuprija in Turkish) built across the Morava on the site of the former Roman bridge. Ćuprija was the center of an administrative district during Ottoman times.

Church of the Ascension of Christ (Holy Savior),
Ravanica Monastery

It is the spring of 1390 and the slow, mournful procession is carrying the perfectly preserved body of Lazar Hrebeljanović, the Serbian prince who had been killed by the Ottoman Turks the previous summer during a battle on the Field of Kosovo. Myrrh emanates from the holy remains.

Today, if you are lucky, you may find a private car to take you along the dusty road some 11 kilometers to the Monastery of Ravanica. If not, the walk is long enough to serve as a kind of time machine in which you can begin to imagine the procession that moved along the same dusty road more than 600 years ago.

The monastery with its fortifications and church was built by Prince Lazar only a short time before the battle of 1389. The church was one of the first examples of a new architectural style that would continue to enrich the countryside of Serbia for the next half century. Here the holy relics of Saint Lazar of Serbia would rest for some 300 years through Ottoman conquest and subsequent wars, famine, plague, and numerous fires.

The principality of Lazar Hrebeljanović represented only a relatively small part of the medieval state of Serbia, which achieved its greatest territorial extent in the early part of the 14th century. A little more than 30 years before the Battle of Kosovo, Serbia was a powerful empire which controlled almost two-thirds of the Balkan peninsula and threatened to conquer Byzantium itself. It had begun its quest for independence and Balkan power in the mercurial atmosphere of the late 12th century. Throughout most of that century the Serbian leaders, or great župans as they were called, had been forced to recognize the suzerainty of the Byzantine Empire. After 1180, however, upon the death of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Comnenus, the relatively small territory of Rascia (the eastern Serbian lands) began to expand into the land surrounding it, including today's Montenegro and Kosovo. Under the rule of Stefan Nemanja, the founder of a new dynasty for Serbia, this new state continued to struggle with the Byzantine Empire and to recognize its authority, but the dominance of the Greeks in this region of the Balkans was clearly over. Under the leadership of Stefan Nemanja's son, Stefan the First Crowned (1196–1217), Serbia became an independent kingdom with an autocephalous Church.

Stefan received his crown from a papal legate in 1217. The autocephalous archbishopric, on the other hand, was established with the blessing of the Byzantine emperor, who at the time was in exile in Nicaea. Serbia thus found herself as a pawn and a willing benefactor in the continuing rivalry between Constantinople and Rome. The establishment of a kingdom and an independent Church gave

Prince Lazar, detail from the donors' composition, naos, west wall, Ravanica, 1385–1387. Photo: Z. Jovanović.

Donors' Composition from Ravanica, drawing by B. Živković

the land a certain legitimacy in the eyes of other European states, and it encouraged within Serbia a new respect for the authority of the Nemanjić dynasty. According to the political ideology of the Byzantine world, the ideal state achieved a working harmony between the two heads of the body politic, the sacred and the secular. Throughout the growth and decline of the Serbian medieval state, the Serbian Church accepted this responsibility and became a powerful force, helping to build and then preserve a sense of Serbian historical consciousness.

These important developments encouraged a solid foundation for the internal growth and outward expansion that occurred in Serbia during the 13th century. This beginning period of Serbia's ascendancy was a particularly volatile time in the Balkan peninsula. With the Fourth Crusade in 1204 and the conquest of Constantinople by Western Christians, Serbia found itself surrounded by a number of new hostile states. Leadership in the region continually changed hands, and the struggle for dominance was only complicated by the invasion of the Mongols in 1241 and the reconquest of Constantinople by the Greeks in 1261.

Serbia managed to survive the turbulent conflicts of the first part of the century and found itself taking control in the peninsula by the end of the century. Under the rule of Stefan Uroš II Milutin (1282–1321) Serbia advanced into northern Macedonia. His son, Stefan Uroš III Dečanski (1321–1331), extended Serbian dominion over most of the Vardar Valley; and his grandson, Stefan Dušan, pushed his armies all the way to the Gulf of Corinth. Serbia's greatest success in territorial aggrandizement was largely due to the effort and vision of Dušan. He was an ambitious leader who planned to conquer all of Byzantium and to establish a Serbo-Greek Empire in the spirit and tradition of the Byzantine Empire. The entire course of his 25 years as king and emperor (1331–1355) was dominated by this grandiose objective.[1]

Dušan's era was the grand moment in Serbian history. He patterned his court after Byzantium, introduced an efficient system of administration, codified the law, developed communications, and brought in experts from all over Europe to help advance the state. In 1346 he proclaimed himself emperor of the Serbs and Greeks, of Bulgars and Albanians. Crowned by the archbishop of Peć, he then raised

[1] Emperor Dušan's reign in Serbia is discussed in the following works: T. Florinskii, *Iuzhnye Slaviane i Vizantiia vo vtoroi chetverti XIV v.* (Petrograd, 1862); S. Novaković, *Srbi i Turci XIV i XV veka* (Belgrade, 1933), pp. 103–119; Konstantin Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, trans. J. Radonić, I (Belgrade, 1952), pp. 211, 236; *Istorija Naroda Jugoslavije*, I (Belgrade, 1953), pp. 353–365; G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1957), pp. 450, 476; G. Ostrogorski, *Istorija Vizantije* (Belgrade, 1969), pp. 465–496; John V. A. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1987), pp. 286–337.

Emperor Uroš V Nemanjić and King Vukašin Mrnjavčević,
narthex, north wall, Church of Saint Nicholas, Psača, 1365–1371

King Marko Mrnjavčević,
west facade, Church of the Holy Archangels, Prilep, ca. 1372

the archbishop to the rank of patriarch. By 1355 he had been successful enough to consider a move against Constantinople itself with the idea of supplanting the Greek Empire with a Serbo-Greek hybrid. However, he died on his way to the imperial city.

His death was a disaster for the Balkans. Long before anyone else, he had begun to understand the potential danger posed by the presence at his southern border of a new force: the Ottoman Turks. In 1354 he sent his emissaries to Pope Innocent IV in Avignon with the request that he be named the captain of a crusade against the Ottomans.

He asked the pope to send his legates to Serbia in order to arrange the agreement. In exchange for the pope's support Dušan was prepared to recognize the pope as father of Christendom, successor of Peter, and representative of Christ; he also vowed to promote peace and friendly intercourse between the Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox in his realm. The pope was interested, but then Hungary, supposedly the defender of Western Christianity in the Balkans, attacked Serbia. Shortly after, the negotiations between Rome and Serbia ended.

The Serbian Empire fell apart quite quickly.[2] During the years of the reign of the last Nemanjić emperor, Uroš V, the authority which the Nemanjić dynasty represented was completely undermined by those powerful lords who succeeded in governing their territories quite independently of their emperor. In the 1360s the center of power in Serbia gravitated first to the western territories of Vojislav Vojinović, and after his death in 1363 to Macedonia and the lands of Jovan Uglješa and, more importantly, his brother, Vukašin.

Vukašin became king of Serbia and co-ruler with king Uroš V. Uroš, who was childless and had no success in maintaining central authority in the short-lived Serbian Empire, apparently recognized in Vukašin his own successor. Vukašin, in turn, designated his son, Marko, as "young king," in anticipation of the foundation of a new dynasty. By 1371, the erosion of Uroš' power throughout the empire was complete, and formally Vukašin was the only real authority. He and his brother, Despot Jovan Uglješa, governed an enor-

[2] See Rade Mihaljčić's excellent study of the collapse of the Serbian state after the death of Dušan: *Kraj srpskog carstva* (Belgrade, 1975).

mous territory in Macedonia and Thrace and certainly represented the strongest Christian power in the Balkans. But the process of feudalization in Dušan's former empire had progressed long enough so that few important territorial lords recognized the authority of Vukašin. And the two most prominent Serbian lords north of Macedonia, Lazar Hrebeljanović and Nikola Altomanović, demonstrated no loyalty to the king. Whether time would have favored a restoration of the Serbian state by Vukašin and his son Marko can never be known. In September 1371 the king and his brother died while defending Uglješa's territories against the Ottomans on the river Marica. A short time later king Uroš died, and in the 18 years which separated his death from the Battle of Kosovo the struggle for territorial aggrandizement continued among the nobility in Serbia.

With Macedonia in Ottoman hands, the center of this struggle moved north and northwest to the territories of Nikola Altomanović, Lazar Hrebeljanović, and Tvrtko Kotromanić. Altomanović began his rise to prominence after the death of his uncle, Vojislav Vojinović. His conquest of Vojinović's lands started in 1367, and within a year his province stretched from Rudnik to Kosovo and the sea. He controlled most of the river basin of the Drina, governed Dračevica, Konavlje, and Trebinje, and for a shorter time occupied the coastal region from the Bay of Cattaro to Ston; excepting, of course, the territorial ambitions of the Serbian Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović and the Bosnian Ban Tvrtko Kotromanić. Lazar lost the vital mining center of Rudnik to Nikola sometime at the end of 1371 or the beginning of 1372, and was involved in frequent border skirmishes with him. Tvrtko had watched Altomanović establish himself along Bosnia's entire eastern border and now was especially threatened in those areas of Hum which he held. A mutual desire to eliminate this menace from their borders and to acquire new territories in the process brought Lazar and Tvrtko together.

Their campaign against Altomanović took place in the autumn of 1373 with assistance from the king of Hungary; and in a very short time Altomanović was defeated, captured, and blinded. The elimination of Altomanović from the competition for territory and authority in post-Nemanja Serbia left only Prince Lazar and Ban Tvrtko as the most powerful contenders. Tvrtko, a distant relative of the Nemanjić family, was in control of enough Serbian territory by 1377 to justify (at least in his mind) his coronation as "king of Serbia, Bosnia, the Hinterland, and the western lands."[3] Venice, Dubrovnik, and even Hungary recognized Tvrtko as "rex Rassie," and it appears that Prince Lazar and his son-in-law, Vuk Branković, at least approved of Tvrtko's coronation. Whether they actually accepted him as their lord and king, however, seems highly unlikely. Regardless of Tvrtko's pretensions to the Serbian throne, it was really Prince Lazar who was quickly becoming the dominant figure in post-Nemanja Serbia. If his state eventually represented the only hope in the peninsula in the struggle against the Ottomans, it was not an unrealistic hope given the increasing strength and prestige of the principality and its prince. Lazar was setting the stage for the restoration of central authority in Serbia, and his court at Kruševac was becoming a lively intellectual and artistic center in the Balkans.

Lazar Hrebeljanović, the martyr of Kosovo, became independent during those years in which the Mrnjavčević brothers dominated the political scene in Serbia. Unfortunately, very little is known about his early life. His *baština* (hereditary land holding) was probably located near his birthplace of Prilepac, which was east of Kosovo in the vicinity of the important mining center of Novo Brdo. Pribac, his father, was a logothete at the court of Emperor Dušan, and medieval sources say that it was at Dušan's court that Lazar was educated.

He began his career with a low-ranking noble title in the Serbia of Emperor Dušan.[4] By 1362 he appeared to be a man of some influence at the court of Emperor Uroš,[5] and in 1371 he is referred to for the first time in extant sources as "prince."[6] It is not known when Emperor Uroš awarded Lazar the title of prince; but it seems quite clear that, in spite of some territorial acquisitions following the Marica Battle, Lazar's real success only began after Altomanović's defeat.[7]

The victory over Altomanović allowed Lazar to reconquer Rudnik, which Altomanović had taken shortly after the battle on the Marica, and to seize all the territory in the

[3] For a complete discussion of Tvrtko's claim to the Serbian throne, see Ćirković, *Sugubi venac, Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta*, VIII, №1 (1964), pp. 343–369; M. Dinić, "O krunisanju Tvrtka I za kralja," *Glas*, CXLVII (1932), pp. 133–145; S. Ćirković, *Istorija srednjevekovne Srbije*, pp. 135–140; Rade Mihaljčić, *Lazar Hrebeljanović*, pp. 60–65.

[4] He is referred to as *stavilac* in a charter of July 15, 1363, in which Uroš confirms an exchange of territory between Nikola Altomanović and Čelnik Musa. *Čelnik* was a noble title between the ranks of *sluga* and *stavilac*. See A. Solovjev, *Odabrani spomenici srpskog prava* (Belgrade, 1926), pp. 166f.

[5] So little is known about the early years of Lazar's life that it is necessary to make inferences from the few sources that do exist. In August of 1362, during peace negotiations between Dubrovnik and Serbia, the senate of Dubrovnik singled out Lazar for a gift of three bolts of cloth. That was a considerable honor, and it would seem to indicate that Lazar had some influence in the Serbia of Emperor Uroš.

[6] On April 22, 1371, a dispute was heard before a court in Dubrovnik between Maroje de Volcigna, lessee of Prince Lazar's tariff in the mining center of Rudnik, and Bogavcet Pribojević Okruljic. Lazar is referred to as comes Lacarus or Prince Lazar. See Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, pp. 1, 250, and fn. 77. It was customary for Serbian rulers—especially later during the time of the despotate—to lease the privilege of collecting tariffs and taxes. As in the case of Maroje de Volcigna, these leases were sold primarily to citizens of Dubrovnik. See Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, II, p. 431.

[7] Orbini says that after the death of the Mrnjavčević brothers, Lazar seized Priština, Novo Brdo, and many other nearby places. See Orbini, "Il regno," p. 278; Orbini, "Kraljevstvo," p. 54. Since his *baština* was located in the vicinity of Novo Brdo, it may be that Lazar simply reclaimed certain areas which had been lost sometime earlier. He was never in control of Priština, however, since it was occupied by Vuk Branković after the Marica Battle.

Church of Stephen the Protomartyr, known as Lazarica,
endowment of Prince Lazar in Kruševac

area of the Western Morava River, including the town of Užice. He did have to pay for his victory over Nikola by surrendering his independence to King Louis of Hungary and temporarily ending his expansion to the north, but his relationship to King Louis was no real obstacle to his authority in Serbia.

Lazar devoted a great effort in the early years of the 1370s to consolidating his authority in the northern regions of Serbia and to creating the structure of a strong and unified principality. His decision to build his court city in the north, away from the heartland of Nemanjić Serbia, was a necessary one. After the battle on the Marica almost everything south and east of Kosovo was under Ottoman authority. His new court in Kruševac, however, was a comfortable distance from the Ottomans. It was located at the mouth of the Rasina River where it enters the Western Morava about 14 kilometers west of the Southern Morava; and, although it was not far from the important Belgrade-Constantinople highway, it was still quite isolated. Lazar built his fortress above an already existing settlement. The exact date of its construction is impossible to determine, but it was begun sometime after 1371, and by 1377 it was already an established center.[8]

This was the "Morava period" of Serbian art and architecture.[9] Lazar dotted his lands with churches and monasteries and made them financially strong by showering them with rich landed estates. Ravanica was given more land (148 villages) than any monastery during the entire era of the Nemanjić.[10]

The growing political and cultural strength of Lazar' s principality certainly depended on adequate economic resources. The two most important mineral centers in Serbia (Rudnik and Novo Brdo) were both under Lazar' s jurisdic-

[8] Momčilo Spremić, "Kruševac u XIV i XV veku," *Kruševac kroz vekove* (Kruševac, 1972), pp. 9f. Cf. Buda Ilić, *Istorija Kruševca, 1371–1941* (Kruševac, 1971), pp. 22–26.

[9] Concerning the Monastery of Ravanica, see Branislav Vulović, *Ravanica* (Belgrade, 1966). See also Vojislav Djurić, *Moravsko slikarstvo* (Belgrade, 1968), and Mirjana Ljubinković, *Ravanica* (Belgrade, 1966).

[10] *Istorija Naroda Jugoslavije*, I, pp. 416.

tion; and it was the wealth of these mines which created the economic basis of his power. Ravanica alone was given 150 liters of silver each year by Prince Lazar.[11]

Lazar' s success, however, was not due only to territorial aggrandizement and economic power. The support of the Serbian Church was a most essential ingredient in Lazar' s efforts to end the schism with Byzantium. That schism had existed since 1346, when Byzantium placed Serbia under anathema after the emperor of Serbia had proclaimed an independent patriarchate in Serbia. Lazar' s lands continued to bear the sting of that anathema. In 1375, however, due to the efforts of Prince Lazar and Isaiah, the Serbian prior of the Russian Monastery of Saint Panteleimon on Mount Athos, the schism was ended and Byzantium formally recognized the legality of the Serbian patriarchate. This was perhaps Lazar' s most important accomplishment during the 1370's, and in itself reserved for him an honored place among his own contemporaries and in history.

As one of the last Christian refuges in the Balkans, Lazar' s principality began to attract large numbers of priests, monks, writers, architects, and artists from Bulgarian, Greek, and southern Serbian areas, which were already subject to the Ottomans. Travelers report as late as the early 14th century that the area had been empty land, unsettled, with thick forests. After 1371, however, thousands made their way there, including many monks from Mount Athos. They built churches and monasteries and reformed the liturgy. A new era of culture began to flourish in Serbia, which was to reach its fullest expression during the reign of Lazar' s son, Despot Stefan Lazarević.

There is some disagreement concerning the exact circumstances which led to the reconciliation. The monk Isaiah was a most influential figure at the court of Prince Lazar; he was called on for delicate diplomatic missions. Isaiah' s biographer, who was also a monk on Mount Athos, says that the entire undertaking was in Isaiah' s hands.[12] Constantine the Philosopher, however, who wrote a biography of Lazar' s son in about 1431, attributes the successful reconciliation directly to Prince Lazar. He says that once Lazar had consolidated his authority throughout the principality, the matter of rapprochement between Churches became his chief concern.[13]

In the anonymous biography of Patriarch Sava IV, written in the late 1370s, both Lazar and Isaiah are portrayed as being intimately involved in bringing about reconciliation.[14] The writer says that Isaiah came to Lazar in Serbia to discuss the Church' s problems and to encourage the prince to work for a settlement with Byzantium. Lazar responded by sending Isaiah to Patriarch Sava in Peć, who opposed the idea at first but eventually agreed to support it. In the end, the patriarch himself actually asked Isaiah to go to Constantinople to arrange the agreement. Isaiah returned to Lazar' s court, where he was given everything he needed for the trip. He chose his associates for the mission and then "reported to the whole council, to the old Empress Jelisaveta, and to all the nobles."[15]

The participation of the council and nobility in the negotiations is also mentioned in the biography of Patriarch Jefrem, Sava' s successor. Bishop Marko, the author of this biography written during the first decade of the 15th century, says that Lazar could not bear to see the schism continue between the Churches and, therefore, after consultation with his council and nobility, chose Isaiah and a priest named Nicodemus to go to Constantinople to arrange the peace.[16]

It is clear that no matter how important a role Isaiah may have played in the negotiations which finally resulted in peace, there could have been no agreement without Lazar' s participation in this matter. The support of secular authority was a necessary prerequisite to any successful agreement. Moreover, Lazar himself stood to gain from a rapprochement between the Churches. The ideal ruler in medieval Serbia was expected to demonstrate deep concern for the religious life of his people. Certainly, Lazar' s efforts toward reconciliation with Byzantium would contribute substantially to his own prestige among his subjects.

According to Patriarch Sava' s biographer, the negotiations in Constantinople were successful and the Greeks recognized the legality of the Serbian patriarchate. There was only one condition to the agreement. If at any time the Serbs succeeded in conquering any Greek territory again, they were prohibited from replacing Greek metropolitans with Serbs as Dušan had done. As a sign of the agreement, the Byzantine Patriarch Philotheos, sent two representatives to Serbia who celebrated a service of unification in the Church of the Holy Archangels near Prizren and, over the grave of Emperor Dušan in that church, proclaimed the removal of the anathema of Serbia and peace between the Churches.[17]

Patriarch Sava IV died the same year that this peace was concluded, and the choice of his successor did not prove to be a simple matter. Prince Lazar and Djuradj Balšić assembled a council in Peć in October 1375 to elect a new patriarch. The proceedings of that council clearly mirrored the general political disunity in Serbia. Each important territo-

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11 Mihailo Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji i Bosni*, II (Belgrade, 1962), p. 40.

12 N. Dučić, "Starine Hilandarske," *Glasnik srpskog učenog društva*, LVI (1884), pp. 70–77.

13 V. Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof i njegov život Stefana Lazarevića, despota srpskoga," *Glasnik srpskog učenog društva*, XLII (1875), pp. 258f.

14 Nikola Radojčić, *Srpski državni sabori u srednjem veku* (Belgrade, 1940), p. 161.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 162.

16 *Ibid.*

17 Djoko Slijepčević, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve* (Münich, 1962), pp. 188f.

rial lord sought to elect a man from his own territory who would support his own particular interests. They finally chose an elderly ascetic named Jefrem, who represented absolutely no threat to any of the individual lords and apparently had the support of the Byzantine and Serbian patriarchates. Nevertheless, Jefrem[18] had accepted the position very reluctantly, and in 1379 he returned to his less demanding life as a monk.

Lazar' s role in this final chapter of rapprochement between the Byzantine and Serbian Churches assured him the support of the Church and its recognition of him as the ruler of Serbia after 1375 and the successor to the tradition of the Nemanjić. Certainly, some of the evidence for the Church' s relationship with Lazar comes from the panegyrics of the post-Kosovo period, which did not hesitate to embellish the details of Lazar' s life and work; nevertheless, there is little reason to doubt that the Church did recognize him as the autocrat of Serbia in the decade preceding the Battle of Kosovo.[19]

Whether that recognition extended beyond the circle of the Church, however, is a more difficult question. Lazar did identify himself as autocrat of Serbia in several charters. Not long after a successful military adventure in 1379 to the north against Radič Branković, the lord of Braničevo and Kosovo, Lazar issued a charter in which he referred to himself as "Stefan Prince Lazar, pious and autocratic lord of Serbia and the Danubian lands."[20] In still another charter he wrote: "I, pious Prince Lazar, autocrat of all Serbian lands."[21] But Lazar was not the only territorial lord to identify himself as "autocrat." After the collapse of the empire, various individuals used the term in order to express the fact that they considered themselves independent. And the name "Stefan," although a symbol of state authority during the time of the Nemanjić, was also adopted by Tvrtko when he proclaimed himself king of Serbia and Bosnia.

We may also ask whether Lazar would have retained the modest title of prince if his pretensions had been more grandiose or his authority more widely recognized. The reality of the political situation in Serbia was that there were many Serbian territories which were not under his authority. The Balšići ruled in Zeta; Vuk Branković was lord of Kosovo and the surrounding regions; and King Tvrtko maintained his control over a significant amount of Serbian territory. The very fact that Tvrtko and Lazar remained friends and allies would seem to indicate that Lazar represented no threat to Tvrtko's own pretensions. Dubrovnik never referred to Lazar as prince of Serbia, but only as comes Lacarus or simply Lacaro.

This is not to deny the position that Lazar began to enjoy in the decade before Kosovo. Although his principality had less than one-fourth of the territory of Dušan's empire, he was still the most powerful of those Serbian lords who were not subject to the Ottomans. He united the central regions of Serbia with those northern provinces of Mačva, Kučevo, and Braničevo, which the Nemanjići had held only briefly. He enjoyed the homage of a number of vassals on his territory, and his lands became a haven for those fleeing the Ottomans in the south. As the Ottoman threat increased, he sought alliances with lords in neighboring territories by offering his own daughters in marriage. His sons-in-law included Nikola Gorjanski, the ban of Mačva; Djuradj Stracimirović Balšić, lord of Zeta after 1385; Vuk Branković; and Alexander, the son of Ivan Šišman, emperor of Bulgaria. It was this familial relationship that led Jireček to argue that

Prince Lazar and Princess Milica,
narthex, Ljubostinja, ca. 1405, photo: Z. Jovanović

[18] Not only was Jefrem supported by Constantinople, but it is very probable that the imperial delegates to the council in Peć were instrumental in securing his election. The Byzantine Church hoped to nurture its own interests in Serbia with an ally on the patriarchal throne. See Dimitrije Bogdanović, "Izmirenje srpske i vizantijske crkve," *O knezu Lazaru* (Belgrade, 1975), pp. 81–90. Cf. also Radojčić, *Srpski državni sabori*, pp. 162–165; Slijepčević, *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve*, pp. 190ff.

[19] See Vladimir Mošin, "Samodržavni Stefan Knez Lazar i tradicija Nemanjićkog suvereniteta od Marice do Kosova," *O knezu Lazaru*, pp. 13–41. Mošin takes issue with Jireček, who argued that Lazar was never the autocrat of all Serbia but that he was the head of a family alliance whose members included Vuk Branković and Djuradj Stracimirović Balšić. Cf. Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, I, p. 322.

[20] Franjo Miklosich, *Monumenta Serbica specantia historiam Serbiae, Bosnae, Ragusi* (Graz, 1964), p. 195.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 194.

although Lazar was not the autocrat of all Serbia, he was the head of a family alliance.[22]

The precise nature of the relationship within this alliance is not easy to determine. There is little question about Balšić's independence. In a charter of 1386 he proclaimed: "I, Balšić in Christ the Lord, Djuradj, pious and autocratic lord of the lands of Zeta and the coast."[23] Branković's independence is less obvious and more difficult to determine. By 1379, he was in control of extensive territory which included Priština, Vučitrn, Trepča, Zvečan, Peć, Prizren, Skoplje, and Sjenica.[24] Nevertheless, he never referred to himself as autocrat or autocratic lord as did Lazar and Djuradj. A number of scholars have argued on the basis of certain fragmentary evidence that Vuk Branković was not independent at all but rather recognized Lazar as his sovereign.[25] One might assume that this is a clear indication of some type of subordinate relationship. Understood in a larger context, however, it may be nothing more than an expression of Vuk's respect for his father-in-law—the *pater familias*, as Jireček would have it.

Evidence from sources outside of Serbian territory would seem to corroborate the conclusion that Lazar was not recognized (at least outside the narrow circle of the Serbian Church) as autocrat of all Serbia. When the Republic of Dubrovnik solicited guarantees of its old trade agreements with Serbia,[26] it did so not only with Lazar but also with Djuradj Stracimirović Balšić and with Vuk Branković.[27] If Lazar had been recognized by the republic as sovereign of Serbia, only he would have confirmed these trade agreements.

In 1388 a similar situation occurred. Every year Serbian monks from the Monastery of the Archangels in Jerusalem came to Dubrovnik to receive the Tribute of Ston'a sum of 500 perpers which had been presented by the republic to these monks each Easter since 1333. It was the custom for Dušan, and later Uroš, to provide Dubrovnik with a letter of faith on behalf of these monks. In 1388, however, Lazar, Vuk, and Djuradj all presented individual letters of faith to Dubrovnik in which they requested prompt payment of the tribute to the travelers from Jerusalem.[28] Although Lazar may have been the strongest territorial lord in the remnants of imperial territory, it appears his sovereignty was largely confined to the lands of his own principality and perhaps to those of his son-in-law, Vuk Branković.

Whatever the question of Lazar's authority, however, everything changed with the tragic conflict on Kosovo in June 1389. Serbia was not very strong when the attack came. She lost her prince and the flower of her nobility in the battle; and the following year Lazar's widow had to accept a tribute relationship with the Ottomans. Conscious of the need to combat an understandable pessimism of their people, Serbian monks wrote eulogies, liturgical and hagiographic works in which they celebrated the martyrdom of their prince and interpreted the battle and the eventual loss of independence as a kind of martyrdom for the whole Serbian people, a martyrdom expected by God and freely accepted by those who died. Having chosen them as the "new Israel," God would eventually return Serbia to them. A cult of the martyred prince was encouraged by these writings. It joined the other two cults of the Serbs, one devoted to Stefan Nemanjić, who founded the first unified Serbian state in the late 12th century, and the other to his brother, Sava, who established the first autocephalous Serbian Church in the early years of the 13th century. Like these two, Lazar would become a saint in the Serbian Church.[29]

Others believe that there was probably a formal canonization and that the rite of canonization took place at the time that Lazar's remains were moved from Priština to Ravanica sometime in 1390 or 1391. In the Narration on Prince Lazar by Patriarch Danilo III we read that the decision to transfer the relics was made by Lazar's children. Stefan and his brother Vuk pointed out to their mother that it was shameful that the relics of their father were not preserved in the Church of Ravanica. Milica granted their request, and eventually the transference was carried out with the blessing and under the direction of the hierarchy of the Serbian Church.[30]

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22 Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, p. 322.

23 Miklosich, *Monumenta Serbica*, p. 203.

24 See the important study by M. Dinić, "Oblast Brankovića," *Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor*, XXVI, № 1–2 (1960), pp. 5–29. Our knowledge of Vuk's background is quite superior to our knowledge of Lazar's. His grandfather was Vojvoda Mladen, a contemporary of King Stefan Dečanski and Emperor Dušan. Vuk's father was *sevastokrator* Branko Mladenović, Dušan's representative in Ohrid. Branko died in 1365, leaving behind three sons: Caesar Grgur, Vuk, and Roman, a monk in the Serbian Monastery of Hilandar on Mount Athos. During the last years of Uroš' reign, it appears that the territory governed by Grgur and Vuk was limited to their *baština* in Drenica, a region on the western rim of Kosovo. It was only after the decisive victory of the Ottomans over the Mrnjavčević brothers in 1371, and less than three months later, that Vuk began to spread out from his *baština* at the expense of his neighbors. He took Sjenica, Zvečan, and part of the Lim River valley after Nikola Altomanović's defeat; and Prizren, which was occupied by the Balšići, after Vukašin's death, most likely fell to Vuk upon the death of Djuradj II Balšić in 1378.

25 See Vladimir Mošin, "Knez Lazar—Samodržac," *Bagdala*, CXLVII–CXLVIII (June-July, 1971), p. 7; Mošin, "Samodržavni Stefan Knez Lazar," pp. 39–41; and Sergije Dimitrijević, *Novac Kneza Lazara* (Kruševac, 1971), pp. 591, "Novac kneza Lazara u odnosu na novac drugih oblasnih gospodara," *O knezu Lazaru*, pp. 185–219.

26 Lj. Stojanović, "Stare srpske povelje i pisma," *Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda*, XIX (1929), pp. 136f. "By the grace of God, I gospodin Vuk Branković write in testimony to all how the government of Dubrovnik sent their envoys—Nikola Gundulić and Jakov Bavželić—to my Lord Prince..."

27 Lj. Stojanović, "Stare srpske povelje i pisma," *Zbornik za istoriju, jezik i književnost srpskog naroda*, XIX (1929), pp. 110f., 120–123, 136–139.

28 *Ibid*, pp. 111,123,139f.

29 I am largely indebted to the work of my colleague, Rade Mihaljčić, and his study *Lazar Hrebeljanović: istorija, kult, predanje* (Belgrade, 1984), pp. 141–157, for his careful analysis of questions pertaining to Lazar's canonization.

30 See Mihaljčić: "Lazar," pp. 151 f.

Map of Serbia at the Eve of the Battle of Kosovo (1372–1395)

Unfortunately, the patriarch gives no information about any ceremony of canonization. Rade Mihaljčić has argued that there are a number of things, however, which suggest that there probably was a formal canonization: first of all, Patriarch Danilo who organized the transference of Lazar's remains was familiar with the rite of canonization which was used for Simeon Nemanja; secondly, the most important heads of the Serbian Church participated in the transference; and, thirdly, several contemporary sources report that Lazar's body was in perfect condition when it was exhumed in Priština and that it exuded the fragrance of myrrh. An incorruptible body and the emanation of myrrh were often seen as clear signs of saintliness. Finally, Mihaljčić points out that the relatively large number of cult texts devoted to Lazar, as well as their early appearance shortly after the transference of the prince's relics, suggest an organized cult rather than one which developed spontaneously.[31]

Lazar was the first secular figure to become a saint in Serbia after 200 years of the Nemanjić.[32] This perhaps helps us to understand the concern of his eulogists to emphasize the family ties between Lazar and the "saintly-born" dynasty of the Nemanjić. If Prince Lazar could be viewed as part of a continuous line of authority that had begun with the Nemanjić and that would continue after Lazar, it might be possible to overcome the sense of disorder and chaos which had characterized the troubled years 1355–1389. These writers wanted to see their own society as an integral part of the Nemanjić tradition. In giving legitimacy to Lazar, they sought to identify Lazar's Serbia and Nemanjić Serbia as one and the same entity.

Lazar's martyrdom on Kosovo was Serbia's Golgotha, but his second burial in Ravanica and his canonization reminded the faithful of the hope of resurrection. One day Serbia would be whole again. The agony of defeat became the symbol of the purest victory.

It appears that Lazar became a saint soon after his martyrdom on Kosovo. Some have suggested that the very act of martyrdom itself guaranteed him sainthood, and thus a spontaneous cult emerged among the survivors of Kosovo.

Refer to the works by Thomas Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha, Kosovo 1389*, East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, New York, NY., 1990; and Thomas Emmert/Wayne W.S. Vucinich (eds.), *Kosovo: Legacy of Medieval Battle*, Minnesota Mediterranean an East European Monographs, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN., 1991.

Kosovo, ed. B.W.R. Jenkins,
Serbian Western American Diocese 1992, pp. 39–45.

31 *Ibid*, pp. 153–156.
32 *Ibid*., p. 146.

The Kosovo Field, June 15, 1389

Sima M. Ćirković

The Kosovo battle can be classified among those events which, in the true sense of the word, have been fixed in people's memories. Participants and contemporaries, as well as their heirs, talked about the great bloodshed. Just a small part of the story, which had been told and sung, remained in written form and was preserved for future generations. That preserved part forms a long and rich tradition, composed of numerous and various genres and forms of presentation, such as echoes in contemporary letters, historical narratives and detailed epic poems. Taken all together, the texts represent a very important testimony to the Kosovo clash, to the power and duration of the tradition. But, taken in such a way, they cannot be used to establish the circumstances under which the battle took place, or to define its most important moments. Among all these sources, there are those—not just a few—which were created very late, with very poor information, there are legendary ones also and additionally those in which we can recognize the color of later times experience.

Six weeks after the battle, the Venetians sent word to Murad's heir Bayezid mentioning that "various matters, which cannot be easily believed" had been circulating about the war between his late father and Prince Lazar. From some other sources, we also get to know that, the letters and rumors on the Kosovo battle were not all correct and in agreement. These differences were even greater in testimonies written later. The Byzantine historian Laonik Halkokondil, a few decades after the battle, testified expressly that "the Greeks" i.e. Christians, had one, and the Turks—another version of the death of Murad. In the Ottoman version, Murad had been killed when he had already won the battle.

The disparity between the reports and stories was not a result of the inadequacy of technical means at the end of 14th century, but because the rumors reflected the attitudes of some of the participants, because they had conveyed only a part of what had happened, and because the majority of the reports, from the very beginning, were colored by partisan attitudes. In later representations, the versions from the standpoint of later experience were expressed fully, but different to those from 1389. Only after 1459, when the Serbian state had collapsed, was it possible to attach to the Kosovo battle, the importance of a vital turning point, and add the conviction of "failure of the Serbian empire."

It was inevitable this change in the traditions of the Kosovo battle, as well as their transformation under the influence of living circumstances and the ideas of further generations, modified by their particular apprehension of values. The recognition of the ideas of a later period is a necessary prerogative for approaching a realistic picture of the battle as a great and important event. A critical approach to the Kosovo battle must be based on a division between well informed and truthful, and less reliable and legendary sources. But critical research must not underestimate of exclude narrations from a later period, as they can throw light on the mentality of the times, in which they were created, and also because they are very important for preserving a people's consciousness of its own history.

It is natural that scholars and the general public are interested primarily in the concrete circumstances, in which the Serbs and Turks clashed, but it is also quite natural to preserve and interest in the changes within the tradition. It is interesting to search for the personality of a soldier who killed the Ottoman ruler Murad but it is more challenging to reveal how the views on him changed—how, from a knight at the end of 14th century, he became a mythical personality of supernatural power.

A contemporary historian does not have any reason to oppose history to tradition in connection with the battle, as the study of former histories has shown him that both get equally interesting and significant tasks, which he must solve by a variety of methods and forms of research. No matter whether he has chosen one or the other way, he must pay attention to the time and circumstances in which some of the sources have been created. It is not possible to draw a clear and sharp line between the sources which speak of the event, and the sources which throw light on the event's tradition, as it is possible that some correct contemporary detail appears in a later source and is found only there as well as it is possible that some unfounded rumor is connected to the first months after the battle. However, we must divide the sources of the battle from the sources of tradition, mostly to avoid the distortion which can occur under the influence of a later period. The example of Ottoman sources, made a whole century after the battle, serves as a warning; it gives the ways of fighting, types of armament, and even the most important Ottoman enemies,

represented in the light and experience of the end of 15th century.

The influence of later epochs can be eliminated, if the researcher limits himself conscientiously to the most ancient sources, from 1400 or 1402, which were created in the world in which the battle took place. By such a self-limitation, the researcher will free himself from many picturesque details, but the few important ones will be reliable. The analysis of the sources from the first decade after the battle are not insignificant, but as they are of a general character, they will satisfy only a distant perspective; they will give only an outline of the event, placed in a wider context; losses will be noticed only when we try o examine the battle closely, trying to conjure up its drama and richness of detail.

Completely reliable and authenticated facts are the time and place of the battle: the day of Saint Vitus (Vidovdan), June 15th, 1389; that part of the Kosovo field where Murad's turbe (tomb) is placed, the place where Murad's entrails had been buried, and which remained marked constantly, although the present monuments dates from a later period. As "Murad's grave," the turbe is marked in 16th century maps. The other object, the "great marble column," built on the spot where Prince Lazar was caught, is not preserved on the field.

The majority of contemporary and most ancient sources put the battle into the framework of the war between the Serbian Prince Lazar and the Ottoman emir Murad. Some rhetorically colored texts tell of the battle between the Christians and Moslem infidels, but one letter from the Bosnian King Tvrtko I (1353–1391) sent to the Municipality of Trogir on 1st August, 1389, and the answer from Florence to the letter of the same King (October 20th, 1389), reveal that King Tvrtko had informed his friends and allies, that he had defeated "the Son of Satan and a servant" of Murad. A detachment of the Bosnian King, without doubt, took part in the Kosovo battle. Some of his warriors were kited there, the others were taken prisoners and transferred to Turkey, and their families, helped by the Dubrovnik go-betweens, did their best to free them. The explanations for these certainly authentic letters, in which Prince Lazar was not mentioned, and the number of Serbian casualties was minimized, can be found in Tvrtko's legislative principles. In 1377 he himself: as the heir of his oldest ancestors—"Serbian Lords," had himself been crowned by "a double crown" as "Stefan, the King of Serbs in Bosnia, the littoral Hinterland and Western areas" and saw himself in the role of the Serbian ruler, on the throne of the Nemanjić, who—long ago "ruled the Empire" and then "moved to Heaven." His real power was limited to the inherited Bosnia and the Nemanjić territories gained in 1373, 1377, and 1385; in the territories of Prince Lazar and Vuk Branković, he did not have any power, but, he had been accepted, certainly, as a high rank ally because of his King's title. So, he did not without reason represent himself as a Serbian ruler, as he had been one—by his detachment represented in Kosovo—but the basic perspective of his share in these affairs has been altered. It is also positive that Vuk Branković, in whose territory the battle took place, took part in it. On the Ottoman side, there was Murad along with his two sons, one of whom was killed in the battle with his father, according to the most ancient reports. The Sultan was followed by vassals, those from the South-Slav and Byzantian areas, but their names were not mentioned till the end of 14th century.

For the study of the circumstances under which the Kosovo battle took place, the very important fact is that Murad did not possess common frontiers with territories of Prince Lazar and Vuk Branković, and that he was separated from them by the belt of territories of his vassals in Bulgaria, South-Eastern Serbia and Macedonia. That is why the territories of Prince Lazar and Vuk could not come directly under the rule of the Ottoman government, while the territories of Dragaš or Vukašin's sons were not transformed into Ottoman sanjaks, in 1395. On the other hand, the rulers of Hungary, Bohemia, Germany and some others, could not enter the Christian camp, as later Ottoman sources revealed, for Tvrtko I was, at that time, in severe dispute with the Hungarian King-Siegmund of Luxemburg (1387–1437). Tvrtko supported the King's rebels, conquered parts of Croatia, and managed to subjugate Dalmatian towns. In his negotiations with Split, he allowed it to be the last of the towns to surrender to his power, and it was done on the same, St. Vitus Day, in 1389. On the other hand, King Siegmund decided on the month of July, of the same year, for gathering an army against the Bosnian ruler. In the summer of 1389, Tvrtko and his allies fell between two fires, and the practical realities of this situation are rather remote from the romantic view of sacrifices for the defense of Europe.

Restricting research to the most ancient sources does not help too much in efforts to establish the number of warriors in the Kosovo battle. A contemporary, French knight Philipe Mesiere, in his epistle written after the Nikopolis battle, in 1396–97, wrote that both the Turks and Prince Lazar had lost 20.000 soldiers. Being aware of the disability of people in the Middle Ages to estimate approximately at least the number of soldiers, animals, goods or money, we must be very suspicious of Mesiere's information. In some later sources, even greater exaggerations can be found: that there were a hundred thousand Serbs, and three hundred thousand Turks. The official data on military power, from the middle and the second half of 15th century, might give a somewhat realistic appraisal and approximate scale of values. From one, frequently checked document on the military power and Sultan's incomes dating from the period of Murad's great-grandson, a great conqueror Mehmed II (around 1475), we know that the Sultan, from the European part of the territory—an area that was much larger than that of the countries of those who directly, as vassals, took part in the Kosovo battle, could raise 20.800 cavalry-

men-landowners. A few decades earlier, a Serbian Despot, whose territories were approximately that of Prince Lazar and Vuk Branković's territories, in a plan for the defense of Hungary against Ottoman attacks, had an obligation to raise 8.000 cavalrymen, while the Bosnian King and three feudal lords gave 9.000 cavalrymen. It is not possible that either one or the other side had greater potential during' the Kosovo battle.

In most ancient sources, there are few details on the course and most important moments of the battle. In the above-mentioned reply of the Florence Municipality to King Tvrtko, Murad's death was mentioned along with the congratulations for victory "gifted by Heaven." There, the feat of twelve noblemen, who, gathered by mutual oath, made their way to Murad's camp, and where one of them thrust a sword into the ruler's throat and loins, was praised. In that letter, written on the basis of the King's message and of the facts heard and known from rumors and letters only four months after the battle, the historical basis of the event, which would be talked and sung about in future centuries, lies.

It is not possible to conclude from this, most ancient source, anything of the heroe's personalities, and we cannot even tell to which part of the army he belonged—Lazar's, Vuk's or Tvrtko's. Only in sources a decade later is his name—Milo or Miloš—mentioned. From the most ancient sources, we get to know just a few facts about Prince Lazar's death. He was probably killed during the typical Ottoman slaughter, after the battle, as a sign of revenge for their killed warriors.

The texts from the later period, unequivocally, speak of Ottoman victory and Christian defeat, and even in Serbian tradition this defeat was connected to the "collapse of the Serbian Empire." On the contrary, in the most recent sourc-

The Russian Illustrated Chronicle, mid-16th century.

The book, some sort of an old chronicle that narrates the development of the world from its creation to the time of the rule of Ivan the Terrible, was preserved in about 9,000 sheets with approximately 16,000 miniatures. The story of the Battle of Kosovo goes from 276 to 280 p. Episodes reel off: the accusation of Lazar's faithful knight Miloš Obilić of treason, the onset of the Battle, Murad's assassination and Miloš's death, the assault of the Serbian soldiers, the proclamation of Bayazid as Turkish Czar and Prince Lazar's capture and decapitation. The Chronicle was dated back to mid-16th century, the time when the Russian Czar Ivan the Terrible tried to assert himself as successor of all previous Russian rulers and emphasize his Russian and foreign ancestors alike. Prince Lazar had a most prominent place among them. Thus the cult of Prince Lazar spread through Russia of that time, magnifying the significance of the Russian dynasty, which Ivan the Terrible, son of Prince Vasily III, wanted to consolidate.

es, we find a view that the Turks were defeated. Some of the sources are very explicit in this assertion, and this can be concluded from some others, indirectly. This difference sharpens the gap between the tradition and critical history, and raises some basic questions as to methods of forming opinions and discussions in history. In order to understand and explain differences of narrative in our sources, we have to ask ourselves what was the basis for earlier centuries' criteria of success of the battlefield—fewer number of casualties, power over land, exploitation of the aftermath of a battle, the number of captured enemies, booty or some other factors, which are not important today? We also have to ask whether it is easy to establish the important facts: that the ruler or commander's death was more significant,

among warriors, than the number of casualties, which is very difficult to define. According to the Mediaeval understanding, the management over a battlefield, remaining there when the enemy was forced to run away or withdraw, was one of the most impressive signs of a successful end to a battle. This seems very easy to establish. But, if a battlefield was in a country of the enemy side which had been forced to abandon its territory and if the one who remained the owner of the battlefield, after a short period, started moving back to his own country, matters would not be as clear as it seemed, at first sight. Would the conditions immediately after the battle be remembered, or the ones established later, after the departure of the real winner? In that case, there would be the possibility of exchanging roles. If the result was judged according to which side had benefited from a battle's then later events should be taken into consideration; this opens up the possibility of distortion of the battle, under the influence of later perceptions.

These open questions and perplexities remain even after centuries of critical study of the Kosovo battle, and even with a widening of the field of sources and clearer understanding of the situation after 1389. Instead of short and reliable replies, a critical historian is obliged to convey to a reader his doubts and to go through all of them. It is quite certain that a number of the most ancient sources testify generally to the battle, emphasizing Murad's death. The ruler's death threw a shadow onto the Ottoman side. But, the Ottoman tradition, emerging much later, was not influenced by it. We have already mentioned that Tvrtko's letters represented his legislative views, according to which it had been his battle and, as the enemy ruler had been killed and the army, under his successor had withdrew from Serbia, Tvrtko didn't have to "embellish" the affair, so that it was represented as his victory. However, his correspondents, informed from other sources, accepted the version of his triumph. Vuk Branković remained in his own country and didn't reconcile with the Turks up to 1392, so it could be concluded that the battle result hadn't been questioned. He got the chance to fill in, by his personality, the gap which arose by the disappearance of Prince Lazar.

The family and territories of Prince Lazar were the most affected by the consequences of the Kosovo battle. The ruler had been killed, and the country came into the hands of a widow and weak sons. In the autumn of 1389, the Hungarian King Siegmund invaded their territory along with a huge army, which hardened their position toward the Turks. Contrary to the writers of hagiographies and praises to Prince Lazar, who saw him not only as a hero crowned by religious martyrdom, but also as a "new David"—which meant—a victor aided by God, the Prince's son Stefan remembered the conditions after his father's death in a much more gloomy light. In the preface to the Law on Mines (1393, 1412) he mentioned that in the beginning of his rule "the infidels attacked the Christians," that he saw "a great victory of my country;" also, how, following the advice of patriarch Spiridon (died on 18th August, 1389), other archpriests and his mother, he had gone to "the great emir Bayezid," and how, according to the latter's requests, he had liberated the country and towns—which undoubtedly meant that he had become Bayezid's vassal. Lazar's heir claimed that his destiny had been decided by the consequences of the Kosovo battle. The most important fact for understanding the differences among the most ancient sources, was that not all the participants were affected by the Kosovo battle in the same way, and so it is quite normal that they didn't experience it in the same way, nor did they talked of it in the same way.

Knowing, generally, the further development of Serbia, and bearing in mind the leading role of Stefan Lazarević after 1402, and also knowing that the long-term hostility between the Lazarević and Branković as Stefan's heirs (1412), remembering how Zeta had fallen to Stefan as an inheritance (1412)—we can easily understand why the views of Lazar's heirs predominated and gave a mark to the whole of future Serbian tradition. In the narration of Konstantin Filozof, a biographer of Despot Stefan, we can recognize attempts at a reconciliation of the two views: "Lazar's forces at first resisted the attacks and prevailed. But, the hour for rescue was expiring. That's why the son of the Tsar became strong and won that very battle, as God allowed(...)." But this could be classified as a study on the development of the tradition of the battle, which is another different but very attractive task.

The Battle of Kosovo
Serbian Epic Poems

When in 1845 Vuk Karadžić published several collections of Serbian poems, formed "deeply within people," they were somewhat of a sensation to literary Europe, revealing a rare originality and beauty. The writers of these ballads saw the world with the eyes of a child and with the heart of a man, as it is shaped by life. The ballads are remarkable for their feel for actual history. Their soul is saturated with Christian faith, but they also express the general human condition. These are the distinctive *Christian* and *human* qualities of this people's soul—readiness for self-denial, sacrifice, suffering, endurance, forgiveness, and imprisonment for the sake of justice and freedom.

It should be noted that by the end of the thirteenth century the Serbian public received a new kind of literature, one that opened up a view into the world of knighthood and courtliness that was different from what had been offered before. The illustrious novels about the Trojan War and Alexander the Great were adapted creatively through the use of highly developed epic poetry, which is a direct testimony to that poetry's qualities. The appearance of these novels was exceptionally productive, they offered a model of a literary system which Serb writers could not ignore thereafter.

In the poems of the Kosovo Cycle everything is intertwined: the eschatological, symbolical, and mythical are present but so are history, realism, and sobriety. Here, history is the foundation on which the questions of personality, morality and ideas are answered. Everything acquires the dynamism of interpenetration with the trans-historical. This is the fate of all the small peoples in history who face the tragic. In the Kosovo epics one sees how historical catastrophes become starting points for knowledge of reality, God, and man—and for spontaneous praise.

These poems were translated by the Brothers Grimm. One of the brothers, Jacob, said that "since the days of Homer, one could say, in the whole of Europe there was not a single phenomenon which would make us understand the essence, as well as the genesis, of epics, to such an extent as the Serbian folk-songs." Goethe began learning the Serbian language in order to understand the origins of this oral, poetic art form. On several occasions wrote about the character of these poems (in his *Kunst und Altertum*); during a conversation with Eckermann, he once ventured to compare the beauty of some examples to that of the Song of Songs. The great Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz claimed that in the Serbian poems Europe had discovered its precious component, which had been completely unknown to her for a long time (although it is hard to find anything quite like it in Western European literatures). With the profound spirituality of these anonymous poets (these poems, as somebody said, are signed by an entire nation!), the interest for Serbian folk-epics grew all over Europe (through many translations, imitations, mystifications, and paraphrases). It is the basis for the expression of an ethos, one that goes beyond the codex of moral principles and rules. This ethos is based on the Battle of Kosovo's poetic quality—a "moral victory in face of physical defeat"—and all of this makes Serbs "the chosen people."

This and other similar liturgical and cultic writings about Kosovo's martyrs and heroes, in which martyrdom was exalted to both a historic and a metahistoric ideal, soon became the source and inspiration for the well-known Kosovo Cycle of epic poetry.

The meaning of the Kosovo sacrifice "for the Holy Cross and golden freedom" forms a sacred story of a historically marginalized and tormented nation, one that is small, poor, weak and backward. It is a story about history but more so about earthly human destiny and the meaning of life which renders Kosovo a "new Jerusalem."

In order to understand the poetical genius of the Serbian peasantry, one should read Serbian Nobel laureate Ivo Andrić's short passage called *Levies*, in which he conveys not only how entertaining these poems are but also how comforting is the atmosphere they create. Like the fragrance of burning incense they give off a word of consolation that brings everyone together and gives them peace of mind. The poems were best received when accompanied by *gusle* —a tiny primitive fiddle, clumsy and without much elegance —with the notes sharp and uneven, sung through the nose of the *gusle* fiddlers. "Everyone was intent, awaiting the wonderful tale," Andrić writes. "Then, suddenly, after he had more or less attuned his voice to the *gusle*, the Montenegrin threw back his head proudly and violently so that his Adam's apple stood out in his scrawny neck and his sharp profile was outlined in the firelight, and sang in a strangled and constrained voice: A-a-a-a-a-a-a-a- and then all at once in a clear and ringing tone:

At Chenonceau, one of the most beautiful castles of the Loire Valley, walking down the halls, one encounters one of the tapestries from the 16th century. The name of the tapestry is **Battle of Kosovo**.

"The Serbian Tsar Stefan / Drank wine in fertile Prizren, / By him sat the old patriarchs, / Four of them, the old patriarchs; / Next to them were nine bishops / And a score of three-tailed vezirs / And the ranks of Serbian nobles. / Wine was served by Michael the cupbearer / And on the breast of the sister Kandosia / Shone the light of precious stones ..."

Andrić concludes his illustration of this scenery with the following rendition: "The peasants pressed closer and closer around the singer but without making the slightest noise; their very breathing could be heard. They half closed their eyes, carried away with wonder. Thrills ran up and down their spines, their backs straightened up, their breasts expanded, their eyes shone, their fingers opened and shut and their jaw muscles tightened. The Montenegrin developed his melody more and more rapidly, even more beautiful and bolder, while the wet and sleepless workmen, carried away and insensible to all else, followed the tale as if it were their own more beautiful and more glorious destiny."

So the folk poet, having invested the complexity of the vision, for which the Kosovo Cycle is famous, goes beyond philosophy and poetry, beyond transient glory and existence. Although some critics take the sound of the gusle as the sound of defeat (Stanislav Vinaver), the image and emotion of defeat is inadequate to describe the true nobility and heroism of the people's genius. The folk poet of the Kosovo Cycle does not want a mere earthly triumph. He knows that we win when others win (Nicholas Cabasilas), and defeat can be justified as wiser than victory.

As the well-known German translator of the Serbian songs, Miss Talvj (Therese von Jakob, later Mrs. Robinson), emphasized: "Indeed, what epic popular poetry is, how it is produced and propagated, what powers of invention it naturally exhibits — powers which no art can command — we may learn from this multitude of simple legends and fables. The Serbians stand in this respect quite isolated; there is no modern nation that can be compared to them in epic productiveness; and a new light seems to be thrown over the grand compositions of the ancients. Thus, without presumption, we may pronounce the publication of these poems one of the most remarkable literary events in modern times."

Charles Simić wrote that everyone in the West who has known these poems has proclaimed them to be literature of the highest order which ought to be known better. And, of course, there have been many translations since the mid-nineteenth century. Except for one or two recent exceptions, they do not resemble the originals at all. Perhaps the main stumbling block is prosody. The ten-syllable line in Serbian is a mighty force. Each syllable is audible and distinct. The trochaic beat sets a fairly regular and steady pace. In the Kosovo Cycle there's an absolute minimum of verbosity and epic posturing. The clarity, the narrative inevitability, and the eloquence and poetry of the Kosovo Cycle come through in these translations. If the Serbian heroic ballads are indeed great poetry, as people keep saying, you will get a good taste of that greatness here.

"Poems about Kosovo are a Serbian classic, the one and only," writes Vasko Popa, and they are true classics of European epic literature as well.

Mother of Jugović, Ljubinka Jovanović, 1953

Fragment

(…)

Sultan Murad fell on level Kosovo!
And as he fell he wrote these few brief words
Sent them to the castle at white Kruševac
To rest on Lazar's knees in his fine city.
"Lazar! Emperor! Lord of all the Serbs,
What has never been can never be:
One land only but two masters,
A single people who are doubly taxed;
We cannot both together rule here,
Therefore send me every tax and key,
Golden keys that unlock all the cities,
All the taxes for these seven years,
And if you do not send these things at once,
Bring your armies down to level Kosovo
And we'll divide the country with our swords …"
When these words have come to Lazar's eyes
He sees them, weeping cruel tears
(…)

The Downfall of the Kingdom of Serbia

A great gray bird, a taloned falcon flew!
From a sacred place, from Jerusalem,
And he carried a gentle swallow.
But it was not an eagle, a grey bird,
It was a saint, Holy saint Elijah,
And he did not bear a gentle swallow,
But a letter from the Mother of God.
He brings it to an emperor to Kosovo,
Laid it on his trembling knees.
The letter itself spoke to the emperor:
"Emperor Lazar, of noble family,
Which kingdom will you join rather,
Will you choose the kingdom of heaven?
Or will you choose the kingdom of earth?

If you choose the earth then saddle horses,
Tighten girths—have your knights put on
Their swords and make a dawn attack against
The Turks: your enemy will be destroyed.
But if you choose the skies then build a church—
O, not of stone but out of silk and velvet—
Gather up your forces take the bread and wine,
For all shall perish, perish utterly,
And you, O Emperor, shall perish with them."
And when the Emperor has heard those holy words
He meditates, thinks every kind of thought:
"O, Dearest God, what shall I do, and how?
Shall I choose the earth? Shall I choose
The skies? And if I choose the kingdom,
If I choose an earthly kingdom now,
The earthly kingdom lasts only a brief time,
But the heavenly kingdom always and forever."
And Lazar chose heaven, not the earth,
And tailored there a church at Kosovo—
O not of stone but out of silk and velvet—
And he summoned there the Patriarch of Serbia,
Summoned there the lordly twelve high bishops:
And he gathered up his forces, had them
Take with him the saving bread and wine.
As soon as Lazar has given out
His orders, then across the level plain
Of Kosovo pour all the Turks.

Supper in Kruševac

The Serbian Emperor will celebrate his Slava
Here in Kruševac, a well-protected fortress.
All the high nobility and all
The lesser lords he seats around the table—
All will honor now his holy patron saint.
On his right he places old Jug Bogdan
And next to him the nine brave Jugovići.
On his left Vuk Branković sits down,
And then the other lords according to their rank.
Across from Lazar is Captain Miloš;
And next to him are these two noble knights:
The first: Ivan Kosančić,
And the second: Lord Milan Toplica.
Now the Emperor lifts up the golden goblet,
Lazar thus questions all his lords:
"To whom, I ask you, shall make this toast?
If I must toast old age—to old Jug Bogdan then,
If I must honor eminence—to Branković;
If I must trust emotion—to the nine brave Jugovići,
Sons of old Jug Bogdan, brothers of my queen;
If I must bow to beauty—to Ivan Kosančić;
If I decide by height—to tall Milan Toplica;
But if heroic courage must decide me
I shall drink to noble Captain Miloš.
Yes! to Miloš—to nobody else at all.
I'll only toast the health of Miloš Obilić.
Hail, Cousin! friend of mine and traitor!
First of all my friend—but finally my betrayer.
Tomorrow you'll betray me on the field of Kosovo,
Escaping to the Turkish Sultan, Murad!
So to your health, dear Miloš, drink it up,
And keep the golden goblet to remember Lazar."
Then up on nimble legs springs Miloš Obilić
And to the dark earth bows himself and says:
"My thanks to you O glorious Lazar,
My thanks for that fine toast and for your handsome gift,
But I can't thank you for those words you spoke.
Let me die if I should lie to you!
I have never been unfaithful to my Emperor—
Never have I been and never shall I be—
And I am sworn to die for you at Kosovo,

For you and for the Christian faith.
But treason, Lazar, sits beside you now—
The traitor sips his wine right up your sleeve.
It's Branković, Vuk Branković I say!
And when on Vitus-day tomorrow morning
We make our dawn attack upon the Blackbirds' Field
We'll see right there at bloody Kosovo
Who is loyal to you and who is not!
I swear to you in God Almighty's Name
That I shall go at dawn to Kosovo
And slaughter like a pig the Turkish Sultan,
Put my foot upon his throat.
And then if God and good luck aid me I'll return
For Branković and bind him to my lance,
Bind him like the wool around a distaff.
I'll drag him like that back as far as Kosovo!"

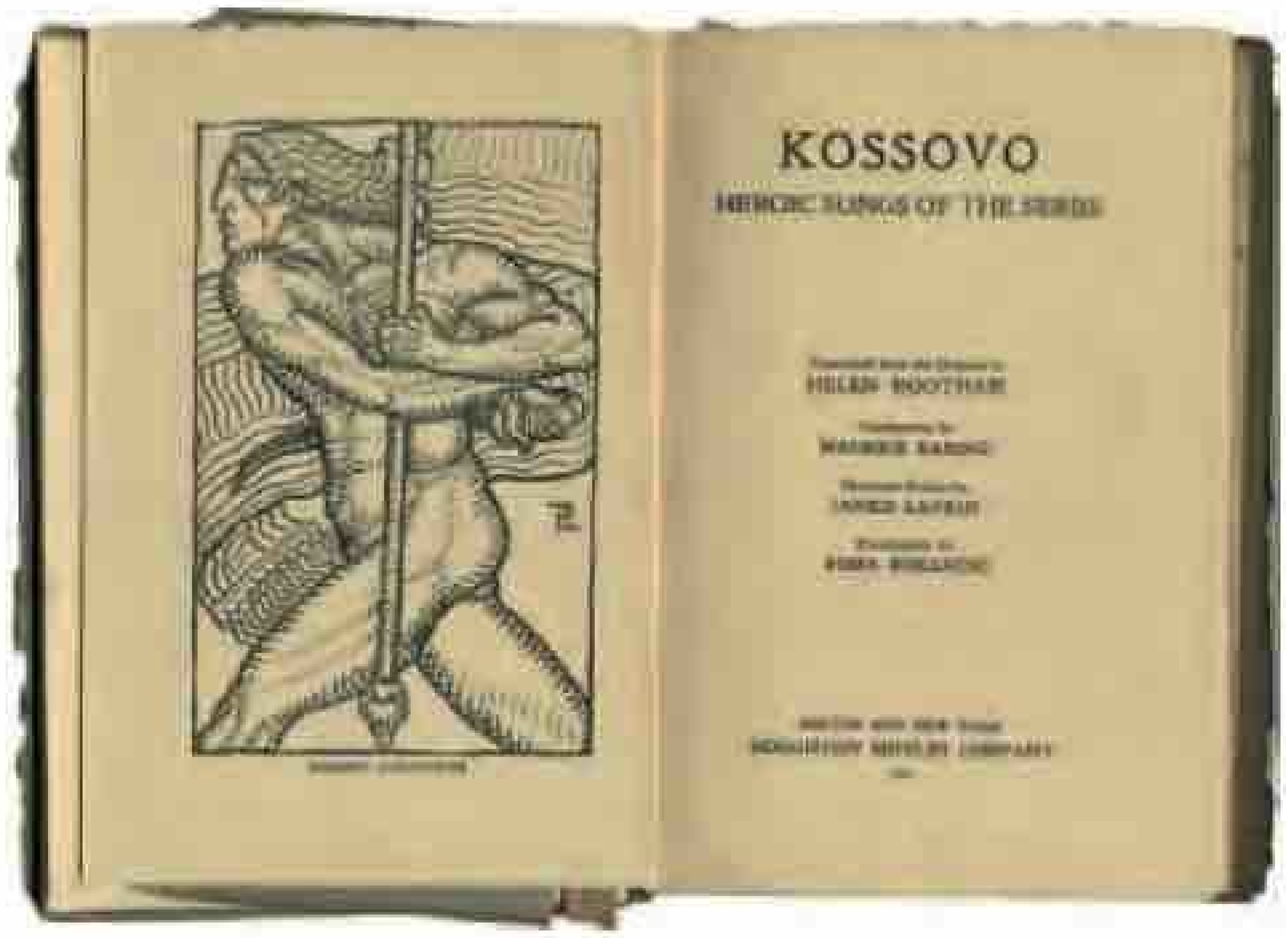
Captain Miloš and Ivan Kosančić

And Miloš says to Ivan Kosančić:
"My brother, have you seen the Turkish army?
Is it vast? and do we dare attack them?
Can we conquer Murad here at Kosovo?"
And Ivan Kosančić answers him like this:
"My noble friend, O Miloš Obilić!
I have spied upon the Turkish army
And I tell you it is vast and strong.
If all the Serbs were changed to grains of salt
We could not even salt their wretched dinners!
For fully fifteen days I've walked among those hoards
And found there no beginning and no end.
From Mt. Mramor straight to Suvi Javor,
From Javor, brother, on to Sazlija,
From Sazlija across the Čemer Bridge,
From Čemer Bridge on to the town of Zvečan,
From Zvečan, Miloš, to the edge of Čečan,
And from Čečan to the mountain peaks—
Everywhere the Turks line up in battle gear:
Horse is next to horse and warriors all are massed.
Their lances are like trunks of forest trees;
Their banners are like endless sailing clouds
And all their tents are like the drifting snows.
Ah! and if from heaven a heavy rain should fall
Then not a single drop would ever touch the earth
For all the Turks and horses standing on it.
Turkish forces occupy the field before us
Stretching to the rivers Lab and Sitnica.
Sultan Murad's fallen on the level plain of Mazgit!"
Then Miloš looks at Kosančić and asks:
"My brother, tell me next where I can find
The tent of mighty Sultan Murad
For I have sworn to noble Lazar
To slaughter like a pig this foreign Emperor
And put my foot upon his squealing throat."
And Ivan Kosančić replies like this:
"O Miloš Obilić, I think you must be mad!
Where do you suppose that tent is placed
But in the middle of the vast encampment—
And even if you had a falcon's wings
And flew down from the clear blue skies above
Your wings would never fly you out again alive!"
Then Miloš thus implores Ivan to promise:
"O Ivan Kosančić my dearest brother—
Not in blood, but so much like a brother—
Swear to me not to tell the Tzar
What you have seen and said to me just now.
Lazar would suffer anguish over it;
The army under him would grow afraid.
We must both of us say this instead:
Though the Turkish army is not small,
We can easily do battle with them
And defeat them . . . This is what we've seen:
Not an army made of knights and warriors
But of weary pilgrims, old and crippled hodjas,
Artisans, and skinny adolescents
Who have never even tasted blood
And only come to Kosovo to see the world
Or earn a crust of bread, a cup of dark red wine...
And if there is a real Turkish army,
That one's fallen sick from dysentery and has lost its way.

Musić Stefan

In Maydan where they mine the purest silver
Musić Stefan drinks the dark red wine
That's brought to him by Vaistina his servant
To a table in his lordly castle.
When he has satisfied his thirst he says:
"Vaistina, my dearest friend and servant,
Drink and eat while I lie down to rest
And then go walk before our lordly castle:
Gaze into the clear transparent skies
And tell me: is the bright moon in the west?
Is the morning star rising in the east?
Has the hour arrived for us to journey
To the level plain of Kosovo
And join forces with the noble Emperor?
My son, you will remember that grave oath—
Lazar exhorted us like this:
"Whoever is a Serb, of Serbian blood,
Whoever shares with me this heritage,
And he comes not to fight at Kosovo,
May he never have the progeny
His heart desires, neither son nor daughter;
Beneath his hand let nothing decent grow—
Neither purple grapes nor wholesome wheat;
Let him rust away like dripping iron
Until his name shall be extinguished!"
Then Musić Stefan rests upon soft pillows
While Vaistina his friend and loyal servant

Eats his meal, drinks his share of wine,
And goes to walk before the lordly castle.
He looks into the clear transparent skies
And sees the moon—bright and in the west;
The morning star is rising in the east.
The hour has thus arrived for them to journey
To the level plain of Kosovo
And join forces with the noble Emperor.
Now Vaistina takes horses from the stable—
Battle-horses, one for each of them—
And saddles them, arrays them beautifully.
Then he carries out a noble silken banner
All embroidered with twelve golden crosses
And a brilliant icon of Saint John,
Holy Patron Saint of Musich Stefan.
He puts it down before the castle keep
And climbs the stairs to wake his master up.
Now as Vaistina ascends those stairs
The wife of Musić Stefan stops him there,
Embracing him. Imploringly she says:
"O Servant Vaistina, in Jesus' Name!
By God Almighty and by Holy John,
Till now you were my good and faithful friend.
If you are still my brother then I beg you:
Do not awaken now your sleeping master.
Pity me; I've had an evil dream.
I dreamed I saw a flock of doves in flight
With two gray falcons flying on before them,
Flying right before this very castle.
They flew to Kosovo and landed there
In Sultan Murad's cruel vast encampment—
But never did I see them rise again.
This, my brother, is a prophecy:
I fear that all of you are going to die."
Then Vaistina the servant speaks like this:
"Dearest sister, honored wife of Stefan!
I cannot, my sister, be unfaithful
To the master of this noble castle;
You are not bound as he and I are bound"
By Lazar's bitter exhortation:
I tell you truly—this is what he said:
'Whoever is a Serb, of Serbian blood,
Whoever shares with me this heritage,
And he comes not to fight at Kosovo,
May he never have the progeny
His heart desires, neither son nor daughter;
Beneath his hand let nothing decent grow—
Neither purple grapes nor wholesome wheat;
Let him rust away like dripping iron
Until his name shall be extinguished!'
Thus I cannot, sister, be unfaithful
To the master of this noble castle."
Then Vaistina goes up and wakes his master
Saying this: "The time is now upon us."
And Musić Stefan rises on strong legs



Kosovo ballads in the poetic reception in the Western culture, 1920

And washes slowly, puts on lordly garments.
He belts around his waist a well-forged saber,
Pours himself a glass of dark red wine
And toasts his holy patron saint,
And then a quick and providential journey,
And last of all the saving cross of Jesus.
All this in his castle at his banquet table—
Where Stefan will not eat or drink again.
Then they walk before the lordly castle,
Mount their ready chestnut battle-horses
And unfurl the cross-embroidered banner.
Drums and trumpets break the morning silence—
Off they ride to battle in the name of God!
When the brilliant dawn has cast its light upon them
Over Kosovo, that flat and graceful plain,
There suddenly appears a lovely maiden
Bearing in her hands two empty golden goblets.
Beneath her arm she has a noble helmet
Made of wound white silk with feathers intertwined
Which are worked in silver at their ends
And sewn with precious threads of yellow gold—
And all embroidered at the top with pearls.
Then Musić Stefan speaks to her like this:
"May God Almighty bless you and be with you—
But where can you have found that noble helmet?
Were you yourself upon the field of battle?
Give it to me, dear one, for a moment,
For I will know at once which hero wore it.
I promise by my providential journey
That I will never injure or betray you."
The lovely maiden answered him and said:
"Greetings to you, warrior of the Emperor!
I was not myself upon the field of battle
But my mother woke me early to get water
From the river Sitnica that flows nearby
And when I got there—what a flood I saw!
Of muddy water, horses, dying heroes,
Turkish calpacs, fezes, bloody turbans,
And the helmets worn by noble Serbs

Made of wound white silk with feathers intertwined.
I saw this helmet floating near the bank
And waded out a bit to reach it there.
I have at home a little younger brother
And I wanted him to have it for a present.
Besides, I'm young myself; I like the feathers on it."
She gives the helmet to the mounted knight.
As soon as Stefan has it in his hands
He recognizes it and starts to weep;
Tears flow down his stern and noble face.
He slaps his side so fiercely that he breaks
A golden cuff link joining his right sleeves
And tears the velvet of his trouser leg.
"May God in Heaven help me and protect me!
Now the curse of Lazar surely falls!"
And he returns the helmet to the girl
And reaches in his pocket with his hand
And gives three golden ducats to her, saying:
"Take them, dear one, lovely Maid of Kosovo,
For I am going into battle now
To fight the Turks in Jesus' Holy Name.
If God allows me to return alive
I'll have for you a better gift by far—
But if, my sister, I should die in battle,
Remember me by these three golden ducats."
Then they spurred their horses into battle
Across the flooding muddy river Sitnica
And rode into the camp of Sultan Murad.
Musić Stefan fought and killed three pashas,
But when he met the fourth that warrior smote him—
And there he died beside his Servant Vaistina
And with his army of twelve thousand souls.
Great Emperor Lazar also perished on that day
And with him died a good and ancient Empire—
With him died the Kingdom of this Earth.

Emperor Lazar and Empress Milica

Now when at Kruševac the Emperor is camped
And takes his supper on the eve of battle
Milica his Empress implores him thus—
"O Lazar, Golden Crown of Serbia,
You ride tomorrow out to Kosovo
And take away your servants and your knights,
You leave me no one at the castle, Sire,
Who'd ride out with a letter to the field
Of Kosovo and bring an answer back
You take away with you my nine dear brothers,
All the Jugovići ride with you
I ask you this leave but one behind
Leave me just one brother here to swear by."
And Lazar thus speaks to her and says
"My Lady Milica, my dear Empress—
Which brother is it you would like for me
To leave with you in this white castle tower?"
And she: "Give me Boško Jugović!"
And he, noble Prince of all the Serbs.
"My Lady Milica, my dear Empress,
Tomorrow when the white day brightly dawns,
When the day dawns, the sun bright in the east,
And when the portals of the town are opened,
Go and stand beside those city gates
For there will pass the army in its ranks
And all the horsemen with their battle-lances
Boško Jugović will lead them all
And carry high the cross-emblazoned banner
Give him all my blessings and say this.
That he shall give the flag to someone else
And stay with you in this white castle tower"
When dawn has broken early in the morning
And the portals of the town are opened
Out she walks, Lazar's queen,
And goes to stand beside the city gate
Where all the army passes by in ranks
Out before the warriors with their lances
Comes her brother, Boško Jugović,
Riding in his noble golden armor
On his golden-harnessed battle stallion
Holding high the cross-emblazoned banner
Which envelops him, my brothers, to the waist
On the staff there is a golden apple,
And on the apple golden crosses stand
From which there hang several golden tassels
Dangling in the breeze about his shoulders.
Now Empress Milica goes up to him
And takes his horse's bridle in her hand.
She puts her arms around her brother's neck
And thus she softly speaks to him and says:
"O my brother, Boško Jugović,
Lazar has given you to me
And tells you not to go to Kosovo;
He sends his blessing to you and he says:
To give your flag to anyone you like
And stay with me at white-walled Kruševac
That I will have a brother here to swear by."
Boško Jugović then speaks like this:
"Go back, my sister, to your castle tower
It is not for me to go with you
Or give away this banner that I hold
Even if the Emperor would give me Kruševac;
What would all my comrades say of me?
Look upon this coward Jugović!
The one who dares not go to Kosovo
And spill his blood for Jesus' Holy Cross
And for his faith to die upon that plain."
With that he spurs his horse on through the gate.
And next rides out Jug Bogdan, Boško's father,
And behind him seven Jugovići;
One by one she stops them and implores them
But not a one would even look at her.

She waits in misery beside the portals
Until her brother Voin comes riding past
Leading close behind him Lazar's horses
All caparisoned with golden trappings.
She stops his chestnut, takes it by the bridle,
And then she throws her arms around her brother.
Thus she softly speaks to him and says:
"O Voin Jugović, my dearest brother,
Lazar gives you to me for a present!
He sends his blessing to you and he says:
Give to someone else those noble horses
And stay with me at white-walled Kruševac
That I will have a brother here to swear by."
Her brother Voin thus answers her and says:
"Go back, my sister, to your castle tower—
For as a warrior I may not return,
Nor would I leave these horses of the Emperor
Even if I knew that I would perish.
I ride out to the level field of Kosovo
To spill my blood for Jesus' Holy Cross
And die with all my brothers for the faith."
With that he spurs his horse on through the gate.
When Lady Milica has seen all this
She falls down fainting on the cold hard stone
And lies unconscious, still as if in death.
Glorious Lazar, Prince of all the Serbs,
Is next to pass, and when he sees his queen
He weeps, and tears flow down his cheeks.
He looks around him turns to left and right,
And calls out to his servant Goluban:
"Goluban, my dear and faithful servant,
Dismount at once from your white horse
And take my lady in your strong white arms
And carry her into the narrow tower.
I free you before God from your grave oath.
Do not ride out to fight at Kosovo
But stay with her inside the castle tower."
When Goluban has heard his master's words
He weeps, and tears flow down his cheeks;
As ordered he dismounts from his white horse
And lifts the lady up in his white arms
And carries her into the castle tower.
But yet his heart torments him: he must go
And ride to battle on the Blackbirds' Field.
Turning back at once to his white horse
He mounts and rides to level Kosovo.
As in the east the morning brightly dawns
Two black ravens fly to Kruševac
From Kosovo, that wide and level plain,
And land upon the narrow castle tower,
The castle tower of Lazar the Emperor.
The first bird caws, the second starts to talk:
"Is this the tower of Glorious Lazar,
Or is there no one home in this white castle?"
Only Lady Milica is there to hear,

Prince Lazar Renounces All Worldly Empires,
Uroš Predić, 1900, National Museum, Kruševac

And she alone walks out before the tower.
Thus she speaks and asks the two black birds:
"Ravens! in the name of God Almighty
Tell me where you come from this bright morning.
Could it be you come from Kosovo?
Have you seen two mighty armies there?
And did those armies join in furious combat?
Great black birds: which army won the battle?"
Then the ravens answered, both together:
"In the name of God, Empress Milica,
We come today from level Kosovo,
And we have seen two mighty armies there;
Those armies met in battle yesterday
And both the Emperor and Sultan have been slain.
Among the Turks some few are left alive,
But fewer still among the Serbs yet breathe,
And all of them have cruel bleeding wounds."
Even as the ravens speak those words
The Servant Milutin comes riding up:
His own right arm he bears in his left hand;
Bleeding from his seventeen grave wounds,
He reins his sweating blood-drenched war-horse in.
Lady Milica thus questions him:
"What happened to you Servant Milutin?
Did you abandon Lazar on the field?"
And Servant Milutin replies to her:
"Help me down, dear lady, from my horse,
And bathe with cool water all my wounds;
Quench my thirst with red reviving wine;

These evil wounds will be the end of me."
The Lady Milica takes him gently down
And bathes his wounds with cool water there,
And gives him dark red wine to quench his thirst
When she has thus attended to his needs
She questions him again & softly asks:
"What happened, Milutin, at Kosovo?
The noble Emperor and old Jug Bogdan—dead?
The Jugovići, nine of them, all dead?
Vuk Branković and great Lord Miloš—dead?
And Strahinja the Ban beside them all?"
The wounded servant answers her and says:
"All remain, my lady, on the field
Where the glorious Emperor has bravely perished.
There are many broken lances there
Belonging both to Turks and noble Serbs—
But many more of ours have broken, Lady,
Than the Turks' defending Lazar,
Fighting for our glorious Lord and Master.
And old Jug Bogdan, Lady, lost his life
At the beginning, in the dawn attack
Along with his eight sons, the Jugovići,
Where brother fought by brother to the end
As long as he could strike and cut;
But Boško Jugović remains there still,
His cross-emblazoned banner waving high,
Where he chases Turks in frightened herds
As a hunting falcon chases doves.
And Strahinja died too where blood rose to the knees
While Miloš, Lady, lost his noble life
Fighting near the river Sitnica
Where many dying Turks lie all around.
But Miloš killed the Turkish Sultan, Murad,
And slaughtered many Turkish soldiers with him.
May God Almighty bless the one who bore him!
He leaves immortal fame to all the Serbs
To be forever told in song and story
As long as Kosovo and human kind endure.
But ask me nothing of Vuk Branković!
May the one who gave him birth be damned!
Cursed be his tribe and his posterity,
For he betrayed the Emperor at Kosovo,
And led away twelve thousand men, my Lady,
Led his knights away with him from Kosovo."

Empress Milica and Vladeta the Voyvoda

Empress Milica went out to walk
Before the castle at white Kruševac,
And with her there were her two daughters:
Vukosava and the pretty Mara.
Then up to them came Vladeta the Voyvoda
Riding on a bay a charging war-horse;
Vladeta had forced the horse into a sweat
And it was bathed all over in white foam.
Empress Milica spoke to him and said:
"In the name of God good knight of the Emperor,
Why have you so forced your horse to sweat?
Aren't you coming from the field of Kosovo?
Did you see great Lazar riding there?
Did you see my master and your own?"
And Vladeta responded in his turn:
"In the name of God Empress Milica,
I have ridden from the level field,
But I fear I did not see the Emperor.
I saw his war-horse chased by many Turks,
And thus I think our noble Lord is dead."
When Empress Milica had heard that news
She wept and tears ran down her face.
And then she looked at Vladeta and asked:
"Tell me more good knight of the Emperor,
When you were on that wide and level plain,
Did you see my father and my noble brothers there?
Did you see the Jugovići and Jug Bogdan?"
And Vladeta thus answered her and said:
"As I rode out and over level Kosovo
I saw the Jugovići, nine of them, your brothers,
And I saw your father, old Jug Bogdan, there:
They were in the midst of all the fighting
And their arms were bloody clear up to their shoulders,
Their tempered swords clear up to the hilts;
How their arms grew weary though and sank
Struggling with the Turks out on that field!"
Again the wife of Lazar spoke to him and said:
"Voyvoda stay with me and wait!
Did you see the husbands of my daughters?
Did you see Vuk Branković and Miloš?"
And Vladeta the Voyvoda replied:
"I have gone all over level Kosovo,
And I have seen what I have seen.
I did see Captain Miloš, Miloš Obilić,
And he was standing on that level field;
I saw him lean upon his battle lance
And saw that it was broken
And the Turks were swarming on him
Until now, I think, he surely must have died.
And did I see Vuk Branković at all?
I did not see him—let the sun not see him either!
For he betrayed the Emperor out on that field,
The noble Emperor, your master and my own."

The Maiden of Kosovo

Early rose the maiden of Kosovo,
Early rose she on a Sunday morning,
Rose before the brilliant sun had risen.
She has rolled the white sleeves of her robe back,
Rolled them back up to her soft white elbows;
On her shoulders, fair white bread she carries,
In her hands two shining golden goblets,

In one goblet she has poured fresh water,
And has poured good red wine in the other.
Then she seeks the wide plain of Kosovo,
Seeks the noble Prince's place of meeting,
Wanders there amongst the bleeding heroes.
When she finds one living midst the wounded
Then she laves him with the cooling water,
Gives him, sacramentally, the red wine,
Pledges with her fair white bread the hero.
Fate at last has led her wand'ring footsteps
Unto Pavle Orlović, the hero,
Who has borne the Prince's battle-standard.
From his gaping wounds the blood is streaming,
His right hand and his left foot are severed;
And the hero's ribs are crushed and broken,
But he lingers still amongst the living.
From the pools of blood she drags his body
And she laves him with the cooling water,
Red wine, sacramentally, she gives him,
Pledges then with fair white bread the hero.
When at length his heart revives within him,
Thus speaks Pavle Orlović, the hero:
"Oh dear sister, Maiden of Kosovo,
What great need compels thee here to wander,
Thou, so young, amongst the wounded heroes?
What dost thou upon the field of battle?
Dost thou seek a brother's son, or brother,
Dost thou seek perchance an aged father?"
Answered him the Maiden of Kosovo:
"Oh dear brother ! Oh thou unknown warrior!
None of my own race am I now seeking,
Not a brother's son nor yet a brother,
Neither do I seek an aged father.
Wast thou present, oh thou unknown warrior,
When for three whole weeks to all his army
Prince Lazar the Sacrament was giving
By the hands of thirty holy fathers,
In the splendid church of Samodreža;
When Lazar and all the Serbian army
There the Holy Sacrament have taken,
Three Voyvodas last of all did enter:
First of them was Miloš, the great warrior,
Ivan Kosančić was close behind him,
And the third, Toplica Milan, followed.
"I by chance stood then within the doorway
When there passed young Miloš, the great warrior,
In the whole world no more splendid hero;
On the ground his clanking saber trailing,
Silken cap with proudly waving feathers,
Many-colored mantle on his shoulders
And around his neck a silken kerchief.
Then he gazes round and looks upon me,
He takes off his many-colored mantle,
Takes it off, and gives it to me, saying:"
"Here, oh Maiden, is my colored mantle,

The Kosovo Maiden, marble relief, 1909,
Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962), National Museum, Belgrade

Sculptures and reliefs for St. Vitus' Temple rank high among Meštrović's achievements. He wrote in 1919 about the idea to devote himself to this topic:
A thought of St. Vitus Temple was conceived as soon as I left school, but I didn't feel strong enough to start implementing it on a broad scale then, Only after the Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1908, when it seemed that our national catastrophe was complete and doom of our race sealed, at the climax of our national pains, amidst fever that was shaking us, did I dare to start working on some fragments, and in the course of the coming years I did what was left to be done.
Relief *The Kosovo Maiden*, which clearly resembles metopes on antic temples, is one of the details planned for St. Vitus' Temple.

By it thou wilt keep me in remembrance,
By this mantle shall my name live with thee.
Now, dear Maid, must I go forth to perish
There where camps the noble Prince's army;
Pray to God for me, dear Maid, my sister,
That I may come back again in safety.
And that all good fortune may attend thee
I will marry thee to my friend Milan,
Him whom God has given me as brother,
My friend Milan who is my sworn brother.
In God's name and good Saint John's,
I promise I will be a groomsman at thy wedding."
"Ivan Kosančić was close behind him,
In the whole world no more splendid hero;
On the ground his clanking saber trailing,
Silken cap with proudly waving feathers,
Many-colored mantle on his shoulders
And around his neck a silken kerchief,
On his hand a golden ring is shining.
Then he gazes round and looks upon me,
Takes the golden ring from off his finger,
Takes it off and gives it to me, saying:"
"Here hast thou my ring of gold, oh Maiden,
By it thou wilt have me in remembrance,
By this gold ring shall my name live with thee.
Now, dear maid, must I go forth to perish
There where camps the noble Prince's army;

Miloš Obilić, the alleged assassin of Sultan Murad I,
oil on canvas, Aleksandar Dobrić, 1861

Pray to God for me, dear Maid, my sister,
That I may come back again in safety.
And that all good fortune may attend thee
I will marry thee to my friend Milan,
Him whom God has given me as brother,
My friend Milan who is my sworn brother.
In God's name and good Saint John's, I promise
I myself will give thee to the bridegroom."
"Then Toplica Milan follows after,
In the whole world no more splendid hero;
On the ground his clanking saber trailing,
Silken cap with proudly waving feathers,
Many-colored mantle on his shoulders
And around his neck a silken kerchief,
On his hand a golden ring is shining
And upon his arm a golden bracelet.
Then he gazes round and looks upon me,
From his arm he takes the golden bracelet,
Takes it off and gives it to me, saying:"
"Here, oh Maiden, is my golden bracelet,
By it thou wilt have me in remembrance.
Now, dear Maid, must I go forth to perish
There where camps our noble Prince's army;
Pray to God for me, dear soul, my darling,
That I may come back again in safety;
Then, dear Maid, that good luck may attend thee,
I will take thee for my true beloved."
"And then went away these mighty leaders,
And to-day I seek them here, oh brother,
Seek them here, upon the field of battle !
Pavle Orlović then makes her answer
"Oh dear sister, Maiden of Kosovo,
Dost thou see, dear soul, those battle-lances
Where they lie most thickly piled together
There has flowed the life-blood of the heroes;
To the stirrups of the faithful horses,
To the stirrups and the girths it mounted,
Mounted to the heroes silken girdles,
And the three have fallen there together.
Now return thee to thy fair white castle
Lest thy skirts and sleeves with blood be spattered."
To the hero's words the maiden listens,
Down her white face are the fast tears falling;
She returns then to her fair white castle.
From her white throat pour her lamentations:
"Woe is me, what fate I bear within me,
I but touch the young and tender sapling
And the fair green pine must surely wither."

Fragment

"Who is that fine hero, who's the one
Sweeping with his tempered sword,
His tempered sword in his right hand,
To cut off twenty heads?"
"That is Banović Strahinja!"
"Who is that fine hero, who's the one,
Impaling four before he's done
Upon his lance and heaving them
Behind him in the river Sitnica?"
"That is Srdja Zlopogledja!"
"Who is that fine hero, who's the one,
Riding on the great white stallion,
Holding high the banner in his hands,
Chasing Turks around in bands
And plunging them into the river Sitnica?"
"That is Boško Yugović!"

The Death of the Mother of the Jugovići

Lord of Hosts, how passing great the marvel!
When the army camps upon Kosovo
In its ranks the Jugovići—nine brothers,
And the tenth, the Jug Bogdan, their father.
Unto God then prays the aged mother:
"Give me, God, the keen eyes of a falcon,
Give to me, oh God, the swan's white pinions;
I would seek the wide plain of Kosovo,
I would see the Jugovići—nine brothers,
And the tenth, the Jug Bogdan, their father."
Thus she prays to God—her prayer is granted.
God gives her the keen eyes of the falcon
And He gives to her the swan's white pinions,
And she seeks the wide plain of Kosovo.
Dead she finds the Jugovići—nine brothers

And the tenth, the Jug Bogdan, their father.
At their sides nine battle-spears are lying,
On the spears are perched nine keen-eyed falcons,
Round the spears stand nine good battle-horses,
And nine lions lie beside their masters.
And there roar their grief the nine grim lions,
And there mourn the nine good battle-horses,
And nine keen-eyed falcons scream in sorrow.
But the mother's heart is hard within her,
Hard the mother's heart, and dry her eyelids.
And she leads away the nine good horses,
Leads away with them the nine grim lions,
Calls to follow her nine keen-eyed falcons.
Thus returns she to her fair white castle.
From afar her sons' nine wives beheld her,
As she nearer came they walked to meet her.
Cried aloud to God the nine fair widows,
And there wept with them the nine young orphans,
And there mourned the nine good battle-horses,
And there roared their grief the nine grim lions,
And nine keen-eyed falcons screamed in sorrow.
But the mother's heart is hard within her,
Hard the mother's heart, and dry her eyelids.
When the night is at the hour of midnight
Whinnies low the battle-horse of Damian,
And the mother asks of Damian's loved one:
"Oh my daughter, thou belov'd of Damian
Wherefore whinnies Damian's horse thus sadly?
Doth he hunger for the silver wheat-fields?
Doth he thirst for Zvečan's cooling waters?"
Slowly answers her then Damian's loved one:
"Oh my mother, mother thou of Damian,
Not for silver wheat-fields is he hungry,
Not for Zvečan's waters is he thirsty;
Long since learnt he from his master Damian
Until midnight on fine oats to feast him,
After midnight many roads to travel;
Therefore now laments he for his master
Sorrows that he left his lord behind him
There upon the wide plain of Kosovo."
But the mother's heart is hard within her,
Hard the mother's heart, and dry her eyelids.
On the morrow as the dawn is breaking,
Lo, there fly two ravens, two black ravens;
Bloody are their wings up to the shoulders,
From their beaks the blood-flecked foam is falling.
'Tis a hero's severed hand they carry,
On the hand a golden ring is shining.
See, they drop it in the mother's bosom,
From her bosom then the mother takes it,
Turns and turns it slowly as she gazes.
Then again she calls to Damian's loved one:
"Oh my daughter, thou belov'd of Damian,
Tell me, whose this hand that I am holding!"
To the mother answers Damian's loved one:
"Oh my mother, mother thou of Damian,
'Tis our Damian's hand that thou art holding,
For I know the golden ring, oh mother,
This gold ring I gave him at our marriage."
And the mother holds the hand of Damian,
Turns and turns it slowly as she gazes;
To the hero's hand the mother whispers:
"Thou dear hand, oh thou my fair green apple,
Where didst blossom? Where has fate-now plucked thee?
Woe is me! thou blossomed on my bosom,
Thou wast plucked, alas, upon Kosovo!"
And the mother's heart swelled big with anguish,
Swelled the mother's heart, and broke with sorrow
For her dead, the Jugovići—nine brothers
And the tenth, the Jug Bogdan, their father.

The Miracle of Lazar's Head

When they cut off Lazar's head upon the Blackbirds' Field
Not a single Serb was there to see it
But it happened that a Turkish boy saw,
A slave, the son of one who had been made
Herself a slave, a Serbian mother
Thus the boy spoke having seen it all:
"Oh have pity, brothers; Oh have pity, Turks.
Here before us lies a sovereign's noble head!
In God's name it would be a sin
If it were pecked at by the eagles and the crows
Or trampled on by horses and by heroes."
He took the head of holy Lazar then
And covered it and put it in a sack
And carried it until he found a spring
And put the head into the waters there
For forty years the head lay in that spring
While the body lay upon the field at Kosovo
It was not pecked by eagles or by crows.
It was not trampled on by horses or by heroes.
For that, Dear Lord, all thanks be to Thee.
Then one day there came from lovely Skoplje
A group of youthful carters who conveyed
Bulgarians and Greeks to Vidin and to Niš
And stopped to spend the night at Kosovo.
They made a dinner on that level field,
And ate and then grew thirsty afterwards.
They lit the candle in their lantern then
And went to look for waters of a spring.
Then it was that one young carter said:
"See the brilliant moonlight in the water there."
The second carter answered him:
"My brother, I don't think it's moonlight,"
While the third was silent, saying nothing,
Turning in his silence to the east,
And all at once calling out to God,
The one true God, and holy sainted Nicholas:
"Help me God! Help me holy Nicholas!"
He plunged into the waters of the spring

And lifted out into the quiet air
The holy head of Lazar, Emperor of all the Serbs.
He placed it on the green grass by the spring
And turned to get some water in a jug
So the thirsty carters all could drink.
When next they looked upon the fertile earth
The head no longer rested on the grass
But rolled out all alone across the level field,
The holy head moving toward the body
To join it the way it was before.
When in the morning bright day dawned
The three young carters sent the tidings off—
A message to the holy Christian priests
Which summoned some three hundred of them there
And summoned bishops, twelve of them,
And summoned four old patriarchs
From Peć, Constantinople, and Jerusalem.
They all put on their holy vestments then,
Put on their heads the tall peaked caps of monks,
And took into their hands the ancient chronicles,
And read out prayers, and kept long vigils there
For three long days and three dark nights,
Neither sitting down nor seeking any rest,
Neither lying down nor ever sleeping,
But questioning the saint and asking him
To which great church or monastery he would go:
Whether Opovo or Krušedol,
Whether Jaska or Bepenovo,
Whether Rakovac or Šišatovats
Whether Djivša or Kuveždin
Or whether he would rather go to Macedonia.
But the saint would go to none of these,
And wished to stay at lovely Ravanica,
The church he had himself endowed
Which rose below the mountain of Kučaj—
His own church, the one he built himself,
Built with his own bread, with his own treasure,
And not with tears wept by wretched subjects,
In those years he walked upon this earth.

The Death of Duke Prijezda

Message after message after message:
Who is sending them? Just who are they for?
The Turkish Sultan Mehmed sends them all
And they are for Prijezda, Duke of Stalać;
They come to him in his white castle there.
"O Prijezda, noble Voyvoda of Stalać,
I demand you send me your three treasures:
First, your deadly tempered sword
That cuts so easily through wood and stone,
Through wood and stone and even through cold iron;
Second, send your gallant war-horse, Ždral,
That flies across the wide and level fields
And leaps the height of double rampart walls;
Third, I want your faithful wife."
Duke Prijezda studies what he reads,
Studies it and writes a short reply:
"Sultan Mehmed, Tsar of all the Turks,
Raise as large an army as you like
And come to Stalać any time you choose.
Whatever way you may attack us here,
I will not give you any of my treasures;
For myself alone I forged my sword,
For myself alone I fed my gallant Ždral,
And for myself alone I took a wife:
I will not give you any of my treasures."
The Turkish Sultan Mehmed raised an army then,
Raised an army, led it off to Stalać;
He bombarded Stalać three long years,
But not a single stone did he dislodge;
He found no way to conquer that white city,
Nor would he end the siege and march back home.
One fine morning on a Saturday
Duke Prijezda's wife climbed slowly up
The rampart walls surrounding little Stalać
And from those heights she gazed into the Morava,
The muddy river down below the city.
Prijezda's wife thus spoke to him and said:
"O Prijezda, O my dearest master,
I'm afraid, my master and my lord,
The Turks will blow us up from underground!"
Duke Prijezda answered her and said—
"Be silent, love, do not talk like that
How can anybody tunnel under Morava?"
After that Sunday morning dawned,
And all the nobles went into the church
To stand and hear the solemn mass of God,
And when they left the church and came back out
Duke Prijezda spoke to them and said
"My Lords, my powerful right wings,
My wings by which I fly to eat and drink and fight,
After we have eaten and have drunk our wine,
Let us open up the castle gates
And make a flying raid against the Turks,
Letting God and fortune give us what they want!"
Thus Prijezda calls out to his wife
"My love, go down into the castle cellar
And bring us up the brandy and the wine."
Jelica then took two golden pitchers
And went below into the castle cellar,
But when she reached the bottom of the stairs,
She saw the place was full of Turkish soldiers
Drinking cool wine out of their boots
And toasting first the health of Lady Jelica
And then her husband's death, the death of Duke Prijezda
She dropped her pitchers on the cellar stones
And ran upstairs into the castle hall
"Your wine is bad, my lord and master,
Very bad, your brandy is worse still!

The castle cellar's full of Turkish soldiers
Drinking cool wine out of their boots
First they drink my health and then they drink to you,
But you—they bury you alive,
They bury you and then drink to your soul."
Duke Prijezda then leapt to his feet
And opened up the portals of the town,
They made a sortie out against the Turks,
And closed with them and dueled with them there
Until some sixty of the lords were dead,
Sixty lords, but thousands of the Turks;
After that Prijezda rode back home
And locked the city gates against the Turks.
He took his deadly sword out of its sheath
And cut the head off Ždral, his gallant war-horse:
"Ždral, Ždral, O my precious dear,
The Turkish Tsar will not ride on your back."
Then he broke his sharp and tempered sword:
"O tempered sword, O my true right hand,
The Turkish Tsar must never belt you on!"
Then he sought his lady in the castle
And he took his lady gently by the hand:
"Dearest Jelica, wise and faithful lady,
Will you choose to die with me today
Or will you be the lover of a Turk?"
The Lady Jelica shed many tears:
"In honor I will die with you today;
I will not be the lover of a Turk
Or trample on the honorable cross,
They cannot force me to betray my faith."
Then they joined hands, the two of them,
And went up on the ramparts above Stalać;
There it was that Jelitsa thus spoke.
"O Prijezda, O my dearest master,
The waters of the Morava have nursed us;
The waters of the Morava should bury us!"
And holding hands they leapt into the river.
Sultan Mehmed finally conquered Stalać,
But he did not obtain a single treasure
Bitterly he cursed, this Turkish Tsar:
"May God destroy you, O Stalać castle!
I had three thousand men when I arrived;
Now I start for home with just five hundred!"

Marko Kraljević and the Eagle

Marko lies beside the high road of the Tsar,
His spear behind his head, planted in the earth:
He draws around him there his dark green dolman,
Covers up his face with silver-threaded cloth.
Šarac stands beside him, tethered to the spear-shaft—
And on the top of it there perches a great eagle.
He spreads his wings, making shade for Marko,
And gives him cool water from his beak,
Cool water for the wounded hero.

Marko Kraljević,
drawing, Marko Murat, 1914

But suddenly a Vila cries out from the woods:
"In God's name great gray eagle there,
Whatever kind of goodness did this Marko do for you,
What act of kindness or of charity
That you should stretch your wings and shade him in this way
And bring him water in your beak,
Cool water for the wounded hero?"
And now the bird, the eagle, speaks to him and says:
"Silence, Vila! Shut your stupid mouth!
What sort of goodness has this Marko failed to do,
What act of charity has he not done for me?
It could be even you remember this—
The army dropping off like flies at Kosovo,
The two Tsars dying on the field—
Murad dying, great Emperor Lazar dying—
And all the blood rising to the stirrups,
Rising even to the silken belts of heroes,
Men and horses floating in it, swimming,
Horse by horse and hero next to hero—
And then the coming of the hungry birds.
As we ate our fill of human flesh
And drank our fill of human blood
My wings grew wet and sticky in the sun
Which burst out flaming in the crystal sky
And suddenly I could not fly at all
So stiff with blood & scorched had grown my wings.
When all the other birds had flown away
I alone remained on level Kosovo
Trampled under foot by horses and by heroes.
Then God sent Marko to me on that plain
Who plucked me from the flowing blood of heroes
And set me down behind him on the back of Šarac.
He took me straight into the nearest woods
And put me on the green branch of a pine.
Then a gentle rain began to rain.
It fell down from the sky and washed my wings,
Washed away the blood of noble heroes,
And I could fly above beyond the forest
And join all the eagles, join my swift companions.

Various translations were consulted or used, especially those of Helen Rootham, Vladeta Vučkovic, John Matthias, Geoffrey N.W. Locke, and R.W. Seton-Watson.

The Kosovo Legacy

Thomas A. Emmert

On 28 June, 1389 an alliance of Serbian and Bosnian forces engaged a large Ottoman army on the plain of Kosovo in southern Serbia. When the battle was over, Prince Lazar, the commander of the Christian army, and Murad, the ruler of the Ottomans, lay dead. In the years and centuries that followed, the battle and the martyred Prince Lazar became the subjects of a rich literature of popular legend and epic poetry that has profoundly influenced Serbian historical consciousness. The bard, the storyteller, and, eventually, the traditionalist historian depicted the Battle of Kosovo as the catastrophic turning point in the life of Serbia; it marked the end of an independent, united Serbia and the beginning of 500 years of oppressive Ottoman rule. The legend of the battle became the core of what we may call the Kosovo ethic, and the poetry that developed around the defeat contained themes that were to sustain the Serbian people during the long centuries of foreign rule.

A feeling of despair permeated Lazar's lands after the prince's death and his wife's surrender to the Ottomans the following year. Conscious of the need to combat pessimism in Serbia and to provide hope for a bright future, the monastic authors of the day wrote eulogies and sermons in praise of Lazar in which they interpreted the events of this troubled period for their own contemporaries. In their writings Lazar is portrayed as God's favored servant and the Serbian people as the chosen people of the New Testament: the "new Israel." Like the Hebrews in Babylonian captivity, the Serbs would be led out of slavery to freedom. Lazar's death is depicted as a triumph of good over evil: a martyrdom for the faith and the symbol of a new beginning. Serbia and her people would live. Responding to contemporary needs, the medieval writers transformed the defeat into a kind of moral victory for the Serbs and an inspiration for the future. The Serbian epic tradition only developed these ideas further and established them soundly in the consciousness of the Serbian people.

Lazar's hagiographers also endeavored to legitimate Lazar's rule in Serbia. If Prince Lazar could be viewed as part of a continuous line of authority that had begun with the Nemanjić and that would continue after Lazar, it might be possible to overcome the sense of disorder and chaos which had characterized the troubled years 1355–1389. These writers wanted to see their own society as an integral part of the Nemanjić tradition. In giving legitimacy to Lazar, they sought to identify Lazar's Serbia and Nemanjić Serbia as one and the same entity.

After establishing this continuity of leadership, the medieval writers had to deal with the Battle of Kosovo itself. The battle is given very little detail in these earliest Serbian sources, and there is no indication that it was a decisive Serbian defeat. The Serbs had sustained substantial losses in the battle—and yet Murad and a multitude of his troops had been killed and Bayezid, the new sultan, had retreated in haste to Edirne to secure the throne. Serbian writers were, therefore, not concerned with describing a great military defeat. Rather, the central theme in each Serbian account is the death of the Serbian prince. In the view of his eulogists, Lazar sacrificed himself so that Serbia might live. What they were conscious of was the fact that the battle robbed Lazar's principality of its strength and leadership. Lazar's death paralyzed Serbian society. He represented the last and only hope against the Ottomans, and it is for this reason that his death was seen as the great tragedy of Kosovo. When the enemy returned again, there was no one to oppose them, and Serbia' s fate was sealed.

In the 15th century the emerging epic tradition of Kosovo began to express new themes, particularly the assassination of Murad by a courageous Serbian knight, Miloš Obilić, and the suspicion of betrayal at the battle.

The epic tradition of Kosovo would develop much more detail and many more themes and characters during the centuries of Ottoman rule in Serbia. In the 100 years after Kosovo, however, we can discern the origins of the major themes that were to give shape to the cult of Kosovo: the glory of pre-Kosovo Serbia; the necessity of struggle against tyranny; and the essential link between the Kosovo ethic and Christianity, which was expressed most clearly in the heroic ideal of self-sacrifice for the faith and for Serbia, the futility of betrayal, and the assuredness of resurrection.

Miloš Obilić, the assassin, becomes the ideal of the brave Serb who dares to strike out against oppression and as an example to others was to become the central theme in the legendary tradition of Kosovo.

Throughout the centuries after Kosovo its legacy and its unique ethos played an important role in the preservation of Serbian identity. With the establishment of Ottoman rule in the Balkans, those Serbs who remained in the mountains or who fled there to find refuge preserved the ancient tribal traditions of that remote mountain life. The mountains became the protector of the cultural and ethnic characteristics of Serbian patriarchal society. Moreover, encouraged by the Serbian Church, this society carried on

the memory of an independent Serbian state. The Church romanticized the Nemanjić tradition for the masses and, removing any negative feudal connotations, helped to create the image of a once glorious state.[1] Lazar' s death on Kosovo was the atonement for all of Serbia' s sins—sins that had called the wrath of God upon them in the first place and caused them to lose their state.

When these mountain Serbs began to colonize other parts of the Balkan peninsula, they brought with them both their patriarchal ideas and the memory of an independent Serbia. This patriarchal society encouraged a feeling for justice and social equality. According to the argument of Vasa Čubrilović, it was the democratic, patriarchal aspirations of the Serbian village which gave a social-revolutionary tone to the eventual wars for Serbian national liberation.[2] In this society Serbs came to believe that there can be no free state without a struggle.

These democratic, patriarchal ideas are seen most clearly in the oral epic poetry that is an expression of Serbian society during the Ottoman rule. The epic poem is a chronicle in verse through which the Serbs expressed their past at a time when they had no state of their own and when most of them were illiterate. Only those events that were important for them and for their fate became subjects of the epic tradition. The result is that the epic contains a peculiar periodization of history in which events that were viewed as turning points in the history of the Serbs became so important that earlier developments were all but forgotten.

It should come as no surprise, therefore, that the Serbs viewed the collapse of the medieval Serbian state as the central event in their history and sought an explanation for it in the Battle of Kosovo. Indeed, the epic cycle of Kosovo became the longest, the most beautiful, and the most important of all the Serbian epics.[3] The roots of such a development were clearly established soon after the battle in the eulogies and sermons composed in the memory of Prince Lazar. The Church nourished the ideas in these writings during the centuries of Ottoman rule, and the patriarchal society accepted them and added its own visions, attitudes, and experiences to create the epic tradition of Kosovo.

In a most recent study of the epic Svetozar Koljević argues that the decasyllabic poems of the Kosovo cycle emerged among illiterate peasant singers in the culture of exile as Ottoman conquest brought about the collapse of feudal society.[4] The poetic form of feudal society was known as *bugarštice*, poems in 14 to 16-syllable lines. Koljević suggests that Kosovo poems in this form did appear on the

Prince-Martyr Lazar's Coat of Arms, around 1380

The coat of arms of Prince Lazar was cut in a shallow relief on a stone plate decorating the parapet under the window on the southern façade of the narthex in Hilandar. The narthex is an extension to the older church of King Milutin, built on the order of Prince Lazar. The helmet with horns is also decorating the buttons of Prince Lazar's vestment and his coins, as well as the coins of his son Despot Stefan Lazarević.

Adriatic in the 15th century but that it was the decasyllabic poetry which became the primary medium for the Kosovo epic. The illiterate singers picked up fragments and themes of the story of Kosovo and shaped them in their new poetic expression which was to last for centuries.[5] On the Adriatic the oral epic would have an influence on written literature, finding its way most importantly into the history of Mavro Orbini and the prose legend, *Priča o boju kosovskom* (Tale about the Battle of Kosovo).

[1] See Vaso Čubrilović, *Istorija političke misli u Srbiji XIX veka* (Belgrade, 1958), pp. 26f.

[2] Ibid., p. 34.

[3] The most recent and excellent English translation of the Kosovo cycle is by John Matthias and Vladeta Vučković: *The Battle of Kosovo* (Athens, Ohio, 1987).

[4] Svetozar Koljević, *The Epic in the Making* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 31–66.

[5] In the early 19th century, at the time of the great Serbian uprisings, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić set about collecting the epic poems of Serbia, especially those of the Kosovo cycle. His love for his people led him to sacrifice much in order to travel throughout the lands of the South Slavs to collect the poetry and preserve it for generations to come. His work excited people all over Europe and led to editions of the poetry in several foreign languages.

Prince Lazar,
painting by Vladislav Titelbah, 1900, Museum of Kikinda

The highly moralistic society of the Serbian village is clearly reflected in the epic tradition. Such virtues as courage, honor, justice, and respect for tradition were fundamental to the ethos of the village and the epic. This was a society which refused to accept the right of any man to rule another; thus we discover in the epic the glorification of those brave men who fought against tyranny. Miloš Obilić, the assassin of Murad, represented the ideal hero who sacrifices himself in order to strike a blow against tyranny. The epic interpreted sacrifice for the good of society as the noblest of virtues and inspired the Serbs to countless struggles and sacrifices in the cause of liberation. The legendary tradition of Kosovo encouraged brigandry and revolutionary acts against the Ottomans throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries.

By the late 18th century as the spirit of revolution found an echo in the Balkans, Serbs were ready to utilize the powerful psychological factor of Kosovo in the struggle for liberation and unification. The Serbs of the Vojvodina gave the cult of Lazar a kind of national character and warmly embraced the written legend of Kosovo which was embodied in the 18th century *Priča o boju kosovskom* (Tale about the Battle of Kosovo). As we have seen, this legendary account of the battle appears to have originated in the south in the general area of Montenegro, the Bay of Cattaro, and Dubrovnik. It came north during the migrations and was copied and widely disseminated during the 18th century. In this way a society found inspiration for its national awakening in the legendary tale of its medieval past.

Destroying tyranny, liberating the land of all foreign control, and reuniting all Serbs in one strong state were primary goals among Serbs in the 19th century. The Serbian Revolution of 1804–1815 created a new Serbian society and was a partial fulfillment of that age-long dream of avenging Kosovo and liberating Serbia.[6] Perhaps the best exemplar of this revolutionary spirit and one of the greatest interpreters of the Kosovo ethic was the prince and poet Petar Petrović-Njegoš, ruler of Montenegro during the second quarter of the 19th century. For Njegoš life consisted of war against the Turks, and the spirit and memory of Kosovo dominated his actions and writings. Njegoš was himself a product of the Dinaric highlands, that rugged, barren land which produced a unique people. The Yugoslav anthropologist Jovan Cvijić in his study of the social psychology of the South Slav peasantry argues that the people from these highlands demonstrated a unique personality which he labeled the "violent dinaric type."[7] Miloš Obilić displayed some of the characteristics of the Dinaric type, and the mountain peasants of Njegoš' time remembered the personal sacrifice of the Kosovo assassin in the experiences of their own revolutionary environment.

In his most important work, the epic poem *Gorski vijenac* (Mountain Wreath), Njegoš gave expression to this heroic element in the folk tradition of his own people as he paid tribute to the memory of Kosovo.[8] In the poem the word "Kosovo" (along with "God") is mentioned most often, while Miloš Obilić is referred to no fewer than 12 times.[9] It was this epic poem, in fact, that helped to give the final shape to the image of Obilić as the pure, Christian hero—the symbol of freedom. Njegoš message was clear. Encour-

6 In 1809, the leader of the first Serbian revolution in 1804, Karadjordje, observed: "Twice the hopes of Kosovo Christians were dashed that they would once again govern their own lands. But now that almost all Slavic lands of the Ottoman Empire have been liberated, we hope that the hour of freedom will soon dawn for Kosovo as well. And there will perhaps still be bloody wars for the sake of this important piece of land, for whoever has Kosovo, that one will be the lord of the Balkan Peninsula." Cf. V. Klaić, "Kosovo," *Obzor,* № III (13 May, 1889), p. 2.

7 Cf. Jovan Cvijić, *Govori i članci* (Belgrade, 1921), Vol. 1, pp. 237–243; Cvijić, *Balkansko poluostrvo i južnoslovenske zemlje* (Belgrade, 1966), pp. 361–436; Cvijić, "Studies in Yugoslav Psychology," *Slavonica Review* (December 1930), pp. 368–384.

8 Cf. the study by Nikolaj Velimirović, *Religija Njegoševa* (Belgrade, 1921).

9 *Gorski vijenac* (Belgrade, 1947); *The Mountain Wreath of P.P. Nyegosh, tr. James W. Wiles* (Westport, Ct: Greenwood Press, 1970). See also Ivo Andrić, *Njegoš kao tragični junak kosovske misli* (Belgrade, 1935), p. 5; and Vladimir Dedijer, *Sarajevo 1914* (Belgrade 1966), p. 421 (*The Road to Sarajevo,* Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 1966).

aged by the long centuries of Ottoman rule and the spirit of the Kosovo epic, Serbians were to understand that the noblest of acts was to kill the foreign tyrants. Njegoš' "Mountain Wreath" in itself had an enormous influence on the Serbian national movement in the decades following its publication in 1847, and was of special importance among those Serbs who remained rural and uneducated. In Njegoš' hands the legacy of the Kosovo martyrdom was transformed into a compelling, positive force determined to eliminate the foreigner from all South Slav lands.

During the 19th century, the spirit of Kosovo also found new expression in the talents of Serbia's dramatists, poets, and painters, who were attracted to the artistic possibilities embodied in the national legend. Inspired by the wars for liberation, the theme of Kosovo reached the Serbian stage in the first half of the 19th century. Sima Milutinović Sarajlija wrote the first play on the subject of Kosovo. His *Tragedija Obilić* was crafted in 1827 and finally published in Leipzig in 1837. This was followed by five other Kosovo dramas: *Miloš Obilić ili Boj na Kosovu* by Jovan Popović in 1827; *Car Lazar* by Isidor Nikolić in 1835; *Car Lazar* by Matija Ban in 1858; *Miloš Obilić* by Jovan Subotić in 1866; and *Lazar* by Miloš Cvetić in 1889.[10] Apparently, the public expected to find characterizations in these dramas which mirrored their understanding of Kosovo from the epic and the legendary tale. In a critique of all five works written in 1890 Milan Jovanović protested the poetic license of his nation's dramatists:

The titans of Kosovo, who should amaze the public from the stage as they did five centuries ago from the stage of world history, have in the course of several decades become miserable pygmies in the hands of our dramatists. They... exert all their strength to cover up the absence of their goals with ornate but hollow phrases.[11]

Kosovo also became a favorite theme for some of Serbia's 19th century painters. Inspired by the nationalism of the early part of the century, the Romantics found popular subjects in the heroes and events of the Battle of Kosovo. They portrayed Lazar as a strong, vital, secular emperor whose image could evoke sentiments of pride in the population of a revolutionary age. Among those who chose some aspect of the Kosovo tradition for their canvas were Petar Čortanović, his son Pavle, Pavle Simić, Novak Radonić, Djura Jakšić, Adam Stefanović, and the Croatian painter, Ferdo Kikerec. Later in the century the first generation of Serbian realists showed little interest in the heroes of Kosovo; but among the second generation of realists Kosovo was a subject in works by Paja Jovanović, Ivan Rendić, Marko Murat, Djordje Krstić, and Uroš Predić, who in 1917 painted the famous *Kosovo Maiden*, now part of the permanent collection at the National Museum in Belgrade.

While the spirit of Kosovo encouraged the struggle for independence and was an important source of inspiration to Serbs throughout the 19th century, the road to complete liberation would not be easy. Many of the Serbian lands, including Kosovo, remained under foreign control during most of the 19th century. Prince Njegoš certainly reflected the impatience and the desires of many in his constant demands for vigilance and continued sacrifice against the Ottomans.[12] In the Vojvodina newspaper *Napredak* (Progress), 50 years after the revolution, an article expressed frustration over the relative lack of progress in the unification of Serbia and hinted that the problem resulted from a lack of understanding of the spirit of Kosovo:

"Our successes have been small. Half of the Serbian nation still remains in Kosovo chains. An indifference toward our basic responsibilities is the main shortcoming and the most harmful sickness of our people. Even the most powerful and bloody examples cannot cure us from this disease... and today we put little effort into knowing our Miloš."[13]

And in a lecture in Novi Sad in 1872 Emil Čarka observed that things would have been much better in Serbia if its leaders had demonstrated the same devotion to the ethos of Kosovo as its common fold had:

If everything had been decent among us after Kosovo as it was with the common people, we would be much more progressive today. But everything—theocracy, aristocracy, and bureaucracy—failed us. Only the common folk remained truthful to their task. Only they preserved the testament of Kosovo.[14]

In 1876, Serbia found itself at war with the Porte on behalf of its fellow Slavs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The failure of this South Slav insurrection guaranteed that Serbia would exist at the mercy of the big powers for the rest of the century. Thus, by the time of the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in 1889, Serbia was under Austrian influence and her plans for unification were necessarily thwarted.

The first suggestion for a 500th anniversary celebration was made in 1886 in the Novi Sad newspaper *Zastava* (The Banner). Nothing came of the first appeal, however, and near the end of 1888 *Zastava* suggested that the Serbs in Ruma should organize a celebration since Ruma was near Vrdnik where Prince Lazar's remains were preserved. Finally on January 1, 1889, *Zastava* announced that a formal committee had been organized in Ruma for the Kosovo commemoration.[15]

Belgrade newspapers immediately protested this development and demanded that any celebration be held in lib-

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[10] See Milan Jovanović, "Pogled na dramsku leteraturu o Kosovu," *Glas kraljevske srpske akademije*, XVIII (Belgrade, 1890), pp. 1–117.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 117.

[12] Cf. M. Kašanin, "Kosovska bitka i naša umetnost," *Pravda*, № 12, 441 (June 28,1939), p. 6; Nenad Simić, "O liku kneza Lazara," *Glasnik Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 6 (1958), pp. 100–109.

[13] "Na Vidovdan," *Napredak*, 17, 70 (16 June, 1864), p. 1.

[14] Emil Čarka, "Kako smo bili, kako smo sade, i kako treba da budemo" (Novi Sad, 1872), p. 7.

[15] Veljko Petrović, "Petstogodišnjica Kosova pre pedeset godina", *Politika*, 36, 11160 (28 June, 1939), p. 4.

erated Serbia. On February 6, 1889, *Male Novine* (The Little Newspaper) insisted that the commemoration should be observed in Kruševac, Lazar's medieval capital. The Serbian government quickly took the initiative and submitted a set of suggestions for the celebration to the regency, which included: (1) a commemoration in all parts of Serbia; (2) the laying of a foundation stone in Kruševac for a monument to the heroes of Kosovo; (3) state support for the printing of new editions of the Kosovo epic; (4) the establishment of a new Order of Prince Lazar which would be awarded only to the Serbian ruler and his heir apparent; and (5) the coronation of Aleksandar Obrenović as King of Serbia in the monastery of Žiča as a part of the celebration.[16] On April 12, 1889 it was announced in Belgrade that a commission of 15 had begun to organize the main commemoration to be held in Kruševac. Both Ruma and Belgrade, therefore, had commissions for official celebrations; their plans progressed simultaneously.

As the day of the commemoration drew near, tensions began to mount in those South Slavic areas controlled by Austria-Hungary. As of April 1889, no one was permitted to travel in the empire without a great passport, and no Serbs were given such passports for travel in any southerly and easterly directions. Imperial police began to guard all roads which faced Serbia and deterred any Serb who wished to travel during the two or three days before the actual celebration.[17] And the authorities did what they could to stop plans which were already underway. They seized the committee's funds for the celebration in Ruma and also confiscated 2,000 commemorative medallions in Novi Sad. They required the bishop of Budim, Arsenije Stojković, and the archbishop of Vršac, Nektarije Dimitrijević, to inform their priests and teachers that they were forbidden to give any sermons or talks on the subject of Kosovo or to hold any kind of commemorative meeting. In some areas of Hungary, presidents of Serbian choral societies were told that their organizations would be abolished if they participated in the Kosovo commemoration.

Sympathetic newspapers attempted to demonstrate their frustration with these restrictions. In Novi Sad *Branik* (The Defender) complained to the government because of the obstacles it was placing in the way of a church holiday. The newspaper suggested that the government wanted to make the commemoration a political demonstration and that the only result of its restrictions would be to interest more people in the event. In Zagreb on June 22nd, 1889 *Obzor* (The Horizon) reminded the Austrians and Hungarians of the apparent double standard with which they operated. In 1881 the Hungarians had commemorated the end of Ottoman authority in their own land, while in 1883 the Austrians had enjoyed a very festive 300th anniversary celebration of their showdown with the Turks at Vienna.[18] Even one Austrian newspaper seemed to understand the consequence of political repression. In June the Viennese *Vaterland* argued that the Hungarian and Croatian authorities were only making the commemoration of Kosovo more popular. The paper suggested that if these authorities had not interfered, the event would have stayed within its borders.[19]

The popularity of the event did indeed spread far beyond the borders of Serbia and the Vojvodina. In Zagreb Bishop Strossmayer encouraged the commemoration, while some of his supporters even sought an extraordinary session of the Zagreb city "opština" so that the city could claim an official role in the commemoration. From the beginning of June in *Obzor* there was a concerted effort to build public support in Croatia for the commemoration.[20] In spite of harassment from the authorities, the newspaper continued to publish whatever bits of news it had about the approaching commemoration. Although several issues were banned during the month, the paper managed to put out an issue on June 27th, which included the following:

Whoever among the Serbs rose up to lead whatever part of his people to freedom, he always appeared with the wreath of Kosovo around his head to say with a full voice: This, O people, is what we are, what we want, and what we can do. And we Croatians—brothers by blood desire with the Serbs —today shout for joy: Praise to the eternal Serbian Kosovo heroes who with their blood made certain that the desire for freedom and glory would never die. Glory to them and to that people who gave them birth.[21]

It was such sentiment which guaranteed resistance from the authorities. Khuen-Hedervary, the Budapest-appointed ban of Croatia, prohibited all commemorations in his jurisdiction. A few days before a planned Kosovo memorial in Zagreb, the president of the committee for the commemoration received the following decision from the government: "To the Honorable Committee for the commemoration of Kosovo, headed by President Franjo Arnold, in Zagreb: Regarding your petition, received on the 18th of this month, we inform you that the announced concert of celebration in commemoration of the Battle of Kosovo, which the singing society intended to perform on the 27th of this month, is prohibited, on the basis of the order of the high presidium of the territorial government of Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia made on the 6th of this month."[22]

Although the ban succeeded in preventing a large, public memorial, he was unable to stop a requiem mass in Zagreb's Orthodox church and a commemorative session of the Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences. At 5:00 p.m.

16 Budimka Kovbasko, "Petstogodišnjica Kosovske bitke", *Bagdala* 2, 14–15 (May-June, 1960), pp. 1f.

17 Petrović, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

18 "Politički pregled", *Obzor*, № 143 (June 22, 1889), p. 1.

19 "Politički pregled", *Obzor*, № 144 (June 24, 1889), p. 2.

20 Cf. Ivan Nevistić, "Hrvati i proslava 500 godišnjice Kosovske bitke", *Narodna odbrana*, XIV (June 28, 1939), № 25–27, pp. 401ff.

21 "Na Vidovdan 1889", *Obzor*, № 147 (June 27, 1889), p. 1.

22 № 16.104. cited in *Obzor*, № 145 (June 25, 1889), p. 3.

on June 27th the Department of Philosophy and History at the Academy hosted a public session during which lectures on Kosovo were given by Franjo Rački and Tomas Maretić.[23]

The Serbian Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences opened the period of celebration in Serbia with a commemorative session in Belgrade on June 11, 1889. Čedomir Mijatović, Serbia's minister of foreign affairs and a great patriot, began the festivities with an emotional, romantic address on the meaning of Kosovo:

"An inexhaustible source of national pride was discovered on Kosovo. More important than language and stronger than the Church, this pride unites all Serbs in a single nation ...The glory of the Kosovo heroes shone like a radiant star in that dark night of almost 500 years... Our people continued the battle in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries when they tried to recover their freedom through countless uprisings. There was never a war for freedom (and when was there no war) in which the spirit of the Kosovo heroes did not participate! The new history of Serbia begins with Kosovo—a history of valiant efforts, long suffering, endless wars and unquenchable glory... Karadjordje breathed with the breath of Kosovo, and the Obrenović placed Kosovo in the coat of arms of their dynasty. We bless Kosovo because the memory of the Kosovo heroes upheld us, encouraged us, taught us and guided us."[24]

These sentiments were echoed later that month in Kruševac, where the most important of the Serbian memorials to Kosovo was held. Arsa Pajević, a writer from Novi Sad, attended the events in Kruševac and left us a typically romantic chronicle of the festivities. For Pajević the first day was one of intense emotion—even the mountains seemed to raise their heads higher, straining as if to see that day 500 years before. The commemoration began with a service in the Church of Lazarica followed by an outdoor service of prayer for the souls of those who died on Kosovo. The metropolitan of the Serbian Church delivered the sermon, which was inspired primarily by the epic tradition of Kosovo. He concluded his brief remarks with a prayer beseeching Lazar and all the martyrs of Kosovo to intercede with God to seek His help in restoring the Serbian Empire and unifying the whole Serbian nation.[25]

In the evening after vespers a large procession led by King Aleksandar wound its way through Kruševac to the center of the city, where a foundation stone was laid for a monument to honor the heroes of Kosovo. The site was covered with wreaths, and one of them in particular impressed the crowd. Sent to Kruševac by a Czech organization in Prague, it was made of 2,000 laurel leaves, on each of which was sewn a card with the wishes and signatures of individual Czech sympathizers. On the silk sash across the wreath were written the words: "The Czech Nation 1389 +27/6 1889. From Ashes to Greatness."[26]

The 500th anniversary commemorations were more successful than anyone could have imagined. In spite of all the attempts at repression, the anniversary of Kosovo became a popular symbol in the struggle for the liberation of all South Slavs from foreign rule. To many who still yearned for their freedom, the Kosovo ethic sounded a note of hope. About 15,000 people made their way to Vrdnik for the celebration that had been organized by the commission in Ruma; and in the heart of Ottoman Serbia midnight prayers were sung in the Serbian Monasteries of Peć, Dečani and Gračanica.[27] The sentiments of many were expressed in an article in *Obzor* on July 1st, 1889. Although banned three times that day, the newspaper managed to publish the following:

"Opponents of the national idea must recognize that two accomplishments were made in their beautiful celebration. It brought Serbs and Croats closer together, and it ignited the smoldering embers on Lazar's grave into full flames, which will not be easy to extinguish."[28]

The celebration also excited the imagination of Slavs throughout Europe. A Slavophile newspaper in Russia, for example, termed Kosovo the "Serbian Troy" and called on all Russians to recognize it as such. "Not to praise the memory of Kosovo in Russia," the article argued, "means treason to Slavic ethnic feeling."[29] In Vienna, South Slav youth gathered in their respective clubs and in outdoor parties to remember the heroes of Kosovo. The Russian embassy in the Austrian city commemorated the event in their chapel with the assistance of the Serbian Academic Society "Zora" and the Croatian Academic Society "Zvonimir." In St. Petersburg there was a requiem service in St. Isaac's, while in Athens black flags flew from the city's churches. Most of the Serbian colony in Paris attended a service in the Russian church, and articles on Kosovo appeared in many French journals including *Debats*, *Temps*, *Republique Francaise*, *Voltaire*, *Mot d'Ordre*, and *Petit Journal*.

Something that was not accomplished in time for the 1889 celebration, and that would probably have prevented the competition between Ruma and Belgrade, was the

[23] Cf. Franjo Rački, "Boj na Kosovu: uzroci i posljedice", *Rad jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti*, XCVII (Zagreb 1889), pp. 1–68; and T. Maretić, "Kosovski junaci i dogadjaji u narodnoj epici", *Rad jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti*, XCVII (Zagreb 1889), pp. 69–181. In spite of travel restrictions, some Croatians managed to make their way to the celebrations in Serbia. Adam Mandrović, the most famous Croatian actor of his day, traveled to Belgrade to play the role of Prince Lazar in the premier of Miloš Cvetić's play, "*Prince Lazar*."

[24] Čedomir Mijatović, "Kosovo: Beseda Čedomira Mijatovića u svečanoj sednici Kraljevske akademije, 11 June, 1889", *Otadžbina*, 22 (1889), p. HIVf.

[25] Branko Peruničić, *Kruševac u jednom veku* (Kruševac 1971), pp. 33–37.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 38–40.

[27] Cf. Petrović, "Petstogodišnjica", p. 4; *Obzor*, № 150 (July 2, 1889), pp. 1f.

[28] Novak, "Kako su Hrvati proslavili", p. 5.

[29] Petrović, *op. cit.*, pp. 3f.

transfer of Lazar's remains from Vrdnik to Ravanica. Čedomir Mijatović got the idea for the transfer while he was on a tour of Serbia with Prince Milan in 1874. Because of the possibility of conflict with the monks of Vrdnik and with the Hungarian government, Milan was not particularly interested in the idea. In 1880, however, the Hungarian government indicated that it would not oppose the transfer if the Serbian government first secured the approval of the Vrdnik monks. Mijatović sent the Serbian poet Milorad Popović Šapčanin to Vrdnik with an offer of a yearly payment amounting to twice the revenue generated in Vrdnik from an average year of pilgrims. This idea was criticized openly in a letter to the Serbian press from Danilo Medaković, an interpreter with the Russian legation, who argued that the removal of Lazar's bones from Vrdnik would lead to the Magyarization of those Serbs living in Hungary. He believed that the presence of Lazar's remains sustained the Vojvodina Serbs in their patriotism. The Belgrade newspapers, which were subsidized by the Russians, sided with Medaković, and Mijatović was convinced to give up his idea at that time.[30]

A decade later Mijatović argued again for the transfer of Lazar's remains and suggested that such an act might give Serbia a renewed sense of unity and bring an end to her political problems:

"If the interests of our people are what is in question, then it is far more important that thousands of Serbs from Montenegro, Dalmatia, Herzegovina, Bosnia, Old Serbia, and Macedonia come to the center of Serbia on Vidovdan than go to the Kingdom of Hungary... Gathered around the body of the Kosovo martyr, we might be ashamed of our political disorder. We might feel that the ties which bind us together as one and the same people are older, more important and more sacred than the ties of party."[31]

Nothing came of Mijatović's appeal.[32] Throughout the late 19th century the spirit of Kosovo was evoked on each anniversary of the battle, and priests and politicians alike reminded their people of the obligation to avenge Kosovo and unify Serbia. Until the beginning of the 20th century, however, any hope that Serbia would play the role of a "South-Slavic Piedmont" was frustrated by the actions of the big powers.

The turn of the century seemed to bring with it a new, more intense desire to alter the status quo and not only in Serbia but throughout the Balkans. Many young people living under Habsburg or Ottoman rule were especially frustrated by the factionalism, chauvinism, and narrow-mindedness of their fathers and leaders, which made unity and effective action against foreign tyranny impossible. One such youth who channeled these concerns into the works of this creative genius was Ivan Meštrović, the most important Croat and South Slav sculptor of the 20th century.

Meštrović tended sheep as a teenager in Dalmatia, where he learned to read the epic poetry of the Serbs in Cyrillic and was profoundly influenced by the ideas of freedom and liberation expressed in the epic of Kosovo. The centuries-long struggle of the South Slavs against foreign oppression became a dominant theme in his early sculpture.[33] Between 1905 and 1910, he studied sculpture in Vienna and Paris and spent his summers on the Dalmatian coast in Split. One summer night Meštrović sat with some intellectuals and artists in the People's Square in Split and listened to the dramatist Ivo Vojnović read from his recent play on the tragedy of Kosovo, *Smrt majke Jugovića* (The Death of the Mother of the Jugovići). Soon after that Meštrović developed the idea for a monumental temple in honor of the Kosovo heroes: "What I had in mind was an attempt to create a synthesis of popular national ideals and their development, to express in stone and building how deeply buried in each one of us are the memories of the great and decisive moments in our history... I wanted at the same time to create a focus of hope for the future, one which stands out in the countryside and under the free sky."[34] Meštrović hoped that the monument would serve as a symbol of the suffering and hopes of all South Slavs. He envisioned a monumental gate with triumphal arches, a central building with a cupola, and a belfry whose columns would be representations of the Kosovo heroes. Under the cupola was to stand an enormous statue of Miloš Obilić. He anticipated that like the medieval cathedrals, this monument would involve the collective efforts of several generations.[35]

Meštrović's obsession with the Kosovo temple continued until World War I, by which time he had completed several of the Kosovo figures. The emotional impact of this work encouraged the art historian Josef Strzygowski to suggest that there could certainly be trouble for the Habsburg Empire if "Meštrović's fellow nationals understand his message and if his art awakes in them new ideas of unity."[36]

While the years of war eventually ended in the creation of a South Slavic state, the tragedy of those years and the problems of the post-war period turned Meštrović away from his faith in the spirit of Kosovo. He discovered that the appeal of Kosovo was not universal, and his search for a new inspiration led him to Christianity. "It was thinking about these ideas," he said, "that brought me back to bibli-

[30] Čedomir Mijatović, *Memoirs of a Balkan Diplomatist* (London 1917), pp. 224 ff.

[31] Čedomir Mijatović, "Prenos kostiju cara Lazara", *Branik*, 7, 69 (27 June, 1891), p. 2.

[32] Two years before he died, Mijatović still took up his pen in the cause of Kosovo memorials. He suggested that Lazar's wife, Milica, and the legendary "maiden of Kosovo", who brought water to the dying and wounded Serbian soldiers after the battle, should be proclaimed saints. See Č. Mijatović, "Ko je kosovska devojka", *Vreme*, 10, 2910 (1 February, 1930), p. 3; Mijatović, "Caricu i kosovsku devojku treba proglasiti svetiteljkama", *Vreme*, 10, 2889 (2 January, 1930), p. 1.

[33] Duško Kečkemet, *Ivan Meštrović* (Zagreb 1970), pp. 1ff.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

cal themes. A feeling for the general suffering of man took the place that until then had been filled by a feeling for the suffering of my own nation..."[37]

After the turn of the century the youth of Serbia were offered more aggressive outlets for their passions and idealism. The return of the Karadjordjević dynasty to the Serbian throne in 1903 signaled a new period of independence vis-a-vis Austria-Hungary. Within a decade Serbia was at war. In the Balkan Wars of 1912–13 examples of self-sacrifice were abundant among Serbian soldiers. The realization that Kosovo could finally be liberated after more than 500 years fired the imaginations and the emotions of young Serbs. Consider the recollections of one of these young patriots as he was told that his unit was heading for Kosovo:

"My God, what awaits us! To see a liberated Kosovo. The words of the commander were like music to us and soothed our souls like a miraculous balsam. The single sound of that word "Kosovo" caused an indescribable excitement. This one word pointed to the black past five centuries. In it exists the whole of our sad past the tragedy of Prince Lazar and the entire Serbian people ... Each of us created for himself a picture of Kosovo while we were still in the cradle. Our mothers lulled us to sleep with the songs of Kosovo, and in our schools our teachers never ceased in their stories of Lazar and Miloš ...When we arrived on Kosovo and the battalions were placed in order, our commander spoke: "Brothers, my children, my sons!" His voice breaks. "This place on which we stand is the graveyard of our glory. We bow to the shadows of fallen ancestors and pray God for the salvation of their souls." His voice gives out and tears flow in streams down his cheeks and gray beard and fall to the ground. He actually shakes from some kind of inner pain and excitement. The spirits of Lazar, Miloš, and all of the Kosovo martyrs gaze on us. We felt strong and proud, for we are the generation which will realize the centuries-old dream of the whole nation: that we with the sword will regain the freedom that was lost with the sword."[38]

When Kosovo was finally liberated in the Balkan Wars, King Peter I Karadjordjević was on the throne. The liberation guaranteed that Peter would be remembered by some as the romantic fulfillment of the legacy of Lazar and Miloš:

"He was not an ordinary king. Rather he was the incarnation of the idea of Great Serbia, the symbol of Serbian liberty and the Serbian epic, the dream of centuries, and the hope of all generations. He was the synthesis of national feelings, the soul of the Serbian people, a gentle balm and solace for those who suffer."[39]

Less than two years after the liberation of Kosovo, Gavrilo Princip waited on the streets of Sarajevo to assassinate the heir to the Habsburg throne. A teenager who knew Njegoš' "Mountain Wreath" by heart, Princip had certainly been inspired by Njegoš' characterization of Miloš Obilić as the ideal exemplar of the philosophy that the murder of a tyrant is no murder. Like other young Bosnians who were reared in the patriarchal society of the South Slav peasantry, Princip honored the legend of Kosovo. He believed that political assassination could help to restore the liberty lost on that Serbian field five centuries earlier.[40] In essence, Princip was but one more example of Cvijić Dinaric personality:

"Dinaric man burns from a desire to avenge Kosovo where he lost his independence, and to restore the old Serbian Empire, about which he constantly dreams, even in the most difficult times when anyone else would despair ... He considers himself chosen by God to carry out the national mission. He expresses these eternal thoughts in songs and sayings ... He returns to them at every opportunity ... Every Dinaric peasant considers the national heroes as his own ancestors ... in his thoughts he participates in their great deeds and in their immeasurable suffering ... He knows not only the names of the Kosovo heroes but also what kind of person each one was and what were his virtues and faults. There are even regions in which the people feel the wounds of the Kosovo heroes. For the Dinaric man to kill many Turks means not only to avenge his ancestors but also to ease their pains which he himself feels."[41]

This was the spirit and dedication which motivated hundreds of thousands of Serbs to untold sacrifice during the tragic years of World War I. During that war, Serbia became the "darling" of both the English and French public which interpreted her determination to fight and secure her freedom as an expression of the Kosovo spirit. In 1916 a nationwide tribute to Serbia was arranged in Britain to celebrate the anniversary of Kosovo. Information about Serbia was disseminated throughout the country. A shop opened in London in order to sell literature about Serbia, which British publishing houses had printed in tens of thousands of copies. Posters created from a Punch cartoon, "Heroic Serbia," were displayed conspicuously throughout the country. Schools and churches arranged special lectures and services in commemoration of the Serbian holiday. Cinemas showed films about Serbia, and the Serbian national anthem was played in some theaters. The English press publicized all the activities with more than 400 articles and news items.[42]

R.W. Seton-Watson, who helped organize the celebration, prepared an address on Serbia for the schools of Great Britain. Entitled *Serbia: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*, the address was read aloud in whole or in part in almost

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[38] P. M., "Prvi na Kosovu", *Vojnički Glasnik*, 13, 12 (28 June, 1932), pp. 186f.

[39] Dušan Šijački, ed., *Vidovdan: Ilustrovana istorija srpskih ratova* (Belgrade 1926), pp. 4, 54.

[40] Cf. Vladimir Dedijer, *The Road to Sarajevo* (New York 1966), pp. 235–260. Dedijer discusss the influence of Kosovo on the young Bosnians in his chapter, "The Kosovo Tyrannicide".

[41] Jovan Cvijić, *Balkansko poluostrvo*, pp. 362, 368.

[42] "Report on Kosovo Day's Celebrations", *Kosovo Day* (London 1916), pp. 11–25.

12,000 schools and helped to acquaint the youth of Great Britain with Serbian history. In his brief remarks Seton-Watson characterized the Battle of Kosovo as one of the decisive events in the history of Southeast Europe. He wanted his listeners to understand "how completely the story of Kosovo is bound up with the daily life of the whole Serbian nation."[43]

In June 1918, five months before the end of the war, the United States recognized the anniversary of Kosovo as a day of special commemoration in honor of Serbia and all other oppressed people who were fighting in the Great War. The meaning of Kosovo was the subject of countless sermons, lectures, and addresses throughout the United States.

In a special service in New York City's Cathedral of St. John the Devine the Reverend Howard C. Robbins compared Serbs to the people of Israel and observed that Serbia "voices its suffering through patience far longer than Israel's and it voices a hope that has kept burning through five centuries."[44]

The primary commemoration was held in New York at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on the evening of June 17, 1918. James M. Beck, former assistant attorney general of the United States, endeavored in his address to draw a relationship between the ethic of Kosovo and the tragedy of the Great War:

"It is true that we commemorate a defeat, but military defeats are… often moral victories. If Serbia is not temporarily defeated, she has triumphed at the great bar of public opinion, and she stands in the eye of the nations as justified in her quarrel. Serbia was not only the innocent, precipitating cause of this world war, but it is the greatest martyr, and I am inclined to think in many respects its greatest hero."[45]

He then related the legend of the angel who came to Lazar on Kosovo and offered him a choice between the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of the earth. Lazar, of course, chose the Kingdom of Heaven, and Mr. Beck considered this the revelation of a great truth:

"Running through recorded history as the golden thread of a divine purpose is the truth, that the nation which condones a felony against the moral order sooner or later suffers … Each nation which took part in the Congress of 1878 had reason to regret the compounding of the felony that first started on the plains of Kosovo in 1389 … The war is a great expiation for the failure of civilized nations for centuries to recognize the duty that … Lazar assumed on the eve of Kosovo."[46]

During the war, the Yugoslav Committee in London interpreted Kosovo as an inspiration for all South Slavs in their struggle against the enemy and their desire for a unified state. In a message to the Prince Regent of Serbia in April of 1916 the Committee proclaimed:

"Medieval Serbia had its Kosovo which weighed upon the Serbs for five centuries. The Serbia of the present after having gloriously avenged its former Kosovo, had lately suffered a second, more terrible than the first But the Serbia of today is no longer isolated as was the Serbia of the past. Great through the universal moral prestige which the heroism and super human sacrifices of her sons have earned for her, Serbia is today supported by powerful allies. It is her desire and her duty to avenge this second Kosovo. But the country which will arise from the terrible ordeal of which we are the spectators will not be merely a restored, or even an aggrandized Serbia, but one that includes the entire Yugoslav nation, and the whole of its national territory, united in one single state under the illustrious dynasty of your reverend father. This state will be the unyielding rock against which the waves of Germanism will dash themselves in vain."[47]

A month later the committee argued:

"For more than five centuries Kosovo was the banner of our national pride, the sum and substance of our national unity, and as it was, thus it is and will remain the watchword of every Yugoslav wherever he dwells, the watchword of a race which longs, aspires, and demands its proper place and the right of governing its own destiny among other cultured nations."[48]

In the view of many during the war, the creation of a Yugoslav state would be the final vindication of the 14th century tragedy on Kosovo. Tihomir Djordjević, a Serbian professor of ethnography who wrote for the English public during the war, argued that Yugoslav unity had been the ultimate goal of Emperor Stefan Dušan, and had it not been for Kosovo "a great, powerful, and free Yugoslav Empire would have grown."[49] Kosovo was, therefore, a tragedy for all the South Slavs and necessarily became a symbol for the freedom of them all as well. Obviously, this was a view of the medieval world molded by contemporary concerns.

With the end of the war and the establishment of a Yugoslav state, the centuries-long ordeal was apparently over. During the turbulent inter-war years, the Kosovo ethic was often invoked as the essential spirit of Yugoslav unity. After the assassination of King Alexander in Marseilles in 1934, for example, there was a popular attempt to identify the king and his death with Prince Lazar and his sacrifice on Kosovo. In the words of Juraj Demetrović, the editor of *Jugoslovenske Novine* (The Yugoslav News),"Alexander chose the heavenly kingdom in order to secure the future of Yugoslavia."[50] He argued that no great idea has ever been vic-

43 R. W. Seton-Watson, *Serbia: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (London 1916), p. 6.

44 Serbian National Defense League of America, *Kosovo Day in America: 1389–1918* (New York 1918), p. 9.

45 *Ibid.*, pp. 15ff.

46 *Ibid.*, pp. 18ff.

47 For the Yugoslav Committee by Dr. Ante Trumbić, *South Slav Bulletin*, Nos. 10–11 (10 April, 1916), p. 1.

48 *South Slav Bulletin*, № 18 (August 1916), p. 4.

49 Tihomir Georgevitch, "Kosovo, 1389", *Kosovo Day* (London 1916), p. 7.

50 Juraj Demetrović, "Od Golgote do pobjede", *Jugoslovenske novine* I, № 1 (8 October, 1936), p. 1.

torious without its Golgotha. Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia all had their individual Golgothas, but it was only the tragedy at Marseilles which represented the ultimate sacrifice. There Alexander became the first martyr for the Yugoslav idea, and resurrection would come with a strong and unified Yugoslavia.[51]

1939 was the last year in which the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo was widely celebrated. The 550th anniversary came at a time when the clouds of war in Europe again loomed on the horizon. The commission for the celebration of the anniversary announced to all Yugoslavs that the Kosovo ethic was, indeed, a Yugoslav ethic:

"Kosovo gave us Vidovdan from whose faith, ethic, and symbols we remained alive ... until this very day. The Vidovdan mystique was that magical lever for all our unprecedented undertakings and accomplishments in history. It was the foundation of our national, spiritual image, our heroism, and our Christian view of man. It was the greatest and most difficult test of the Serbian people, and it remained as an example not only to them but to all Yugoslavs ... Vidovdan is the torch of our spirit which is stronger than all other factors in anything we do. It is our deepest sign and warning not to forget our national duties and honor, but to be like those perfect soldiers who fell alongside the righteous prince on Kosovo for his unified nation, its happy future and honor, and for the empire of eternal national ideas."[52]

The Serbian organization, "National Defense," designated Vidovdan as "a holiday of thanksgiving to known and unknown heroes, as a day of commemoration and remembrance for our obligations to king and country, and as a holiday for the cult of freedom and the indivisibility of the Yugoslav spirit, land, people, and state."[53] One member of this organization encouraged an even broader interpretation of the power of Kosovo: "Kosovo is a pan-Slavic, universal idea. It can be accepted only by rejecting all selfish concerns, prejudices, and all national pretensions."[54] Yugoslavs everywhere were reminded that Kosovo belonged to them all. To the Croats, many of whom were less than enthusiastic about celebrating a Serbian holiday, the message was direct:

"Prince Lazar integrated the national and religious ideals. The Kosovo myth gave the Serbian people strength and created a collective consciousness. This should be a lesson to the Croatian public. On the crossroads of the world, where so many interests are in conflict, collective consciousness is necessary. Without it there is no strength, no self-sacrifice, no future."[55]

In Slovenia the message was also an appeal to unity:

"What does this national holiday mean to us today in these extraordinary circumstances! Nothing less than our national consciousness and our strong desire to remain united, free, and independent."[56]

The Serbian people needed no reminder of the importance of Kosovo, but the anniversary in 1939 provided another opportunity for reflection. Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović described Kosovo as "our national Golgotha and at the same time our national resurrection."[57] This Christian symbolism, so central to the meaning of Kosovo throughout the centuries, was expressed in dozens of commemorative articles:

"Not a single task could be started without first consulting Kosovo through the medium of the gusle. *Hajduks* and *uskoks* and captains of Cattaro, and Montenegrian rulers and leaders of national uprising—all of them before everything else communed first with the miraculous Vidovdan wafer."[58]

A 1939 article in *Slobodna Misao* (Free Thought), entitled "The Kosovo Religion" demonstrated that Kosovo could even be exploited to test the loyalty of individuals to the unitarist position of the Serbian monarchy. Using the examples of Stojan Protić and Velja Vukićević, the author of the article suggested that some political leaders in the postwar period followed ideas which were not inspired by the religion of Kosovo.[59] Apparently, there were "many ways to interpret this old "religion."

It is clear today that the appeals for unity in 1939 were eleventh hour alarms. Europe was at war again three months after the anniversary of Kosovo. In less than two years the fragile unity of Yugoslavia would be destroyed. On March 25, 1941 representatives of the Yugoslav government signed the Tripartite Pact. Widespread dissatisfaction with this capitulation to the Axis powers led two days later to a coup d'état in Belgrade. Patriarch Gavrilo of the Serbian Church saw the capitulation as a betrayal of the Kosovo ethic. In an address on Belgrade radio he reminded his people that Lazar had faced the enemy and accepted his fate for the sake of Serbia. He insisted that the contemporary situation demanded the same sacrifice:

"Before our nation in these days the question of our fate again presents itself. This morning at dawn the question received its answer. We chose the heavenly kingdom—the kingdom of truth, justice, national strength, and freedom. That eternal ideal is carried in the hearts of all Serbs, preserved in the shrines of our churches, and written on our banners..."[60]

51 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

52 *Vrbaske novine*, 10, 1599 (28 June, 1939), p. 1.

53 "Proslava Vidovdana", *Narodna odbrana*, XIV (28 June, 1939), b. 25–27, p. 436.

54 Radojčić, "Tajna Vidovdana", p. 391.

55 "Hrvati o Kosovu", *Slobodna misao*, 17, 24 (2 July, 1939), p. 5.

56 "Slovenački listovi povodom vidovdanske proslave", *Politika* 36, 11160 (28 June, 1939), p. 10.

57 Nikolaj Velimirović, "Kosovo", *Narodna odbrana*, XIV, № 25–27 (28 June, 1939), p. 388.

58 Uroš M. Bjelić, "Vidovdanski kult u programu narodne odbrane", *Narodna odbrana*, XV, № 28 (16 June, 1939), p. 433.

59 "Kosovska religija", *Slobodna Misao*, 18, 24 (2 July, 1939), pp. 1f.

60 D. Stranjaković, "Vidovdan", *Glasnik* (službeni list Srpske Pravoslavne Crkve), 6 (1953), p. 16.

The Original Model of Meštrović Saint Vitus Temple,
1912, National Museum, Kruševac

"What I had in mind was an attempt to create a synthesis of popular national ideals and their development, to express in stone and building how deeply buried in each one of us are the memories of the great and decisive moments in our history... I wanted at the same time to create a focus of hope for the future, one which stands out in the countryside and under the free sky. It was thinking about these ideas that brought me back to biblical themes. A feeling for the general suffering of man took the place that until then had been filled by a feeling for the suffering of my own nation..."

The Axis invasion began 10 days later. Yugoslavia was dis-membered and puppet states were established in Croatia and Serbia. Within weeks of the occupation the resistance struggle began. On the anniversary of Kosovo in 1942, in an article in Belgrade's *Naša Borba* (Our Struggle), an organ of the puppet government, it was argued that everything the resistance movement represented was in direct opposition to the spirit, ideals, and the legacy of the heroes of Kosovo:

"It is not dangerous to lose a battle. It is not even that dangerous to lose a state... Such losses can be made up. It is dangerous, however, when one begins to distort the truth, warp principles, corrupt ideals, and poison traditions. Then the spirit suffers, craziness overcomes it, and self-destruction crushes it... Can the discord be greater? Can the blunder be worse? It can if the eel is exchanged for the snake, the heavenly sower for the sower of corn cockles... if truth is replaced with lies, wisdom with foolishness, beauty with ugliness, patriotism with hatred of country... blessing with damnation... The defeat of a nation is either a tragedy or a comedy, depending on whether the blow comes from outside or from inside, from Providence or from a crazy mind. Our Kosovo is a tragedy. The 'Kosovo without Kosovo' is a comedy—a comedy as a symbol of Njegoš' curse: Lords, damn their souls... They threw away the government and the state! Lords, ugly cowards, They become traitors of the land."[61]

With the establishment of a socialist society in Yugoslavia after World War II, there was a marked decline in public comment on the meaning of Kosovo—most noticeably on the occasion of the anniversary of the battle. The government's ideologues and many of the war's survivors helped to create new legends about the great battles of the Partisan movement. For many years after the war the Battle on the Sutjeska was revered as a kind of Yugoslav Kosovo. Commemorations of the Battle of Kosovo were essentially confined to services of the Serbian Church; and it has been the Church that continues to remind the faithful of the basic religious and humanistic qualities of the Kosovo ethic:

"One of the main characteristics of Kosovo is the idea of a conscious, willing sacrifice for noble ideals, a sacrifice of one individual for the benefit of the rest, a sacrifice now for the sake of a better future. According to popular understanding which developed in our folk literature, the Battle of Kosovo was not an event in which it was possible to win or lose. It was rather a conscious, heroic sacrifice. A slave is only half a man; a freeman is similar to God."[62]

A perhaps more secular interpretation of the basic idea of the Kosovo spirit is provided by Miloslav Stojadinović in the preface of his *Kosovska Trilogija* (Kosovo Trilogy). He maintains that ..."the Kosovo spirit is the 'revolutionary spirit of justice, humanity, equity, equality of rights, with a noticeably democratic and progressive quality of respect for the rights of all other people."[63]

In these few words Stojadinović expresses the timeless character of the Kosovo ethic. As we have noted, this ethic was nourished in the patriarchal society of the Serbian peasant during the centuries of Ottoman domination. It expressed a basic attitude toward life itself: democratic, anti-feudal, with a love for justice and social equality. For centuries it has been an essential ingredient in the historical consciousness of the Serbian people.

Kosovo, ed. B.W.R. Jenkins,
Serbian Western American Diocese 1992, pp. 47–59.

[61] D. Najdanović, "O Kosovu onda i sad", *Naša Borba*, pp. 2, 43 (28 June 1941), p. 4.

[62] "Vidovdan", p. 8.

[63] Miloslav Stojadinović, *Kosovska trilogija* (Belgrade 1970), p. 5

The Cult of the Great-Martyr Prince Lazar of Serbia

Fr. Daniel M. Rogić

The true Christian is a warrior making his way through the regiments of the invisible enemy to his heavenly homeland.
St. Herman of Alaska

Our Holy Father Great-Martyr Prince Lazar was born in 1329 to God-fearing and noble Serbian Orthodox parents, in the town of Prilepac, near the large mining center of Novo Brdo (southern Serbia). His father, Lazar Pribac Hrebeljanović, was the chancellor to Emperor Stephen Dušan the Powerful. According to Orthodox practice, eight days after his birth this divine child of God was given his name Stephen Lazar Hrebeljanović, after the First-martyr of the Book of Acts.[1] From infancy Lazar possessed a gentle spirit, coupled with a humble yet brave mind and a noble heart and soul. His was a wealthy aristocratic family; yet his parents and the surrounding royal court of the Serbian kingdom were founded upon the principle known as *Svetosavlje*, taught by St. Sava himself, whereby the basis for royal leadership and all aspects of life in the kingdom of Serbia was the Orthodox Faith and holy life of the Church. His family lived in humility at all times. This is evidenced in the lives of his two sisters.

Lazar never sought a cheap freedom "at any price," but only true freedom which comes from God alone, through the Cross of Christ. After the Battle of Kosovo, the humble Lazar bowed his holy head beneath the sword of the blood thirsty Bayazid, and softly prayed these words: "O my Creator, Who judges our sins known and unknown, to Thee I cry out and to Thee I pray: forgive me for all I have neglected to do according to Thy holy will, and save my people's soul, or more properly, not my people, but Thy people, O Lord. Into Thy hands I commend my spirit." With these words Great-Martyr Lazar was beheaded, on Tuesday, June 15, 1389, at the Field of Black birds, where the Kosovo peonies blossomed from pools of blood.[2] He was sixty years of age. Bayazid himself, taken aback by such a dignified commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ on the part of the Saint,

Prince Lazar *Cephalophoros*, wood carving, 17th century, Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Belgrade

[1] The name Stephen is a most popular Serbian name, beginning with Stefan Nemanja, the founder of the Serbian kingdom, who was among the first royalty to be named after St. Stephen the First-martyr. In fact, Prince Lazar was named after the Serbian King Stefan Dečanski, who ruled at the time, and of course his father, Lazar. In the services in honor of Lazar, he is called the "New Lazarus," referring to Jesus' friend, whom He raised from the dead just eight days before His own Resurrection. According to the tradition, the martyred Prince was called Lazar to distinguish him from the Stefans at the time: Stefan Dušan and Stefan Dečanski, as well as his son Stefan Lazarević.

[2] The Field of Kosovo is also known in Serbian Epic Poetry as the Field of Blackbirds, mainly because of the black ravens which are plenteous there, and which feasted on the dead bodies of the fallen soldiers. See the poem, *The Death of the Mother of the Jugović Brothers*. Peonies, known as *božurs* in Serbian, which means "flowers of God," are perennial flowers which grow on the plain. In many Serbian villages in Kosovo it was customary to fast on Tuesdays in remembrance of the battle.

Prince Lazar, fresco from Kremlin, Moscow,
1564–65, repainted 1652–66,
Cathedral of the Holy Archangels (Archangelsky Sobor)

allowed monks to take the body of Lazar for honorable burial in the Church of the Holy Ascension in Priština. The great poetic saying of the Serbs rang true: *Sve je sveto i čestito bilo, i milome Bogu pristupačno* ("Everything was holy and honorable, and acceptable to the gracious God").

One year later (1390–91), in a solemn procession from Priština to Ćuprija, led by Patriarch Danilo III, the body of Holy Great-Martyr Prince Lazar was brought to his foundational monastery, Ravanica. Along the way, mourners, especially the Christian women and children, lamented the loss of the fallen Holy Emperor and his soldiers, as Rachel weeping for her children (cf. Matt. 2:18). Many at first were bewildered and did not understand the meaning of his life, especially his life-giving death, and the significance of the Battle of Kosovo itself. They also mourned for Elder Jug-Bogdan and his nine sons, as well as the heroic soldiers Milan of Toplica, Ivan Kosančić, Miloš Obilić, the Musić brothers (who were buried at the Monastery of Nova Pavlica), and the thousands of Christian soldiers martyred on the Field of Kosovo.

Many of the women who came to the battle field afterward, as well as those who awaited the body of Saint Lazar at Ravanica, were like the Myrrh-bearing women who came to the tomb of Christ to anoint and lament over the Lord's body. Princess Milica cried out: "O how I lament, how I grieve, and there is no one to comfort me. Weep with me, O fields and valleys, for you have become partakers of their bodies and blood! Cry with me, O mothers, and mourn for your most beloved children! Grieve, O wives, for your triumphantly gallant husbands!" The beloved Kosovo Devojka (unknown Maiden of Kosovo), who had come to the battle field as to a tomb, lamented: "Most bewildered evil has come upon me; most sorrowful if I were to grasp the branch of a green pine tree, even the green pine would wither." And the blessed mother of the nine Jugović brothers, after receiving the severed right hand (with ring) of her youngest son Damian—delivered to her by two black ravens was in total shock at such a disaster, so much so that she could not speak. Husband and nine sons had been martyred, her heart swelled and burst asunder.

Yet to the amazement of all, upon opening the casket at Ravanica, all those gathered together found the holy body of Lazar, with severed head, exuding a fragrant myrrh, and they beheld a supra-sensual, uncreated light beaming from within the casket. As the funeral Liturgy was chanted and all received the precious Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the sorrow began to turn into joy, the wailing began to cease, and up lifted hands and hearts began to silently praise God. Those who venerated Holy Lazar, giving him the last kiss, were healed of their spiritual maladies, were fortified in spirit, were inflamed ever more for the Life-giving Cross and Glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ. His burial in the Monastery Church of the Ascension was a complete turning point in the history of the Serbian people: having been certainly founded and formed in Christ and Orthodoxy earlier by St. Sava and his father Stefan Nemanja St. Simeon, they now were fully consecrated and purified by the glorious martyrdom of Holy Prince Lazar.

Indeed, the sorrow of the nation was transformed into joy. Princess Milica, who shortly thereafter, in 1393, became Mother Eugenia as a nun in Ljubostinja, cried out for joy: "Rejoice, O Lazar, my never sleeping eye; Lazar who outshines all the stars, Preacher of the Trinity, Liberator of the imprisoned, Pillar of the Church; Rejoice, O teacher of hesychasts. Blessed art thou indeed, O Lazar; bless me who blesses thee." In 1405, the nun Jefimija, the widow of Despot John Uglješa Mrnjavčević, and the cousin of Princess Milica Eugenia, composed a wondrous encomium which she sewed with gold and silver thread onto the silk shroud

draped over the Great Martyr's sarcophagus: "From thy youth thou wast raised among the beauties of this world, O New Martyr Lazar. With a courageous heart and a desire for piety, thou didst set out against the enemies of the Church of God. Thou didst receive from God the crown of martyrdom. Do not now forget thy children. Kneel down before the Master Who has crowned thee; pray to Him that thy beloved children may lead their life in a God-pleasing manner. Pray that the Orthodox faith may continue in violate in thy homeland."[3]

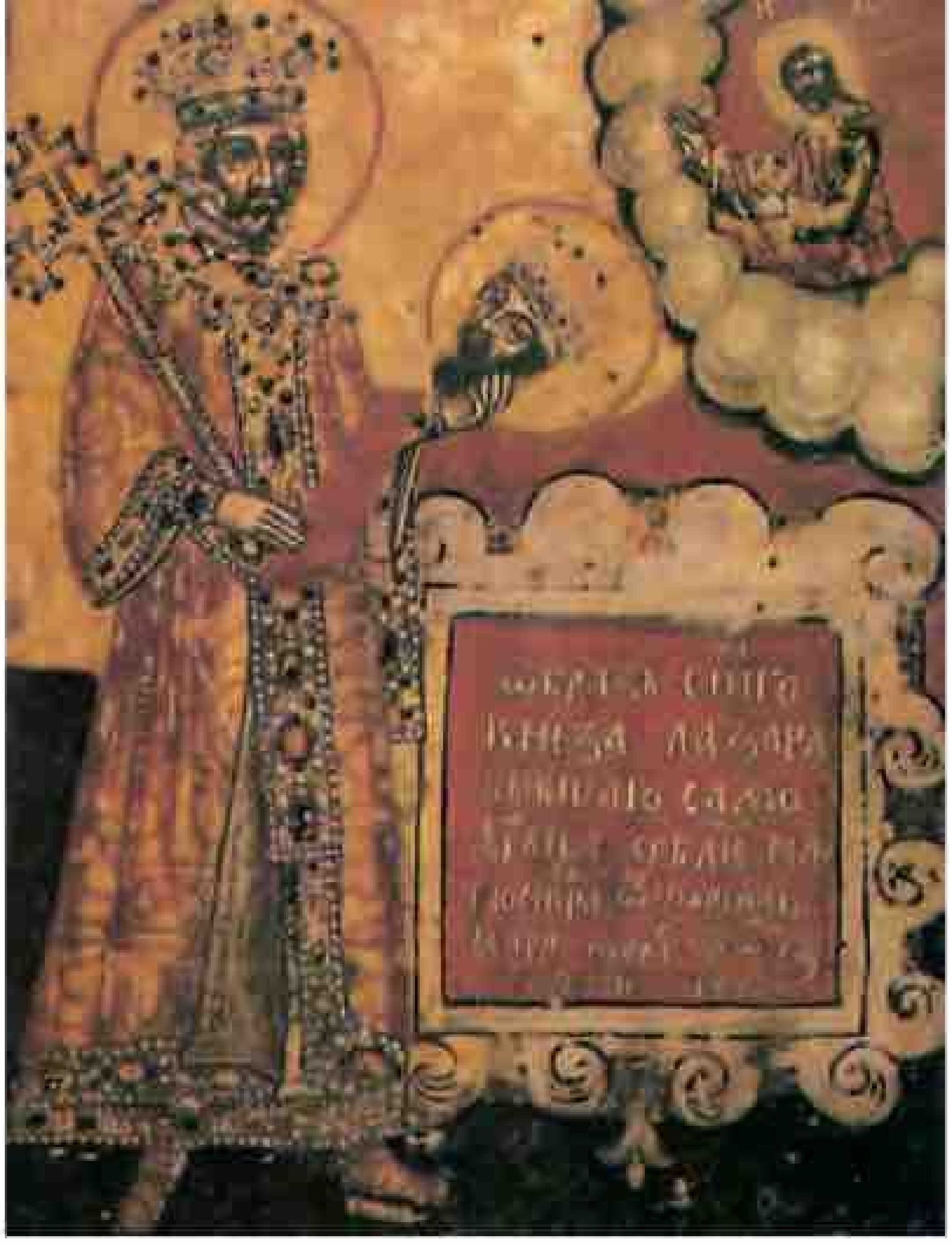
On the Kosovo plain the Holy Martyr's son, Stefan Lazarević, erected a pillar of marble, in scribed with these words to greet those who make a pilgrim age to this Jerusalem of Serbia:

You, O man, who have now entered into the land of Serbia, whether you come from afar or are from here, no matter who you are or what you are, when you come upon this field, which is called Kosovo, and see that it is totally full of the bones of the dead, and notice the field's stony character, may you not pass by me [i.e., the stone pillar]. Here there was once a great sovereign, an earthly prodigy and Tsar of Serbia, Lazar, the great Prince, the steadfast Pillar of piety. As a good shepherd and protector of these noble and glorious men, he wisely led them to lay down their lives courageously for Christ and to obtain the crowns of martyrdom, so that they may become partakers of the glory on High.

It was not long after these events and the praises to Prince Lazar were heard especially immortalized for all on the *gusle*[4]—that the Divine Services to the Holy Great-Martyr were composed and icons were painted throughout the fallen kingdom of Serbia. The good news of Holy Lazar was not solely kept among the Serbs or even within the realm of the Byzantine Empire. Holy Russia knew of these events and glorification. The Russian Orthodox Deacon Ignatius, a pilgrim in Constantinople at the time of the battle, sent by Metropolitan Pimen of Moscow and accompanied by Bishop Michael of Smolensk, heard of the news of Sultan Murat's death, and of the heroic *podvige* of Prince Lazar. They relayed this news back to Russia only a few short weeks after the great battle. And it is well known that were heard especially in 1564, during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, depicted on the walls of the Cathedral of the Holy Archangels in the Moscow Kremlin (built in 1508) were the Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII Paleologos, and the Serbian Saints Sava, Venerable Simeon (Stefan Nemanja), and Great-Martyr Lazar.

[3] Milica's lament is found in the writings of Patriarch Danilo III; and the laments of the Maiden of Kosovo and the Jugović Mother are found in Serbian Epic Poetry. Milica's exaltation of her husband Lazar is found in a poem entitled, *Come, Avenge Me with Thy Blood*. Besides her encomium Blessed Jefimija also wrote, *Pohvala Svetom Knezu Lazaru* (Praise to Holy Prince Lazar). All of these texts can be found in their entirety in Serbian and English in Thomas Butler, *Monumenta Serbocroatica* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1980).

[4] A stringed folk instrument.



Prince Lazar *Cephalophoros*, around 1758

Many details of Lazar's appearance in this icon testify to a steady medieval tradition of visual presentation by Serbian artists of the Baroque era. Prince Lazar's dome-like crown resembles ancient royal *stema*, which Prince Lazar never wore. Also, his decorated vestment with the *loros* imperial belt, over his arm, resembles ornamentation of the medieval Serbian rulers, as does the scepter formed as a cross, richly decorated with pearls and gems. The torso of Christ who is blessing the Prince also speaks of the medieval iconographic technical formula of a ruler's portrait. Typically medieval is also the representation of a martyr decapitated by his enemy. In spite of a vague background which points to an unearthly world and the eternal life of Prince Lazar the Martyr, Baroque forms of sky with the frame of the plate bearing the inscription, along with the painter's mannerism, speak of an educated artist of the 18th century.

The holy Prince's sacrifice not only taught the Serbs about the significance of following Christ at all times, "even unto death," but also had great import for Western Christendom. The Orthodox Kingdom of Serbia must always be acknowledged by Western Europe as that "sacrificial" kingdom which stood in the path of total Moslem captivity, since the Moslems, after the Battle of Kosovo, never regained the strength to take Europe. Besides this, St. Lazar's life represents a supreme example to the West in another way, as St. Nikolai Velimirović repeated so often in his writings: that true Christian communion is not simply a result of political or military arrangements, but a "defense of the Faith" based on a return to the martyric life of the saints.

The life-giving relics of Holy Great-Martyr Prince Lazar remained at Ravanica for three hundred years, until 1690, when Patriarch Arsenije Crnojević (1674–90) of Peć, along with forty thousand Serbian Orthodox families from Serbia and Kosovo and Metohija, in the "Great Migration," fled Ottoman oppression to Vojvodina (then under Aus-

trian control). Due to the migration it was deemed unsafe to leave the holy relics of Saint Lazar where they were, and so they were transferred to the ancient Church of St. Andrew on the northern side of the Danube River, near Budim. In 1697 they were transferred to the monastery of Vrdnik (aptly called "New Ravanica") in Fruška Gora, Srem, during the Austro-Turkish War; and then in 1716 they were taken to Fenek and Klenak for three months, and returned to Vrdnik, where they remained until World War II. Because of the terroristic anti-Serbian Orthodox "cleansing" activities by the Ustashi of the newly created Axis satellite, the Independent State of Croatia, Holy Martyr Lazar's relics were transferred from Vrdnik and placed in front of the iconostasis in the Cathedral Church in Belgrade.

Truly, Holy Great-Martyr Prince Lazar "travels" with his suffering people who need his intercessions due to their own sins as well as due to the trials and tribulations from those who persecute them. He has never left them alone. His commitment is eternal, just as the mention of his glorious name is synonymous with Kosovo and Serbian Orthodoxy (*Svetosavlje*). He was there when his youngest daughter Olivera was taken by his tormentor, Bayazid, and placed into his harem. He gave her strength never to give up her Orthodox faith. He was still there when Constantinople fell in 1453, and Smederevo in 1459, marking the end of benevolent Orthodox rule in the Byzantine Commonwealth. He was comforting those young children who were taken from their families in the janissary system,[5] also known as the "tribute in blood," an unjust evil indoctrination system the Turks carried out for over two centuries. He was there watching in "joyful sorrow" when his beloved Saint Sava's body was burned by the Turks on Vračar Hill, on Holy Saturday, April 27, 1595. He suffered again with the *rayah* (Serbs treated as slaves), when they came to know their Patriarch as Milletbasha (ethnarch), and when the Serbs lost their Patriarchate altogether from 1766 to 1920. He was there on Kosovo Polje during the Balkan War of 1912, when thousands of Kosovo Serbs were "cleansed" from their homeland, being transferred to the Greek Island of Corfu by British and French ships. Again Lazar was there during World War I when a quarter of a million Serbians lost their lives, and during World War II, when over half a million were killed outright, just for being Orthodox Christians, in the Independent State of Croatia. And he is still there today guiding his faithful Orthodox Serbs back on to the right path after they foolishly accepted the "communist trap." He gave them strength in their sufferings at the hands of the Albanian extremist Kosovo Liberation Army, and he gave them hope to cope with the sinful mistakes of the NATO bombings in 1999. One thing is for certain—the Holy Martyr Lazar will never leave the Serbian Orthodox people, who venerate him in faith, hope, and love.

That is why, on June 15, 1989, according to the decision of the Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Holy Martyr Lazar was taken back to his beloved monastery, Ravanica, in order to finally give him some comfort and joy. In a solemn procession the holy relics of Prince Lazar were transferred to their initial place of repose, in the Holy Ascension Church at Ravanica. As Patriarch German, the assembly of bishops, clergy and monastics, and all the faithful venerated the life giving body of Prince Lazar, the praises to him from the Ikos of the Divine Services were chanted by all the faithful:

Thy fatherland and flock have possessed thee as a most honorable gift, both during thy life and after thy death, as fruitful wealth, a great defender, and a mighty warrior, O beloved of God. Therefore, on the day of thy repose we offer up hymns of praise to thee, and magnifying thee we cry out to thee thus: Rejoice, off shoot of a pious father. Rejoice, scion of a reverent mother. Rejoice, for from thy youth thou didst follow the commandments of God. Rejoice, unshakable pillar of Orthodoxy. Rejoice, builder and adorner of holy churches. Rejoice, thou who gavest abundant alms to the poor. Rejoice, good shepherd, who didst lay down his life for the people of God. Rejoice, for thou didst shed thy blood for piety's sake. Rejoice, thou who for this reason art numbered with the martyrs and hast received a habitation with them. Rejoice, for Orthodoxy is adorned by thee. Rejoice, for thy glory hath gone forth unto all the world. Rejoice, our defender and deliverer. And we offer this up to thee as to one who art worthy, and en treat thee: Grant reward to those who glorify thee and deliver us from every misfortune that we may cry out to thee: Rejoice, O ever-memorable Lazar!

Troparion to Great-Martyr Prince Lazar, Tone 3

Having desired the beauty of God's glory, * thou wast well-pleasing to Him on earth, * and thou didst double the talent entrusted to thee, * cultivating it well, * and laboring over it unto the shedding of thy blood. * Therefore, as a martyr thou didst receive a reward for thy pains from Christ God. * Pray to Him, O Lazar, * to save those who hymn thee.

Kontakion, Tone 8

Superb warrior of piety and unashamed martyr for the truth, * thy flock honor ably praises thee as is due, O wise one. * But as thou hast boldness before Christ God, we who glorify thee ask of thee humility that we may cry to thee: Rejoice, O ever-memorable Lazar!

5 The "janissaries" were an elite, celibate regiment of the Ottoman army comprised in part of children who had been abducted from their Orthodox parents and then raised as fanatical Muslims. They were taught hatred of Orthodox people and were then set loose against their own nation. No doubt some of them even unknowingly killed their own relatives.

Kosovo 1389

St. Nikolai of Žiča (Velimirović)

None of the Christian peoples has in its history what the Serbian people have in Kosovo. Some 60 years after the Battle of Kosovo, Constantinople fell, the capital of Eastern Christianity. The Christian emperor, of Serbian blood and origin by one of his parents, was killed. It could be said that that disaster was like Kosovo. And it might also be said that it was an event even greater than Kosovo. God forbid! In the field of Kosovo the Christian army marched toward death, while in Constantinople they remained in the town hoping to the last moment that death would somehow turn its back on them. When the first cannonballs in history penetrated the city ramparts, terror ensued so that both the army and the citizens were panic stricken. All the churches were filled with crying and prayer to God for the salvation of the city, that is for the salvation of their bodies and for the salvation of the state and the earthly kingdom. That is why the Greeks recorded the fall of Constantinople as night and not as day, as destruction and not as victory. It is true that it was a battle between the cross and the crescent, but without an *épopée* and without any inspiration for future generations. For a defeat understood only as defeat cannot arouse anybody's enthusiasm. Nor can Golgotha itself without the Resurrection inspire and strengthen anybody.

The Serbian Kosovo is a totally different matter. As the dead are dressed in new and expensive clothes, so was the Serbian army dressed in its best robes. The glowing procession hurried from all the borders of the empire onto honor and fame, to the field of Kosovo. Shaded with cross-shaped banners and the icons of their family saints (*slava*), singing and cheering, singing and playing musical instruments, with song and joy, the army rushed toward its execution. Does not that remind us of the first groups of Christians who in such a mood went under the sword or to the fire or before the beasts? Not a single Christian martyr is known to have prayed to God to save him from his approaching death, while thousands and thousands are known to have prayed not to be spared from a martyr's death. Neither did Lazar's army hold prayers for salvation from death. On the contrary, it confessed its sins and took Communion in preparation for death. An entire people as one Christian martyr, obedient to the thoughtful will of the Almighty, accepted the bitterness of death, and that not as bitterness but as a life-giving force.

And has not Kosovo right up to the present day, indeed, served as a vital force to dozens of generations? In the history of the Christian peoples there is not another case of one entire army, an entire nation being imbued by the wish to die in order to meet death for the sake of its religion. This was not to meet a suicidal but a heroic death. Kosovo is unique in the 20 centuries old history of the Christian world.

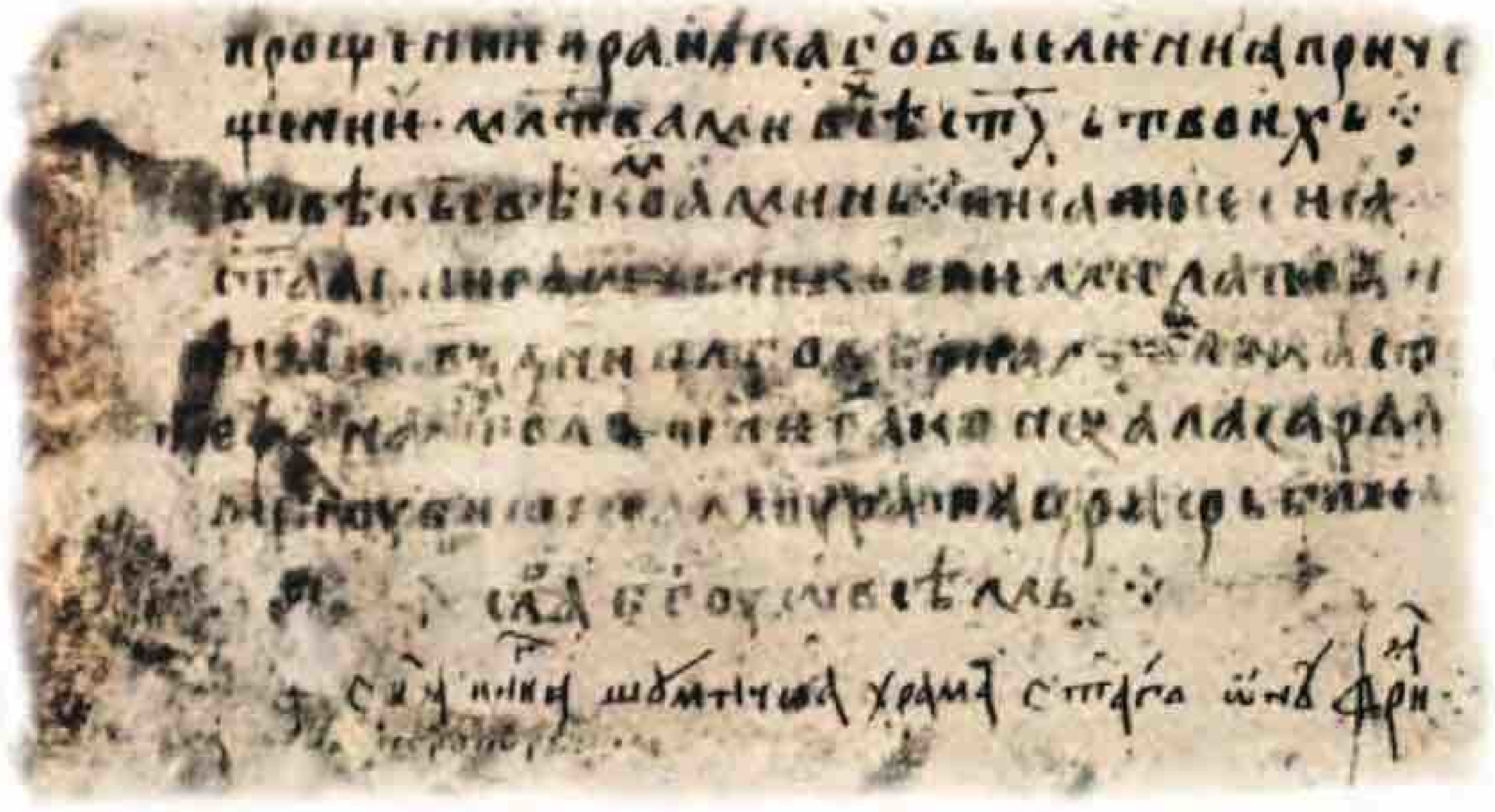
Saint King Stefan Dečanski,
icon, sister Magdalina, Gračanica Monastery

Those are mistaken who say that Kosovo stopped the wheel of our history and held us back. If it had not been for Kosovo, we would have been a great nation today! It was Kosovo that made us a great nation. It is our Golgotha; but it is at the same time our spiritual and moral resurrection. Still, the holy body of Lazar, imbued with Heavenly power, lies whole even today curing all human disabilities. The bodies of the other knights of the cross were not lost, although they remained on the battlefield. Their bodies were sanctified by their holy souls, and the entire land of Kosovo was dedicated by their holy bodies. Thenceforth Kosovo became the *campo santo*, the holy field.

That is why the Serbs, even those living in America, come and take a handful or a bag of soil from the holy field of Kosovo to carry it and keep it as a sacred relic in their places of worship and their homes, as is done from the tomb of St. Demetrius in Thessalonika or the graves of other Christian martyrs. Kosovo is the greatest tomb of Christian martyrs killed in a single day. No other of such magnitude is known to us. And celebrating the deathday of their saint, the whole Serbian people honor and commemorate St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan). He who honors the holy martyrs, such as the archdeacon Stephen or George or Demetrius or Theodore or Triphon or Good Friday and Easter Sunday or Ss. Petar and Paul, does not honor the defeated but the victor; neither does he honor the dead but the living.

Therefore, by celebrating the great martyrdom of the Kosovo martyrs, we do not celebrate the defeated ones but the victors, not the dead but those who are alive. Vidovdan is the greatest Slava of the Serbian people. It is day and not night—it is the Day.

"Whoever keeps his life will lose it,
but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."
(Matthew 10:39).



Paterik from the Patriarchate of Peć, lower part of the page with the inscription on the Battle of Kosovo by Pahomije who wrote it between June 28 and August 31, 1389, and today represents the oldest preserved document on that event

Old Ragusan Report on the Battle of Kosovo

"1389. On the 15th June, on the Day of St. Vitus—it was Tuesday—there was a battle between Serbs and Ottomans. Amongst the Serbs were Despot Lazar, the King, and Vuk Brankovich and Vlatko Vukovich, the Dukes. There was great slaughter, as much among the Turks as the Serbs, and few returned to their own country. Both Tsar Murat and the King of Serbia were killed ; and victory was not granted either to the Turks or the Serbs, so great was the carnage. And the battle took place on the Field of Kossovo."

Old Ragusan Report (*Monumenta Spectantia Historiam Slavorum Meridionalium*, XIV., Zagrabiae, p. 48.)

Memoirs of a Janissary

Konstantin of Ostrovica (Konstantin Mihailović)

• CHAPTER XVI •
HOW IT WENT IN THE SERBIAN OR RASCIAN KINGDOM

THE SERBIAN KINGDOM, after King Uroš, became a principality. They chose for themselves as ruler Prince Lazar, who had [as wife] the niece of King Uroš, named Milica. Therefore some were for Prince Lazar and others were against him, as it unfortunately happens everywhere, not only among the laity but also among the clergy. And wherever there is no unity, it cannot be good for anything in this world; as faith without deeds is dead. Emperor Morat, having heard that Prince Lazar was the successor of his ruler in the Serbian kingdom; having assembled an army, Emperor Morat marched to the Serbian land, to the Plain of Kosovo. And Prince Lazar, without delaying, also having assembled an army, marched to the Plain of Kosovo and took up a position opposite the Emperor on the other side, at Smagovo beside a stream called the Lab.

And it was on Wednesday; on St. Vitus' Day a pitched battle began, and lasted until Friday. The nobles who favored Prince Lazar fought alongside him bravely, loyally and truly; but the others, looking through their fingers, watched. And through such disloyalty and envy and the discord of evil and disloyal men this battle was lost. On Friday at noon, Miloš Obilić killed Emperor Morat. His son Mustaffa was also killed on that day, and his other son, named Ildrin Bayezid, was left on the imperial throne. Also on that day Prince Lazar was taken near a church of the Mother of God called Samodreža. On that spot was placed a tall marble column as a sign of the capture of Prince Lazar. Beside him was taken Krajmir the duke of Toplica. And many other nobles were killed in this place. And the disloyal ones, having watched their fill of the battle, remained traitors; which in fact later did not come out well for any of them. After a good while, choosing little by little he ordered them beheaded, speaking thus: "You behaved falsely and disloyally toward your ruler in such a necessity; you could do the same to me in my need."

Here they had brought Prince Lazar and duke Krajmir before Emperor Bayezid. Emperor Morat his father and also his brother both lay on biers. And Emperor Bayezid said to Prince Lazar: "Now you see lying on biers my father and brother; how did you dare try this and oppose my father?" Prince Lazar was silent, and duke Krajmir said, "Dear Prince, answer the Emperor. A head is not like a willow stump that it will grow a second time." And Prince Lazar said, "Emperor, it is an even greater wonder that your father dared attack the Serbian kingdom." And he said, "Emperor Bayezid, had I known earlier what I now see with my eyes, you would lie on a third bier. But perhaps the Lord God has deigned to have it so for our transgressions. May God's will be done this day." And with that the Emperor ordered that Prince Lazar be decapitated. And Krajmir, having asked permission of the Emperor, kneeling, held the skirt of his tunic under the head of Prince Lazar so that it would not fall to the earth; and when the head had fallen into the skirt, then duke Krajmir, having placed his head next to the head of Prince Lazar, said, "I have sworn to the Lord God, 'Where Prince Lazar's, there mine also.'" Both heads fell to the ground. And a Janissary brought the head of Miloš Obilić and threw it before the Emperor together with those two heads, saying "Emperor, here now are the three heads of your fiercest enemies."

Later the Serbs or Rascians who were with Emperor Bayezid asked for the body of Prince Lazar and carried it to a monastery called Ravanica and there he was buried and was elevated to sainthood. Emperor Bayezid, having won, remained on the Plain of Kosovo on the same battlefield, having built a monument there where his father was killed. On four columns a vault was built, covered with lead, and it stands there to this day. And having prepared his father and brother for their coffins, he sent them to a city called Brusa, where they were buried. Thus ended that unfortunate battle: through the disloyalty of evil men, two rulers, Emperor Uroš and Prince Lazar of the Serbian kingdom, fighting loyally for the Christian faith, in a short time left this world at the hands of the heathens.

• CHAPTER XXVII •
HOW EMPEROR MACHOMET DECEIVED DESPOT DjURADJ UNDER TRUCE

The Turkish emperor, Machomet, made a truce with the Despot never to bother him before his death and that of his son Lazar and to support him faithfully and truly, as was mentioned previously about this. For Emperor Machomet made the truce with the Despot in order that he might take Constantinople or Stambol more easily. This turned out indeed to be so. And as soon as Constantinople was taken, immediately the next year, without having denounced the truce with the Despot, the Turkish emperor marched up-

on the Serbian or Rascian land against the Despot with all his might. The Rascians [i.e., Serbs], having heard this, gave the Despot to know that: "the Turkish emperor is marching upon us with all his might. What have we to do? Earlier we told you that the Turkish dog would deceive us; know, therefore, Your Highness, this is our view: Rather than give up our wives and children before the eyes of our brothers to be distributed among the heathens, we want to venture our necks and fight them. Therefore, Your Grace, march to our aid with as much might as you can. We have one army in Sitnica and another in Dubočica or Kislina. Therefore, Your Grace, knowing this, do not delay."

The Despot answered them: "I cannot raise troops so quickly, for there is no King Vladislav in the Hungarian land who would gladly help me in this; therefore leave it all as it is. If you surrender to the Turkish emperor I will, by God, free you with God's help."

The Emperor, having arrived in Constantine's land at a plain called Žegligovo, on the border of the Rascian land, hearing about the troops who were in Sitnica and Dubočica (Kislina), encamped here four weeks not knowing what to do nor which army to turn against. The army that was in Dubočica attacked his army bravely and fought and killed many Turks and also some famous Turkish leaders. Then the Emperor himself, having arrived with all his might, attacked them beside a mountain called Trepanja. The Turks say that as long as they have lived it is unheard of that from so few men there was such a battle with such a large force. And they say that if that above-mentioned army had all been together with them, it would have decisively defeated the Turkish Emperor. And thus the poor wretches were defeated. Some were killed and others escaped. And one lord named Nikola Škobalić was impaled with his uncle.

And from there the Emperor marched and surrounded a city which they call Novo Brdo, "Mountain of Silver and Gold," and having attacked it, conquered it, but by means of an agreement: he promised to let them keep their possessions and also not to enslave their young women and boys. And when the city of Novo Brdo had surrendered, the Emperor ordered that the gates be closed and that one small gate be left open. Having arrived in the city the Turks ordered all the householders with their families, both males and females, to go out of the city through the small gate to a ditch, leaving their possessions in the houses. And so it happened that they went one after another, and the Emperor himself standing before the small gate sorted out the boys on one side and the females on the other, and the men along the ditch on one side and the women on the other side. All those among the men who were the most important and distinguished he ordered decapitated. The remainder he ordered released to the city. As for their possessions, nothing of theirs was harmed. The boys were 320 in number and the females 74. The females he distributed among the heathens, but he took the boys for himself into the Janissaries, and sent them beyond the sea to Anatolia, where their preserve is.

I was also taken in that city with my two brothers, and wherever the Turks to whom we were entrusted drove us in a band, and wherever we came to forests or mountains, there we always thought about killing the Turks and running away by ourselves among the mountains, but our youth did not permit us to do that; for I myself with nineteen others ran away from them in the night from a village called Samokovo. Then the whole region pursued us, and having caught and bound us, they beat us and tortured us and dragged us behind horses. It is a wonder that our soul remained in us. Then others vouched for us, and my two brothers, that we would not permit this anymore, and so they peacefully led us across the sea.

And the Turkish Emperor Machomet took from the Despot all the Raškan land as far as the Morava, and left him [the land] from the Morava to Smederevo.

Konstantin Mihailović, also known as Constantine of Ostrovica, born in 1430, was a Serbian soldier and author of a memoir of his time as a Jannissary in the army of the Ottoman Empire. Mihailović was born in the village of Ostrovica, near Rudnik in the Serbian Despotate. His book, *Memoirs of a Janissary* was written at the end of 15th century, probably between 1490 and 1501, and provides a unique insight into life in the Ottoman Army of the time. Mihailović's stated motivation in writing the book was to provide a detailed account of the Ottoman state and its military structure in order to assist the Christian powers in their struggle against the Ottomans.

Kosovo 1389

Tihomir R. Djordjević

THE COLLECTIONS of the Jugoslav National Songs (by Vuk Karadžić, B. Petranović, Miladinović Brothers, Iv. Jastrebov, by the "Matica Hrvatska," and "Slovenski Glasnik" 1864, etc.)—all celebrate the heroic splendor of the Battle of Kosovo. The 500th anniversary of the catastrophe of Kosovo 1889, was celebrated both in Zagreb—by the Jugoslav Academy—and in Belgrade, by the Royal Serbian Academy. The Zagreb Jugoslav Academy devoted an entire ample volume of its transactions to it *(Rad Jugoslavenske Akademije Znanosti i Umjetnosti vol. XCVII)*. Jugoslav literature possesses an entire bibliography of Kosovo dramas and novels, written by Serbs from Bosnia (Sima Milutinović), the Banat (S. Popović), Dalmatia (Matija Ban, Ivo Vojnović), Bačka (Miloš Cvetić), and the Kingdom of Serbia (Milovan Vidaković). The Croat Trešić-Pavičić sings the whole epic of Kosovo as fervently as the Serb Nikola Djorić. Tihe Croat Armin Pavić and the Serb Stojan Novaković are equally engaged in selections of these same Kosovo songs for the Jugoslav masses. The Slavonian J. Nović and the Serbian Sreta Stojković, following the example of the national poetry, write songs upon the battle of Kosovo. Davorin Jenko, the Slovene, prepared as his *discours de réception* for the Royal Serbian Academy two compositions, both on Kosovo themes *(Kosovo* and the *Maiden of Kosovo)*, his finest musical work. The Dalmatian Ivan Mestrović designed the Temple of Kosovo, a masterpiece of sculpture and architecture—the epic of Kosovo in stone. If I were to enumerate all the literary and artistic works on this theme created by Jugoslavs no matter whence they hail, tills list of the works on Kosovo would assume considerable proportions.

If it was necessary to celebrate and extol the defeat of Kosovo, surely this could have been done by the Serbs alone; why should others join them? Why should the Croats have joined, since they had lost their independence long before the Battle of Kosovo, and they were not reached by the conquering Turks till long after the Battle of Kosovo, and since, generally speaking, they are in no way connected with the Battle of Kosovo?

And what of the Slovenes, to whom the Battle of Kosovo should mean even less? Nor were all the Serbs equally connected with it. The Serbian Kingdom in Macedonia had been subjugated by the Turks eighteen years before Kosovo (in 1371). The Bosnian State fell more than a half a century after Kosovo (in 1463). The Herzegovinians lost their independence twenty years after the fall of Bosnia (1482). Zeta (Montenegro) was conquered by the Turks toward the end of the 15th century, more than a hundred years after Kosovo (1499). And, moreover, at the first glance it seems not even the Serbs in Serbia were altogether crushed at Kosovo.

The principality of Serbia, as an Ottoman vassal State, existed up to 1459, i.e. for full seventy years after Kosovo. The Battle of Kosovo, when all is taken into consideration, was not so much a catastrophe as only an episode—a very tragic one, but still an episode—and concerning only a part of the Serbian nation.

This, then, is all the magnitude that can justly be ascribed to Kosovo as an event. Nor is the Battle of Kosovo at all exceptional, insofar as the heroism of the Kosovo heroes is concerned. The Byzantine Emperor Constantine, together with the far older and more important Byzantine Empire, perished at an equally important time and place with many of his Byzantine princes—yet the nation has not so celebrated this downfall, neither are there such widespread traditions concerning it, much less a similar epic.

What, then, is Kosovo?

This is what it is. When at the beginning of the 14th century the Turks appeared, and when it soon became apparent how grave a danger they constituted, the Serbian State under the Nemanjić was the one rock capable of checking the waves of the Ottoman invasion. The old Byzantium was no longer as before. The leading powers in her vast territories were the new Slav States of Serbia and Bulgaria, who had fought each other for supremacy till the Battle of Velbužd in 1330, since when Serbia had taken the lead in the Balkans. The Turks had good reason to remember the auxiliary force under the command of Novak Grebostrek, which the Serbian King Milutin sent to Byzantium in 1312 against the Turks. The Serbian Emperor Dušan (1331–55) was a potentate whom the Turks could not even dream of challenging. The Serbian Empire, the center around which the greater part of the Jugoslav nation was united, and which was preparing to become the heir of the Byzantine Empire, was a wall against which the Ottoman power was breaking—an organized war-power of the first class, as we know from history. Unfortunately Dušan died, and his State crumbled up into separate provinces with separate centers and aims. Meantime the Turks were continually growing stronger. The defeat of the Serbian King Vukašin, and the fall of the Macedonian Kingdom (1371), clearly foreshadowed the inevitable end. The central controlling power of the Nemanjić had ceased to exist. In their place the most important

Gračanica, Petar Omčikus, 1951

and the most prominent of the remaining Serbian rulers was Prince Lazar, who reigned over the countries of the Morava and Danube. He was not only the first in geographical order to face the Turks, but he was also the only hope of all the unconquered part of the Serbian nation. He was Serbia's prince, as he is called in the national songs, although in history he never bore this title. The danger from the Turks was fast drawing nearer, not only to the Serbs who had belonged to Dušan's Empire, but also to those who dwelt beyond its borders. All that could be gathered together, gathered round Lazar. The union between the various Serbian principalities under Prince Lazar, Prince Vuk Branković, whose lands lay west of the Lazar's, Prince George Balšić, who ruled the western coastlands, the Montenegro of today, and King Tvrtko of Bosnia, became stronger, closer and more intimate. Between them they waged a successful war against the Turks right up to the Battle of Kosovo. But the Battle of Kosovo was at hand which was to decide who was to be master of the Balkan Peninsula, Serbs or Turks, Christianity or Islam.

And when, on Kosovo Plain, in spite of the united front of the Serbian rulers, the heroism of Obilić, Lazar, and other heroic Serbian princes—although the Serbian nation fought in "blood up to the knees," as the national songs say the war was lost on that day, as could be plainly seen, even though Serbia and Zeta (Montenegro) kept their name as Ottoman vassal States, and Bosnia and Herzegovina retained their independence. The true loss was this, that it was plain that the Ottoman power was irresistible, that the "Serbian Empire had fallen," that for them all their days were numbered, and that it was Kosovo Field that had caused the end of it all. So Kosovo became not only the grave of Serbia, but also of the Jugoslavs, and there was nothing left but to lie in it, as was indeed the fate of the nation. There lies the tragedy of the Kosovo battle. This is the reason why the Battle of Kosovo has enveloped all Jugoslavdom in darkness: this is why the Jugoslavs cried out in one voice for the "Serbian Empire," for the "brave Car Lazar;" the "heroic Obilić," for "Jug Bogdan and his nine sons, nine Jugović," who met their deaths on Kosovo Field. They fell in the defence of all the Jugoslavs.

And as the Jugoslavs, even after the Battle of Kosovo, continued to fight against the Turks for centuries, they found in the exploits of the Kosovo heroes a high example of how to fight, and in the Kosovo heroes themselves they saw the honorable protagonists of the great idea for which they laid down their lives. Because of all this the Jugoslavs have found in the Kosovo heroes an inspiration for their ideals and a reason for glorifying them. The Kosovo defenders have almost become the mythological semi-gods of Jugoslav poetry, and their ideals are almost equal to the ideals of religion. The deliverance of Kosovo has become a symbol which is looked upon as the only sound basis of the future, a symbol which has never been forgotten since Kosovo until this war. This is why the fall of Kosovo and the Kosovo heroes are remembered more deeply and fully than any other downfall of other empires which fell before and after Kosovo. Kosovo is the symbol of the freedom of the Jugoslavs.

There is one thing more that was felt by the Jugoslavs in the Kosovo catastrophe. Beyond the blood and horror of Kosovo Field the Jugoslavs beheld a brilliant period of the Serbian history, from which, but for Kosovo, Jugoslav unity and all its triumphs would have grown. National unification, which was begun under Stefan Nemanja and well developed under Emperor Dušan (1331–55), could not fail to become the ideal of Jugoslav strength, for which the nation sighed in the dark days after Kosovo. Therefore the Nemanjić, and especially the "mighty Car Stjepan," as the Jugoslav national songs call Emperor Dušan, are among the most popular personages of the national poetry. Therefore the mass of the people looked upon Kosovo not only as the downfall, but also as the destruction of a great impetus toward a happy future. This is the interpretation of Kosovo Field as it was understood by the modern Serbian poet when he says that "Kosovo has swallowed all." In these words he did not think only of the fallen Serbian State, or the final stand made at Kosovo against the Turks, but also of the destruction of the foundation from which—if there had been no Kosovo—a great, powerful, and free Jugoslav Empire would have grown. In the song the words "*Kosovo has swallowed all*" are merely a reply to the question, "*Where is Prizren, the glorious city? Where are the imperial palaces? Where is Dušan's golden age which wonders wrought?*" It is that "Dušan's age" which "wrought wonders" that all Jugoslavdom is regretting in its national songs.

That is the significance of the Battle of Kosovo for the Jugoslavs. But the significance of the Battle of Kosovo goes farther and far beyond the borders of the Jugoslavs. The Serbian heroes did not die on Kosovo Plain in defending Serbia and Jugoslavdom only, but also in defending Europe. They shed their blood for the "Holy Cross and golden freedom." Nowhere does the national poetry say that they died "for Serbian freedom." The "golden freedom" of Serbian national poetry has a wider meaning. The *Te Deum* which was celebrated in the Church of St. Denis in Paris after the, Battle of Kosovo, because, according to a false report, it was believed that the Serbs had been victorious, was no more than an expression of rejoicing over the victory "of golden freedom" in general. The Battle of Nicopolis, which took place only seven years after Kosovo, taught all Europe what the Turks were, and what a danger they were for the" Holy Cross and golden freedom" of the whole Christian world. The great popularity of George Kastriot Skenderbeg throughout Europe—although his country possessed none of the importance that Serbia had—rests solely on the fact that he was a champion of the Cross against the Crescent. The countless songs which were sung in Europe to celebrate victories over the Turks—songs to which Serbian poets have also contributed to a considerable extent as, for instance, Ivan Gundulić of Ragusa (1588–1638), Jovan Rajić of Srem (1726–1801), etc.—are nothing but a call to arms against the common danger of the unbaptized barbarian. Had there been no Kosovo, Europe would have felt the hard consequences of an Ottoman invasion.

This is how the struggle with the Turks was understood. Political Europe did not succeed either in saving Jugoslavdom, which, in spite of its being a Christian power, might have been a matter of indifference to her, nor did she efficiently protect herself. Hungary, who was the most called upon to act, saw in the disaster of the Jugoslavs the weakening of formidable rivals of her own personal interests. Occasionally in the moment of danger Hungary promised that she would do her best, but she invariably demanded exorbitant compensation for her services, such as the cession of Belgrade, Mačva, or Braničevo, Serbia's promise to become her vassal, or Serbia's permission for the passage of her troops through Serbia—and usually Hungary put such requests in such a manner that the poor Serbian rulers were compelled to throw in their lot with the Turks in order to remain true to their duty as protectors of their nation and faithful subjects. After Serbia's first disaster in 1439 the unfortunate Serbian despot, Djuradj Branković, travelled allover Europe imploring help. But Europe was silent. Hungary first made peace with the Turks; subsequently Hungary trampled her oath underfoot and went to battle against the Turks at Varna and was beaten. The rest of Europe did even less. The Council of Mantua, which was convened in 1463 in order to save Bosnia, failed to come to an understanding till Bosnia had fallen. In the meantime Turkey advanced and thrust her knife into the very heart of Europe.

Gračanica, oil on board, Nadežda Petrović, 1913

This series of historic events after the defeat of Serbia is very instructive. The Jugoslavs are the gate through which the East tends to break through to the West, and *vice versa*. In the Battle of Kosovo they put forward their utmost strength to shut that gate of the East, and in spite of Kosovo they have given marvelous expression to the significance of that fight. Europe was too late in recognizing the importance of the post at which the Jugoslavs stand between the East and the West. But the Jugoslavs also hold the gate from the West to the East. They are absolutely united in their efforts to keep the gate shut from that side also; but Europe in the interest of the Jugoslavs, and her own as well, must see to it that the Jugoslavs do not shut that gate for their own sake only.

In the fight for liberation and unity the Serbian nation had before its eyes only Kosovo and the catastrophe of Kosovo. The songs of Kosovo have borne the nation on wings from one victory to another. In Kosovo regained, the Serbian nation saw also the earnest of its full power to carry out its national role, just as the nation had seen its end in the defeat. When, in 1912, Kosovo was returned to Serbia, the whole Jugoslav world was with its heart on Kosovo Field. A vast concourse of pilgrims went to the liberated Kosovo to pay homage to the shades of St. Lazar, Obilić, and the other martyrs of Kosovo, and to pledge themselves that they would labor for complete unification.

The Mountain Wreath of P. P. Njegoš,
ed. Nikola Damjanović, Belgrade 2000, pp. 201–204.

Serbian Kosovo Ballad

The Finding of the Head of the Prince Lazar,
painting by Marko Murat, ca. 1920

There resteth to Serbia a glory,
A glory that shall not grow old;
There remaineth to Serbia a story,
A tale to be chanted and told!
They are gone to their graves grim and gory
The beautiful, brave, and bold;
But out of the darkness and desolation
Of the mourning heart of a widow'd nation,
Their memory waketh an exultation!
Yea, so long as a babe shall be born,
Or there resteth a man in the land-"
So long as a blade of corn
Shall be reap'd by a human hand-"
So long as the grass shall grow
On the mighty plain of Kossovo-"
So long, so long, even so,
Shall the glory of those remain
Who this day in battle were slain."

Translated by Owen Meredith

Countless Kosovo epic is not based on conquering arrogance, but on pride of those who defeated the conquerors with spirit as a weapon. Because of this, it does not endanger anyone, it does not threaten anyone. Myth of Kosovo surpasses boundaries of a national myth, with its essence it joins the highest products of human spirit, gathered in an imaginary museum of united European culture. Kosovo choice is the highest ethical principle, which, given to us by Greeks, became our historical experience.

Kingdom of heaven, which Lazar chose, it is that top spirit point, where according to Breton, all contradictories resolve; where, Laza Kostić wrote, those disproportionate temperature differences in universe are created and dreams and reality are united; where Dis saw those eyes beyond any evil, and Rastko Petrović saw his Great friend. This spirit point is not recorded in earthly books; it is "made up" like all human spirit creations, from poetry to mathematics. However, that is why it is no less real or unnecessary. Kosovo choice, it is above all a spiritual and poetic choice... If today we remember the Kosovo choice, it is because we have forgotten, in our huge hurry to get closer to European culture, that our tradition makes up a part of that culture.

Zoran Mišić

Serbia's Greatest Battle

Sir Arthur Evans

Historically the battle of Kosovo was essentially a drawn battle. Nay, in many respects the balance seemed to incline to the Christian side. If one of the Confederate Princes, Prince Lazar, of Danubian Serbia, met his death, the Ottomans lost, in their Sultan Amurath, the head of their whole empire. The Ottoman host, under the new Sultan Bajazet, withdrew to Adrianople. The most valuable prizes that in case of victory might have fallen into Ottoman hands were left in Serbian possession.

The thriving towns of Novo Brdo, in the very neighborhood of Kosovo, and Kratovo, nearer to the Macedonian border the centers of the important silver-mining industry remained untouched. No attempt was made to occupy the Imperial cities of Prizren and Skoplje. It was not without reason that the commander of the Bosnian and Primorian contingent, Vlatko Hranić, who drew off his own forces from the field in good order, sent tidings of victory to his master, King Tvrtko, passed on by him to the citizens of Trail and Florence. In the Cathedral of Notre Dame *Te Deums* of thanksgiving for the success of the Christian arms were actually celebrated in the presence of the King of France.

Contemporaries were impressed by the great forces engaged the Ottomans actually magnified the Christian hosts to half a million men! The dramatic incidents of the battle inspired poetic commemoration among the Turks as well as the Serbs. "The Turkish histories," as the English historian, Richard Knolles, records, "to express the day, vainly say that the angels in Heaven, amazed with that hideous noise, for that time forgot the heavenly hymns wherewith they always glorify God." It is possible, indeed, that for the first time in Balkan war cannon may have contributed to the din of battle, since the Venetians had shortly before presented a "falconus" to the King of Bosnia.

Last United Efforts of the Serbs

Thus the first impression of the fight was that of an heroic combat between equals. The bards who carried on the Court poetry that had already existed in the days of Tzar Dušan and earlier kings, dramatized the incidents of the battle without any particular reference to historic consequences. It was only the later realization of its far-reaching effects that made the Lay of Kosovo an epic record of what proved to have been the last united effort of the Serbian race to resist the Asiatic invader. It was itself an inheritance from days when the spirit of the Serb people as a whole was still unbroken, and it was from this quality indeed that it drew its inspiration in the dark days that were to come.

In reality the apparently even fortunes of the opposing hosts the superficial point that impressed contemporaries were profoundly misleading. The Serbian Prince Lazar was only one of several Confederate champions, the most important of whom, at least, the Bosnian King, would hardly have recognized him as even *primus inter pares*. The combination of so many Christian forces was itself a mighty effort. But even the most decisive victory could have hardly given a permanent value to what in reality was a loosely compacted alliance of princes and chieftains standing in various feudal relations of different races and of opposing creeds, and scattered over a physically divided geographical area extending from North Macedonia to the Danube and the Adriatic.

On the other hand, the fall of Amurath did not seriously affect the centralized Ottoman organization. The "lightning" Bajazet flashed at once into his father's place. The Serbs, too, it should be remembered, had barely recovered from the terrible slaughter on the banks of the Marica some 25 years earlier. Lazar himself had already suffered the loss of Niš, and had been reduced to the position of a tributary and dependent. From their European capital of Adrianople the Ottomans already dominated most of the eastern half of the Peninsula. They were astride of the Balkans, and had subjugated Danubian Bulgaria, while, on the other side, the possession of Seres was a threat to Salonika itself.

Looseness of the Christian Alliance

Apart from the particularist tendencies of the great feudatories and the personal jealousies of which we have the echo in the legendary treason of Vuk Branković on the field of Kosovo itself, it is hard to discover any firm elements of cohesion among the various units represented in the great alliance. Islam was a reality; Christendom less than a name. What real sympathy is it possible to detect between the militant Catholicism of Hungary and its Bosnian vassals and the Orthodox Serbian princes?

The seeds of still worse discord lay in Bosnia itself, where the Catholic persecution of the puritan and quasi-Manichaean Bogomili was to bear fruit in the wholesale conversion of the latter to Mahomedanism. Regional interests and religious jealousies were thus for over five centuries to rivet the bondage of the Serbian people and to bar the way to any political union between the kindred members of the South Slav race.

But, through all this, the epic Lay of Kosovo, sung from generation to generation by peasant bards to the strains of the one-stringed "gusle" in the remotest mountain glens and the busiest market-places, has still been a common heirloom of the whole people. It has perpetuated the tradition of national unity and kept green the memory of heroic deeds. It held up withal the traitors of the past to lasting obloquy. The lesson brought home by it is one which all members of the South Slav race take to heart to-day. It is summed up in the Serbian motto, *Samo Sloga Srbina Spasava*—"Union only saves the Serbs."

"Times" on Kossovo Day,
June 28th, 1916.

The Patriarchate of Peć, Mary Edith Durham, 1903

The Thing Called a Nation: the Spritual Issue of the War

G. K. Chesterton

FIVE HUNDRED years ago our Allies the Serbians went down in the great Battle of Kossovo, which was the end of their triumph and the beginning of their glory. For if the Serbian Empire was mortally wounded, the Serbian nation had a chance to prove itself immortal; since it is only in death that we can discover immortality. So awfully alive is that Christian thing called a nation that its very death is a living death. It is a living death which lasts a hundred times longer than any life of man; and of what it meant to the Serbians I know of no possible literary expression. The nearest words for it are found, I believe, in a Serbian proverb, which I fancy I have heard, and which I am sure is too good for me to have imagined: "God never made a heaven until He saw the sorrows of the Serbs."

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The day of the great Turkish victory is everywhere celebrated by Serbians – except in Serbia. To ask why it cannot be kept in Serbia is to ask the central question about the greatest quarrel that has ever convulsed this planet. Of its momentousness in the matter of Serbia as a nation I will say something in a moment. But if we wished to state the spiritual issue of the whole war in its simplest and strongest terms I do not think we could find a better definition than this one. We are fighting to preserve that particular spirit which remembers a defeat rather than a victory. We are fighting to make Success a failure. The Germans keep the Day of Sedan, that is the Day of Success; and it is a fact, to which any honest observer will attest, that they are conspicuous among other nations recalling other victories, by the fact that their whole phraseology and philosophy treats it as a part of an inevitable success, of an interminable Sedan. The Prussians do not remember and celebrate the Day of Jena. That is why it is vitally necessary, even for their own sakes, to give them a bigger Jena, which they will be obliged to remember. As it is, the average Prussian probably realizes nothing about Jena except that Professor Haeckel lives there; which may indeed be reasonably regarded as a national judgment or visitation in itself; but in which the divine irony expresses itself in too subtle a manner to be easily apprehended by the Prussian mind. We must be content to tell the Prussian, well knowing that he will not understand us, that we are fighting to give him a Kossovo Day to make a man of him, that he may some day be as civilized as a Serbian peasant.

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Kossovo of the Serbians towers in history as the most tragic and memorable of such instances of memory. But it is by no means the only instance indicating that the Allies stand for this paradox of the undefeated defeat. When I first went to Paris as a mere boy I think the thing that most struck my eye and stuck in my memory was that sculptured circle of the great cities of France, in which the only statue still girt with new garlands and draperies is the lost city of Strasburg. It seemed to be a challenge to the changes of time more momentous and impressive even than the cannon column of Napoleon or the towers of Notre Dame. The whole flood of our thoughts which were then full of a German fatalism ran clean contrary to that challenge; so much so that I remember a phrase in some standard English work expressing not only wonder but a sort of amusement at the thing, as if it were an impish variety of the well-known French vanity. "Other nations celebrate their victories," wrote this simple and laborious man. "Who but the French would celebrate even their defeats?" Even then, I am glad to say, I had glimpses of a somewhat manlier moral philosophy, and I never saw a sight in my life that impelled me so spontaneously to say, *In hoc signo vinces*. But the very phrase I am using is enough to remind me that the idea is older and even more historic than the just quarrel of France. In the light of that ancient idea, most assuredly, Serbia must be called the eldest brother of the Alliance. It was under the sign by which Constantine conquered that Lazar fell in a failure that has been as fruitful as a martyrdom. And that sign, which Constantine saw in heaven above his eagles, should be enough in itself to convey that mystery of Christendom which must always be a menace to its enemies, and above all to the Prussian, its last and its most insolent enemy. There is but one religion which can only decorate even its triumphs with an emblem of defeat. There is only one army which carries the image of its own captain, not enthroned or riding, but captured and impaled.

Memorial service on the tombs of the vindicators of Kosovo,
October 10 and 11, 1912

* * *

The sort of cosmopolitan expert who tests everything by the philosophy of a courier, a man to whose globe-trotting cynicism we have paid far more attention than his shallow experiences deserve, will often tell us that he can see little difference between Turk and Christian in the wilds of South Eastern Europe; he thinks they are much of a muchness, because they may both wear knives or what is worse, indulge in religious observances. This is the true type of man who would have been a blind and barren spectator of any one of the great and crucial disputes of history. He would have regarded Cicero and Julius Caesar as two Roman senators in togas having a tiff: he would have been fully satisfied with the fact that Foulon and Robespierre both powdered their hair, when he had got over the real interesting discovery that they both spoke French. The philosophy of facts always escapes him; and we cannot select or even see facts except by a philosophy. It is in the very fundamentals of human philosophy that the Eastern Christians, headed by the heroic and unhappy Serbs, differ from that Asiatic Empire which has ruled or rather robbed them. It is an ultimate question which divides this nation which is no longer an Empire from that Empire which has never been a nation.

* * *

And the chief fruit of this philosophy is the national idea itself, the sacramental sense of boundary, the basis in an almost religious sense of agriculture, the idea of having a home upon this earth, which the Arab armies out of the deserts can hardly even be said to have violated, having never even begun to understand. If we in the West have enjoyed these things more pacifically than the Serbians it would be on the last level of vileness for us to reproach them with the difference. For in the plain light of history, it is because they have been warlike that we have found it possible to be peaceful. If they are fierce it is because no courage short of sheer fanaticism could have kept the frontiers of Christendom against such locust-clouds of foes, while we were electing our first Parliaments and building our first cathedrals. While all we call the world was being made they were the wall of the world. If they had the faults of such fighting we at least might in decency regard them not as sins, but scars. If, as the courier informs us, they carry knives, it is because they know, as we shall probably never know, what we really mean when we talk of war to the knife. If they have wildly struck down tyrants who were also traitors, it is because for them a phrase like "selling the pass" is not a petty political metaphor, but has often referred to a real pass, over real mountains, letting loose ruin upon real villages hi a real valley.

And, indeed, it is this vivid and sensitive visualization of the traitor which makes the main sentiment of Serbia in the war. The Serbs have a feeling about the part played by Austria which we in the West can but imperfectly understand. That Austria was wholly and flatly in the wrong in the quarrel that created this war is admitted by everyone in his five wits. It may even be said that it was admitted by Austria, since she refused arbitration or even any sort of discussion. It is admitted by many of the Germans, who are, indeed, more and more disposed to prove their own impeccable virtue at the expense of the Austrians, as well as of all the rest of mankind. But the Serbian has an issue with the Austrian which is the more sinister for being spiritual. For the Serb the Austrian is a Christian—like Judas Iscariot. He is a Christian who has stabbed him in the back while he was still fighting with his face to the infidel. And his just anger is full of the fury of five centuries, and dark with the trappings of that day of mourning when the blood of his saints and heroes was given on the field of blackbirds in vain.

"The Daily News" London,
on Kossovo Day, 1916

Betrail of Judas, detail,
vault of the western bay,
Church of the Holy Apostles,
the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1300

IC XC

Assembly in Prizren before the Battle of Kosovo, a painting by Stevan Todorović, 1899

The climate of despair which set in after the Battle of Marica in 1371 is expressed in a long personal comment, written by Isaija the Monk. This literary comment is appended to Isaija's translation of the works of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite into Old Serbian which, he says, he had started "in happy times," but had finished it after the battle, "when Ishmelites spread over the entire land as birds in the air, slaying some of the Christians, sending others into slavery… And the land became deprived of all that is good, people, beast, fruit of all kind. There was no prince, nor leader or teacher among people, nobody to save them… And truly were the living envying the dead."

Sultan Bayezid's Testimony 1389

Sultan Bayezid: a firman of the Kadhi of Brussa, Suleiman beg, dated the month of Shaban, 791, i.e., 1389. The firman is preserved in Constantinople in the archives of the State.

"When this my firman comes into your hands" (wrote the sultan) "you ought to know that there was in accordance with Allah's will the battle on the field of Kossovo. My father, Sultan Murad, whose life had been happy and death was that of a martyr, prayed after a vision in a dream to Allah to make him worthy of martyrdom. The battle being ended, he returned unhurt in his full health from the battlefield to the tent, which was elevated towards the heavens. And while we enjoyed the greatest pleasure in seeing how the cut heads of the Christian dukes rolled under the horses' hoofs, and how many of them with tied hands and others with broken legs stood, suddenly appeared a fighter, by name Milosh Obilich. He came perfidiously saying that he accepted Islam and asking that he might so be ranked in the victorious army. And when he after his own wish was allowed to kiss the feet of the illustrious Sultan, he drew a poisonous hanjar (knife) hidden in his sleeve, and boldly thrusted it into the body of the Sultan, sorely wounding him. Well, he caused the illustrious Sultan to drink the sherbet of martyrdom…

After Milosh finished this deed he tried to escape through the soldiers who shone like the stars in the sky, but by them he was caught and cut in pieces.

Having been informed about this event I came to the martyr bed, but I found the Sultan dead. At the same time it happened that my brother, Yakub, departed into eternity. I am sending the shining body of my father there (to Brussa) to be buried. Well, when the corpse arrives there you ought to bury it in secrecy without informing anybody about the real event. On the contrary make you busy in shewing to the people all the signs of victory in order not to make our enemies suspect anything."

St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan), History, Memory

Bogoljub Šijaković

In the historical self-consciousness of the Serbian people, St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan) 1389 has an axiomatic meaning: it is that powerful historical event which in a very real way judged the flow of Serbian history and symbolically marked its understanding (all later Vidovdans draw from it their supplementary meaning). Vidovdan (St. Vitus Day) is a real event of mythic strength (not in any way myth as function), in the sense that it is a historic event which gives us an orientation of values and point of reference in which we see a suprahistoric meaning. As such an event, Vidovdan has an actionable potential of meaning through history which represents a cornerstone in the identity of the Serbian people. On the foundation of a knightly and sacrificial Vidovdan were built the ideals of *Vidovdan ethics*, namely justice and humanity, self-sacrifice and suffering, repentance and forgiveness, patience and generosity, which are really the ethics of Christian culture, and therefore the ethic of the Sacrifice. (This ethos is reflected in hagiographies, and in the popular epics of Njegoš, Marko Miljanov, etc.)

The Vidovdan sacrifice is witness of a total and radical realism which confronts us with a brutal concretization of history. Sacrifice is the sublimation of history. The historical truth is not logical or universal but rather eventful and unique. A highly sacrificial event bears the meaning of the presence of holiness and gives sense to a historical period, becoming the truth of the historical period. A readiness for sacrifice, of course, does not mean glorifying sacrifice as a value in and of itself, because the value of the sacrifice is in its purity and aim—the Resurrection. The meaning and purpose of history must be the salvation and augmentation of life, otherwise our survival in the passage of physical time would remain meaningless. The Vidovdan of Kosovo and Jasenovac are exclusive sacrificial paradigms which make it possible for us to understand events as our history. The history of a people is also that which they see in their own history. Our view on our own history makes it possible for us not only to endure historical brutality but also to understand and accept history. For the Serbian people who are small in number but aspire to be great by character, history is already due to that—a suffering. Sacrifice is the most important memory which illumines that which took place in history. Sacrifice and suffering (namely the experi-

Saint Vitus, northwest bay, church of the Virgin Hodegetria, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

Prince Lazar, painting by Milorad Bata Mihailović, 1971, private collection, Paris

ence of a history of endured suffering, the historical experience of border disputes, victories and defeats, glory and humility) have an epistemic meaning because they enable the understanding of history. From there proceeds the hermeneutic meaning of suffering people for understanding history, if we are capable of viewing historical events from the perspective of victim.

The truth from the perspective of Sacrifice as subject substantially differs from truth from the perspective of Violence which seeks sacrifice as an object. Through stigmatization violence constructs the victim as an object and thus rationalizes its actions, it demonizes the victim and in that way hides the holiness of the victim. It also hides its own nature: contemporary Violence, as a modernization of barbarianism and new absolutism, uses a myth-creating justification of violence by constructing guilt. The stigmatization of the Serbian people as an effort to annul its identity and to force it to accept blame as a means of domination, the branding which we felt on our own skin even during the last civil war and which was often employed by anti-Serbian propaganda during the First World War, is really a technique by which the marked object (Serbian people) is first pushed out of the field of morality so that it could later be pushed out of the field of justice: he who has been disqualified as a moral being is thus made worthy for unjust violence to be exacted against him. For this reason we have a special obligation to defend the honor of our victims. And due to the fact that the Serbian people, together with the Jews and Armenians, has been numbered among the peoples with the highest percentage of military and civilian victims in newer history (19th and 20th centuries), our obligation and need to establish a memorial institution dedicated to Serbian victims has implications on our identity and is an existential question, it is ontological (so to say) and not only ethical. We have forgotten our own multimillions of victims (the exact number is still undefined) which is some form of collaboration in crime.

It is essential to rehabilitate the Vidovdan ethic of sacrifice and effort, not only because it is a part of the identity of the Serbian people but because it represents an important determination to overcome the unbearable confines of reality. Apart from that: identity is integrity as the ability for general self-sustenance and self-recognition. An important condition of identity is memory, all the more important for one who was long and frequently subject to systematic pressure to change his identity. Historical memory as a condition of historical knowledge and historical self-consciousness, as a concern for the reference points of national identity in historical endurance, is also essential for a common awareness of past and orientation to the future. It is made urgent because the social agenda hands us a structural amnesia as an extinguisher of selected points in memory. It is relayed from the structures of power to historical science, literature, art, "theory," in which systematic damage is done to memory: *damnatio in memoria*—deformation, manipulation, and annulment of memory and recollection. Deformed, constructed and imagined memory has the simultaneous function of *forgetting*. Study of the structures of social memory and recollection and discovery of the techniques of deforming memory and recollection is a condition of contemporary critical historical knowledge and historical self-consciousness. Because the effects of forgetting are dramatic.

Our responsibility in history is not only tied to a correct participation in historical events—historical responsibility is transgenerational and it produces moral unity of historical time. Historical events therefore oblige us. Even today Vidovdan obliges us to courage and responsibility toward historical existence, to the axiomatic decision that Kosovo and Jasenovac are an important and irrefutable part of our identity which no one can take away from us—unless we give it away.

Politika, June 23, 2013.
Translated into English by Nenad Djordjević.

The Battle of Kosovo and Kosovo Today—History and Memory

Boško I. Bojović

On 28 June 1389 a famous battle took place at Gazimestan near Priština, leaving a lasting impression on the collective memory of the Serbs. The death of both rulers on the battlefield, the fierceness of the battle, and the extent of military sacrifice on both sides left a strong impression not only on the contemporaries on both sides, but also on others far from the Serbian and Ottoman borders. Both slain rulers were proclaimed martyrs, indicating the religious and inter-civilizational character of the battle, as seen by its contemporaries. This is testified by numerous Serbian Church writings to the glory of Prince Lazar,[1] which date from the first years after his death in the battle against the Ottomans, as well as by his canonization (proclamation as a holy martyr), as testified by the church service (*acolouthia*) written by Serbian Patriarch Danilo III as early as 1392.[2] Buried in the Priština church after the battle, the Prince's remains were ceremonially transported to his memorial church Ravanica on that occasion.

The Ottomans erected the turbeh to their Sultan Murad on the site where he was slain, at Gazimestan, in accordance with the Muslim religious rituals to the glory of a *gazi* (hence the name Gazimestan), a fighter who sacrifices his life for the faith, as testified by Ottoman chroniclers.[3] Under these circumstances, there appeared and survived living oral and written traditions and interpretations, whose content is often very difficult to verify.[4] The consequences of the conflict could only enhance and prolong the effect of the event both among the contemporaries and their successors, which resulted in the fact that the interpretation of the event surpassed in importance its description.[5]

This is the only way to explain the scarcity of the historical facts relating to the course and details of the Battle of Kosovo as well as its outcome. In the absence of written records, scientific historiography has succeeded in determining only the site and date of the battle, as well as the death of both rulers, which in itself is almost a unique historic event. The most disputable is the military outcome of the battle itself. Although both oral folk tradition and later written records stress the defeat of the Serbian army, the oldest yet insufficiently explicit sources highlight a Serbian victory. This is also testified by the oldest Western reports and Serbian writings dating from the first years after the battle. If we consider them insufficiently explicit, this cannot apply to the contemporaries who knew the outcome of the battle. However, in the spirit of the times, it was more important to emphasize the martyrdom and heroic sacrifice of Holy Prince Lazar and his knights than the inexorable and well-known reality. Regardless of the military outcome of the battle, Serbia had to accept the supremacy of the new Sultan Bayazid to whom Lazar's daughter Olivera was given in marriage as a pledge of peace and vassalage. Lazar's son and successor, Stefan, was still very young for the duty of a ruler and soldier, so that the wise and sober Princess Milica had to acknowledge the supremacy of mighty Bayazid.[6]

The new young sultan had to hurry back to Brusa in order to secure the throne after the death of his father. This can explain his leaving Serbia and Kosovo which, in the spirit of the times, was regarded as a sign of his defeat, because the victor would remain on the site of the battle and take possession of the occupied land.

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1 Dj. Trifunović, *Srpski srednjovekovni spisi o knezu Lazaru i kosovskom boju*, Kruševac 1968; B. Bojović, "Geneza kosovske ideje u prvim postkosovskim hagiografsko-istorijskim spisima. Ogled iz istorije ideja srpskog srednjeg veka", in: *Kosovska bitka 1389 i njene posledice—Die Schlacht auf dem Amselfeld 1389 und ihre Folgen*, Belgrade-Düsseldorf 1991, pp. 15–28 & 215–230.

2 Dj. Radojičić, "Izbor patrijarha Danila III i kanonizacija kneza Lazara," *Glasnik Skopskog Naučnog Društva* 21 (1940), p. 33–88; *Manastir Ravanica—Spomenica o šestoj stogodišnjici*, Belgrade 1981.

3 A. Olesnicki, "Turski izvori o kosovskom boju. Pokušaj kritičke analize njihova sadržaja i uzajamne konsekutivne veze," *Glasnik Skopskog naučnog društva* XIV (1935), pp. 57–95; A. Šmaus, "O kosovskoj tradiciji kod Arnauta," *Prilozi proučavanju narodne poezije*, III 1–2 (1936), pp. 73–90.

4 D. Korać, R. Radić, "Kosovska bitka u vizantinologiji," in: *Kosovska bitka u istoriografiji* (ed. S. Ćirković), Zbornik radova 11, Istorijski institut, Belgrade 1990, pp. 93–100; *Boj na Kosovu. Starija i novija saznanja*, ed. R. Mihaljčić, Belgrade 1992.

5 B. Bojović, *L'idéologie monarchique dans les hagio-biographies dynastiques du Moyen-Age serbe*, Roma 1995, pp. 571–603; *Id.*, *Vladarstvo i svetost u srpskom srednjem veku*, Belgrade 1999, pp. 245–272.

6 *Istorija srpskog naroda* I (R. Mihaljčić, Jovanka Kalić), Belgrade 1981, pp. 36–46, 64–74; R. Mantran (group of authors, ed. R. Mantran), *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman*, Paris 1989; B. Bojović, *Le millénaire byzantin* (324–1453), "Ellipses," Paris 2008, pp. 239–241.

If the military outcome of the battle was uncertain or, better said, was in the spirit of the Serbian victory, the political outcome was quite unambiguous. Apart from becoming the sultan's vassal state, Serbia had to hand over its important strategic strongholds—the towns of Zvečan in Kosovo and Golubac on the Danube. In this way, the Ottoman Empire not only penetrated into the central parts of the Balkans for the first time, but also gained a foothold at the very border of Central Europe. Therefore, the outcome of the Battle of Kosovo was decisive not only for Serbia, but also for much broader regions of South Eastern and Central Europe. Therefore, this battle acquired much significance for its contemporaries, due to which its interpretations overshadowed the facts.[7]

Four years after the Battle of Kosovo, Bulgaria fell almost unnoticeably under Ottoman rule, after the conquest of Trnovo. Byzantium had stopped offering any resistance a long time ago, so that its emperors accompanied the sultan with their army in his military campaigns. Almost every attempt of Western Christians to check the unstoppable Ottoman expansion ended in a heavy defeat, like at Nicopolis (1396) and Varna (1444).[8]

Almost three centuries were to pass before Europe was able to offer efficient resistance to the Ottoman conquests. The strength of the then most powerful European empire, Austria, was not sufficient. Thus, the Christian Holy League was formed (1684) after the second and last Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683. Much earlier, the Ottoman army suffered a warning defeat in the Mediterranean, in the great naval battle of Lepanto (1571), but the turning point on the mainland occurred only after the aforementioned siege of Vienna. During the perennial war, in 1689, the Austrian forces penetrated their furthest into the Ottoman territory, reaching Skoplje, Štip and Veles, more than one thousand kilometers far from Vienna. In the Ottoman counter-offensive, the Austrian forces suffered a heavy defeat in Kosovo or, more precisely, at its southern border, in the Kačanik Gorge, in January 1690. The chief commander of the Austrian and allied forces, General E.S. Piccolomini, died of plague in Priština before the event. On his deathbed he confessed to Serbian Patriarch Arsenije III Crnojević and received communion (at the beginning of November 1689), as the French King Louis XIV was informed by his dragomans. France was at war with Austria since the beginning of 1689. It was helping Turkey and, probably, saved it from even more disastrous sequences and defeats at the decisive moments. According to the field reports of French spies, the Serbian Patriarch—before the defeat at Kačanik—brought 10,000 Serbian volunteers and a certain number of Albanian clans Klimenti and Gruda to help the Austrians. The reprisals of the Turkish army, especially the Circassians in its ranks, against the Serbian population were so fierce and destructive that they precipitated the exodus of a large part of the Christian population from Kosovo and Metohija. That was the famous Great Serbian Migration under Patriarch Arsenije in 1690. According to some reports, tens of thousands of Serbian families as well as Albanian Christians migrated into Vojvodina, that is, southern Hungary, reaching Saint Andre north of Budapest. This essentially changed the ethnic composition of the population, especially in southern Hungary, although the Serbs had already settled there in the late Middle Ages. Thus, present-day Vojvodina was becoming some kind of refuge and compensation for the gradual loss of the Serbian majority in Kosovo and Metohija,[9] which was almost absolute in the medieval times.

Accordingly, in the late 14th century, the Ottoman empire reached its zenith and was unstoppable in its expansion through conquest. The military power of the European countries was not sufficient to stop its northward advance, especially toward the northwest. The lack of political and military solidarity was taking its toll. In addition, since late medieval times already, the West European countries were turning to overseas markets and sources of wealth. The significance of the Mediterranean region was declining since the discovery of America and its abundance of precious metals.

Until then, Serbian gold and silver, in particular, were one of the main sources of the European monetary economy. The continuous rise of the European economy, whose beginnings date from the 11th century already, as well as the increasing development of monetary trade were creating a growing monetary deficit, because the monetary stock mostly consisted of silver and gold. From the late 11th century, after the termination of Byzantine monetary hegemony that lasted more than seven and a half centuries, the Venetian gold ducat became the major international means of payment. Since the 13th century, Serbia was increasingly developing mining, thus expanding its production of precious metals, primarily silver and gold, which were mostly exported to Venice via Dubrovnik and its merchants. In the first half of the 15th century, this economy reached its highest point when the production of the Serbian mines of Novo Brdo in Kosovo, Kopaonik, Rudnik and Srebrenica, according to some scientific estimates, accounted for one-

7 Referring to the treason of Vuk Branković and other issues, Nicol does not make enough difference between critical historiography and oral tradition, although he gives to the Battle of Kosovo and its consequences an adequate international context, geostrategic and historic significance, cf. D. M. Nicol, *Les derniers siècles de Byzance*, 1261–1453, Paris 2005, pp. 312–314, 317 (*The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 1261–1453, 1e ed. 1972, 8e Ed., 2008).

8 A.S. Atya, *The Crusade of Nicopolis*, London 1934; O. Halecki, *The Crusade of Varna: A Discussion of Controversial Problems*, New York 1934; D. M. Nicol, *Les derniers siècles de Byzance*, 1261–1453, Paris 2005, pp. 384–386, 387–390.

9 M. Radovanović, *Etnički i demografski procesi na Kosovu i Metohiji*, Belgrade 2004, pp. 81–90, 97–103, 132–136, 242–252; B. Bojović, "Kosovo-Metohija du XIe au XVIIe siècle," *Balkan Studies* 38/I, Thessalonique 1997, p. 31–61.

fourth to one-third of the total production of precious metals in Europe. After their final conquest of Novo Brdo and Kosovo in 1455 and Smederevo and the whole of Serbia in 1459, the Ottomans prohibited the export of precious metals, thus causing the raw material shortage, which heavily affected the flourishing European economy. Consequently, the fall of Serbia under Ottoman rule had a major impact on the search for new sources of precious metals which, as is known, also led to the discovery of America only a few decades after the Ottoman conquest of Serbia.[10]

The main route of the unstoppable Ottoman conquest of Europe, which started in the mid-14th century, ran through the Serbian lands. The Byzantine Empire, which never recovered from its conquest by the Crusaders in 1204, was only a shadow of the thousand-year-old empire. Exhausted by long civil wars, economically undermined by the market hegemony of Venice and Genoa, incapable of creating or accepting a synthesis with the Balkan countries (Serbia and Bulgaria) and blackmailed with the Union with the Catholic Church, Byzantium was the first to fall prey to the Ottomans. At the end of the 14th century, Bulgaria fell prey even faster and easier. The Serbian lands, which sprang up after the break-up of Dušan's empire, were the only ones in the Balkans which could offer strong resistance to the Ottoman advance. However, the heavy defeat of the powerful rulers of their southern parts, King Vukašin and Despot Uglješa, on the Marica in 1371, opened the way for the Ottomans toward the central parts of the southern Balkans. The Battle of Kosovo which took place on St. Vitus' day in 1389 had similar consequences for the central and northern parts of the Balkan Peninsula, which prepared the way for the Ottoman conquest of Central Europe. Despite being helped by the Crusaders from other parts of Europe, the powerful Hungarian kingdom could only slow down the Ottoman advance. The Wallachian principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia, stood aside the main route of the Ottoman conquest and, thus, could keep a vassal's position toward the Ottomans as well as their autonomy, whereby only a certain continuation of Byzantine civilization was retained in South Eastern Europe.[11]

Serbia remained for centuries on the main route of the Ottoman advance toward the northwest of Europe and Vienna, through Hungary and Buda. In their centuries-long expansion of their territory and Islam, the Ottomans aspired to conquer the affluent parts of Europe and, through Vienna, Venetian and other lands, thus rounding off the Mediterranean region, whose southern and eastern parts had already come into their possession in the 16th century. In this way, they would revive the Roman Empire with the seat in Constantinople under the sign of the green color of Islam. The military supremacy of the Ottoman Empire, which stretched over three continents, was still insufficient for such a venture. Its economy was lagging too much behind the European one. The first signs of its weakness appeared in the late 16th century, including the financial collapse, inflation and the loss of value of Ottoman money. A stronger economy and visible trade always take precedence in the long run.[12]

Due to its geographical location in the central Balkans, Kosovo became one of the most important bases of the sultan's massive military campaigns since the final Ottoman conquest. The mines were gradually exhausted and shut down in the 16th century, although the sultans, especially Suleiman the Magnificent, made great legislative efforts to preserve their production of precious metals. The state-run economy of the military-theocratic empire could not keep pace with Europe's flourishing market economy. The agricultural economy of Kosovo and Metohija, one of the most developed parts of medieval Serbia, the cradle of its civilization with the most important spiritual and cultural centers and its central part in which many Serbian rulers were born, suffered continuous regression under Ottoman rule. Due to the military needs and religious prohibitions in Islam, the very well-developed viticulture of this region was replaced by grain production. Later on, the development of cattle breeding began to push out agriculture. Over the centuries, the growing uncertainty, looting by gangs of brigands, arrival of settlers from Albania, whose population—from the late 16th century onwards—was converting to Islam in increasing numbers,[13] pushing out the

10 T. Stojanovich, *Balkan Worlds. The First and Last Europe*, New York-London 1994, pp. 114–118; B. Bojović, "Entre économie Monde et économie d'Etat—l'argent des Balkans (XVe-XVIe siècles)," in: *Serbia e Italia nel Medioevo* (secc. X-XV), Venise 2002-Belgrade 2006, Glas Srpske Akademije Nauka i Umetnosti LCIV, 13, pp. 187–193.

11 N. Iorga, *Byzance après Byzance*, Balland, Paris 1992, pp. 253–275 (epilogue by B. Knede).

12 A. Tenenti, *La formazione del mondo moderno, XIV-XVII secolo*, Bologna 1980; F. Braudel, *La dynamique du capitalisme*, Paris 1985; Id., *Civilisation matérielle, économie et capitalisme, XVe-XVIIIe siècle*, t. 1. *Les structures du quotidien: le possible et l'impossible*, Paris 1979 ; B. Bojović, "Entre Venise et l'Empire ottoman, les métaux précieux des Balkans (XVe-XVIe s.)," *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, novembre-decembre 2005, n°6, pp. 1277–1297.

13 "Only because of this situation the history of Albanians demands extra research. They are sensitive regarding the passion toward "sword, golden embroidery, homage," and only as soldiers they leave their mountains. In the 15th century, they were on Cyprus, in Venice, in Mantova, Rome, Napoli, on Sicily, all the way to Madrid where they would expose their intentions and lamentations, ask for tones of gunpowder or sustenance for years, they were arrogant, haughty, always ready to have a fight. Therefore, Italy little by little closed in front of them. So they arrived in the Nederlands, England, France at the time of our Religious wars, they were soldiers adventurous followed by their women and their children and priests. The regency of Algeria and Tunis had been refusing them, as well as the countries of Moldavic boyars and Wallachians… Then they put themselves in the service of the Porta, from the very beginning but what they did even more since the 19th century. "Where the sword is, there is faith too." They were for those who provide their means for livelihood. In case of failure, "taking as in the song their gun for the pasha and their sword for the vezir," they would be positioned for their own and become brigands. Since the beginning of 17th century, great number of Albanians, mostly Orthodox, moved toward Greek lands where

Christian population and the latter's feudal dependence on Muslim masters, as well as frequent military campaigns were changing the composition of the population to a greater extent than in many other parts of the Balkans.[14]

As one of the most important strategic regions, Kosovo was the site of decisive military conflicts and great battles since medieval times. At Pantin in 1172,[15] Nemanja won a decisive battle against the Byzantines and his brothers, who were their allies. At that time, the Byzantine-Serbian border was still in northern Kosovo with its fortified border town of Zvečan. After 1489, another important and great battle also took place in Kosovo, in 1448, when the Crusader army under the command of the Hungarian king's deputy Janos Hunyadi, suffered a heavy defeat at hands of the Ottomans.[16] The betrayal of the Christian camp by Wallachian Duke Dan had a decisive impact on the outcome. The Serbia of Despot Djurdje Branković, which had just been liberated from the first Ottoman occupation (1439–1444), remained on the sidelines, although the war was waged on its territory.

The uneducated folk poetic and oral tradition made some sort of amalgam of these two battles, which marked the memory of the oppressed people. Thus, in one of the oldest *bugarštice* (type of folk poetry) from the Bogišić collection,[17] there is also mention of King Marko who is "defending the dead Władysław; why is he defending him when he failed to defend him," although Marko did not participate in the battle of Kosovo, just as the Polish-Hungarian King Władysław was not killed at Kosovo,[18] but in a crushing defeat of the Crusades near Varna in 1444. Likewise, Vuk Branković's betrayal described in a folk poem from the famous Kosovo Cycle is an amalgam of his withdrawal from the battlefield in 1389, when it seemed that the battle was already won, and the non-participation of Djurdje Branković in the battle of 1448. Namely, contemporary historical sources do not provide the evidence of Vuk Branković's betrayal. If nothing else, he remained hostile to the Ottomans after the battle of Kosovo as well.[19]

According to its ethos and historical consequences, the Battle of Kosovo left a deep imprint on the collective memory of the Serbs.[20] In its spirit and form, epic poetry sublimated the content and meaning of Kosovo in 1389. This was just in the spirit of the times because, as written by Ernest Kantorovitz, in the 14th century Europe there "emerged readiness for collective sacrifice for the homeland."[21] That which is called the Kosovo covenant and was epically sublimated in the form of the Gospel parallel: the Prince's supper as the Last Supper, Vuk Branković's betrayal as Judas' betrayal, the Prince's sacrifice as Christ's sacrifice—is the unique example of conceiving the life and collective memory characteristic of the poetry of supreme quality, the poetry of a patriarchal people, imbued with the Christian and epic ethos, which is also its greatest value and originality which exceeds the local and ethnic bounds.

Over time, it also became the foundation of the covenant idea with which the people, remaining without its state and institutions, kept alive the awareness about the need for its revival, which is similar to the Greek *Megali Idea* during Turkish rule and later on.[22] A people without a state cannot be the subject of history any more. Such a people, as was the case with the Balkan peoples during Ottoman domination, can only be the object of historical processes. A people without a state cannot have historical responsibility, says Yeshua Leibowitz, thinking, in the first place, of the Jewish people which had not had a state for two thousand years.[23]

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they were encamped as in the seized country," cf. F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, t. 1, Paris 1982 (première édition, Paris 1949) p. 43 (bibliography, n. 3–14).

14 B. Bojović, "Kosovo-Metohija du XIe au XVIIe siècle," *Balkan Studies* 38/I, Thessalonique 1997, pp. 31–61.

15 Jovanka Kalić, "Srpsko-vizantijski sukob 1168 godine," *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta* 11/1 (1970), pp. 193–204; *Istorija srpskog naroda* I (Jovanka Kalić), Belgrade 1981, pp. 191, 209–210.

16 *Istorija srpskog naroda* II (M. Spremić), Belgrade 1982, pp. 263–265; Id., *Despot Djuradj Branković i njegovo doba*, Belgrade 1994.

17 The illiterate singer of the oral folk chronicle knows that Marko was not present at Kosovo but does not know that in the battle in 1389 there was no Hungarian participation; this anachronism comes from overlapping memories of two great battles, one in 1389 and the other in 1448. V. Bogišić, "Narodne pjesme iz starijih najviše primorskih zapisa. S raspravom o 'bugaršticama' i s rječnikom," *Glasnik Srpskog učenog društva odelj. 2, vol. 10,*, Biograd 1878, p. 430.

18 In hundreds of songs and tens of thousands verses on Marko (like in the collection, M. Lukić, I. Zdravković, *Folk Poems Anthology on Marko Kraljević (Antologija narodnih pesama o Marku Kraljeviću)* Belgrade 1996), the son of king Vukašin (who had died in 1371 in a catastrophic defeat of his army of the Marica river), a character whose epic dimension greatly exceeds Serbian cultural and language space, there is no mention of him as a participant of the Battle of Kosovo which is the most significant event in the oral folk chronicle. R. Samardžić, *Usmena narodna hronika*, Novi Sad 1978, pp. 124–130.

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19 The historiography on the Battle of Kosovo provided extensive bibliography although this one could not afford the answers to the many questions: *Kosovska bitka u istoriografiji* (ed. S. Ćirković), Belgrade 1990, p. 119; B. Bojović, "La bataille de Kosovo dans l'historiographie serbe et yougoslave," in: *KOSOVO: Les Annales de l'Autre Islam*, ERISM, INALCO, Paris 2000, p. 23–36.

20 Olga Zirojević, "Kosovo u kolektivnom pamćenju," in: Nebojša Popov (ur.), *Srpska strana rata*, I deo, 2. izdanje, B92, Belgrade 2002.

21 As can be seen from the collection of his works devoted to this topic, which was published under the title E. Kantorovitz, *Pro Patria mori—Mourir pour la patrie*, PUF, Paris 1984.

22 K. Dimaras, *On the Megali Idea* (in Greek), Atina 1970; Héléne Ahrweiler, *L'idéologie politique de l'Empire byzantin*, Paris 1975, pp. 107–114; D. M. Nicol, *The Immortal Emperor: The Life and Legend of Constantine Palaiologos, Last Emperor of the Romans*, Canto edition, 1992; http://www.greece.org/romiosini/fall.html.

23 Y. Leibowitz, *Judeizam, jevrejski narod i Država Izrael* (in Hebrew), ed. Schoken, Jerusalim, 1979; Id., *Judaïsme, peuple juif et Etat d'Israël*, trad. fr. G. Roth, éd. J.-C. Lattès, Paris 1985. On Judaism see more: S. Sand, *Kada i kako je jevrejski narod izmišljen* (in Hebrew), ed. Riesling, Jerusalim 2008.

Such ideas prove that the social community is older and predominant in relation to the state and that it is not only the state which is formed by a people; instead, that is also an interaction in which the people, as a social community, represents both the creator and carrier of the state. A people can exist and survive without a state, even without a prominent role in history, but a state cannot exist and survive without a people, without a common conscience and conceptualized existence and endurance.

As the mainstay of the collective memory, the Battle of Kosovo did not exist only in the tradition of the Serbian people. It also left a strong imprint on the first works of the historiography of the New Age, which could not appear in Serbia under Ottoman rule. Such a work was, first of all, *Il Regno degli Slavi* (The Kingdom of the Slavs) by Dubrovnik historian Mauro Orbini / Mavro Orbin (Pesaro 1601),[24] who devoted considerable attention to this important event, testifying about the tradition still alive after two centuries, as well as about the broader significance of this historic event.

When the army of the Kingdom of Serbia liberated Kosovo and Metohija from the Turks in the First Balkan War in 1912, foreign military observers noted that, after stepping on Kosovo soil, the Serbian soldiers were falling on their knees and kissing their sacred soil. They also wrote that the Serbian people and its soldiers believed that the army which plunders and mistreats civilians would lose the war.[25] At that time, Serbia won three wars: the First and Second Balkan Wars, as well as the First World War.

At that time already, the Albanian population in Kosovo constituted a majority of a little more than 50 percent. This majority was created after the Berlin Congress in 1878, when Serbia obtained its present-day southern regions and extended its present-day border with Kosovo and Metohija. The Albanians from southern Serbia then began to migrate into Kosovo and Metohija, which was still under Ottoman rule. As Muslims, they did not want to live in a Christian state. At the same time, the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija began to migrate into Serbia in increasing numbers, fleeing Albanian violence. The migration of the Albanians into Kosovo and Metohija began in the late Middle Ages and was continuous during Turkish domination. At the beginning, it was very slow, because the Serbian population constituted a majority in the region—over 90 percent. When an increasing number of the Albanians began to convert to Islam, from the late 16th century onward, their settlement was intensified because, as Muslims, they enjoyed a privileged status in Ottoman Empire in relation to the subordinated Christian population. The second great wave of the Albanian settlers in Kosovo and Metohija, as well as in the peripheral parts of southern Serbia, began after the aforementioned Great Serbian Migration in 1690. The Albanian migration after the Berlin Congress preceded the one at the time of Serbia's occupation (1916–1918) during the First World War and, in particular, during the Second World War, when the Italian occupier annexed one part of Kosovo and Metohija to its ephemeral creation—Greater Albania. Tens of thousands of Serbs, who were settled in the inter-war period, were expelled and deported from Kosovo and Metohija. Under the law of March 1945, the communist authorities of Tito's Yugoslavia banned the return of those Serbian settlers to their homes. Since then, the emigration of the Serbs and the immigration of the Albanians have not stopped.[26] Thus, over the centuries, the ethnic composition of the population in that part of Serbia in which, since the 13th century, the seat of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć, the oldest and longest lasting of the seats of the head of the Serbian Orthodox Church is to be found, has been radically changed.

Of all the Serbian lands, Kosovo and Metohija have the highest density of Orthodox church institutions, churches, monasteries (Dečani, Gračanica, Banjska, Holy Archangels, the Mother of God Ljeviška, Devič, and many others), the most important and most valuable monuments of Serbian culture and spirituality, some of which have been included in the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List.

Throughout its history, the region of Kosovo and Metohija was never a separate administrative unit, let alone a state. At one moment, during Ottoman rule, there was a sanjak with the seat in Vučitrn,[27] but the greater part of the territory of that administrative unit did not coincide with the present-day Kosovo borders. The most radical change in the ethnic composition of the population in Kosovo and Metohija occurred within a relatively short time, that is, over a few decades, during the communist regime in Yugoslavia. At that time, Kosovo and Metohija obtained their present-day borders. At first, those borders were administrative ones, then they become political-administrative ones and Kosovo and Metohija obtained full autonomy. Finally,

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24 Mauro Orbini, *Il regno degli Slavi* (reprint: München 1985); Mavro Orbini, *Kraljevstvo Slovena*, Belgrade 1968. Orbini's history, translated into Russian and published in St. Petersburg in 1722, had a significant influence of Russian historiography.

25 V. Čajkanović, "Motivi prve arnautske pesme o boju na Kosovu," *Arhiv za arbanašku starinu*, I (1926), p. 75; A. Šmaus, "Kosovo u narodnoj pesmi muslimana (Srpska i arnautska pesma o Kosovu)," *Prilozi proučavanju narodne poezije*, V 1–2 (1938), pp. 102–121.

26 "During 45 years of the reign of the Albanian-Yugoslav national-comunistic partocracy (1945–1989/90) more than 250,000 Serbs and Montenegreans were immigrated from Kosovo and Metohija (...) that caused deep-rooted ethno-national changes." During this period, only "from 1961 to 1981 the number of declared Albanians increased from 646 605 to 1 226 736, which means absolute increase of 580 131, and relatively 89,7%. Albanians share in the total population of the province is 67,1% in 1961, and 77,4% in 1981": M. Radovanović, *Etnički i demografski procesi na Kosovu i Metohiji*, Belgrade 2004, pp. 383, 386, 377–393.

27 At that time, Prizren was the seat of another sanjak; one part of Metohija belonged to the Dukadjin sanjak and northern Kosovo to the sanjak of Bosnia; cf. B. Bojović, *Histoire et eschatologie*, Paris-Vrnjačka Banja 2008, pp. 140–141.

the region became an international protectorate that was proclaimed an independent state, which has already been recognized by many countries. Today, the remainder of the remaining Serbian population, as an ethnic minority of some 10 percent, lives in the enclaves under the more or less efficient protection of the international forces, KFOR and UNMIK. Nuns and priests in the monasteries live like in camps—protected with high walls and dense barbed wire fences. It is less known that these armed forces often care more about their own security than about the security of the civilian Serbian population. It suffices to see the fortified KFOR camps throughout Kosovo and Metohija, as though in a wartime situation, to be convinced of that. Similar scenes can hardly be seen in Bosnia, the country in which three ethno-confessional communities waged a fierce war for four years, despite the prolonged presence of the international forces in that country. The daily routine of Kosovo and Metohija includes ethnic apartheid and violence, the facts for which NATO and its members have assumed full political, legal and historical responsibility.

Ethno-confessional conflicts will always exist in the world. They are most often the result of a difference in demographic growth and change in the ethnic composition of the population.[28] Nowhere else in this century can one find such violence, apartheid and the expulsion of a people from its homes, fields and graveyards; nowhere else are human rights violated to such an extent on the grounds of ethnic origin, nowhere else is cultural, spiritual and historical legacy destroyed and negated to such an extent, nowhere else is aggressive nationalism so cynically triumphant, not to mention the responsibility of the most powerful military alliance in history. If all this is the announcement of the new millennium, then hardly anyone should rejoice in it.

However, the international community and its only military alliance cannot bear the sole responsibility for the consequences of the politics that brought Kosovo and Metohija into a situation without precedent in modern European and world history. This region was an integral part of Serbia for almost 90 years, of which more than half a century under the communist regime and its democratic successors. The fact that UNMIK restituted to the monastery of Dečani (like to some other monasteries) 700 hectares of its land, which was nationalized by the communist regime—but was not restituted by Serbia—provides ample evidence of the character of the Milošević regime. The late and inconsistent transition carried out by DOS (Democratic opposition of Serbia) is quite another story. It suffices to remind ourselves that Serbia is the only European country which has not yet carried out restitution. However, it is still carrying out the privatization of the property appropriated by the communist regime. Consequently, this is the state which still cares more about the preservation of the "achievements of the revolution" than about the protection of private property which, in addition to the protection of the security of its population, has always been the most important purpose and function of the state as the most developed form of human community. The fact that the relatively greatest changes in the ethnic composition of the population, whose security was not efficiently protected, took place just within that 50-year period, and that the major part of private property has remained appropriated, provides the best evidence of the nature of the state that is still one of the most isolated in Europe.

With the accession to integration processes, EU institutions and free market and other competition, this kind of "privatization" and seizure by the partocratic oligarchy would be curbed or stopped. This is not in the interest of the privileged state over which a monopoly is still held by the one-time "new class" and its consistently self enriching profiteers. The upper class (the middle one vanished a long time ago), which at one time passed over the accelerated Albanization of Kosovo in silence, caring only about its own interests, fought subsequently over power by using populist demagoguery, so that the subsequent deception was in the sign of Serbia's continued self-isolation. Had the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia more seriously approached Euro-Atlantic institutions from 2000 onward and had it joined NATO,[29] Kosovo and Montenegro would have hardly become independent. It is quite another thing that this did not suit everyone in the so-called international community, so that there was not too much encouragement in that direction. Therefore, it was necessary to have a resolute strategy. It is well known that after the fall of the Berlin Wall the strongest, if not the only, guarantee of one's territorial and state integrity was just that—NATO membership. With the independence of Montenegro, the disintegration of Yugoslavia was completed. The separation of Kosovo encroached upon the matter of Serbia's territorial in-

[28] S. P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order," *Foreign Affairs*, 1993 ; Id., "The West: Unique, not Universal," *Foreign Affairs*, Nov/Dec. 1996 (USA), pp. 28–46. Huntington has been inspired by the work of F. Braudel, *Grammaire des civilisations*, Paris 1987. In the Balkan wars during 1990s Huntington saw the best proof for his theories. To avoid conflicts of that kind, he warned of the danger of imperilling borders between great civilization systems. On Albanians, identity, and minorities on Kosovo, cf. G. Duijzings, *Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo*, London 2000, pp. 211–243; Id., "Religion and the politics of 'Albanianism'. Naim Frashëri's Bektashi writings," in: Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers & B. J. Fischer (eds.), *Albanian Identities: Myths, Narratives and Politics*, London 2002, pp. 60–69.

[29] It is a little-known fact that in the 1950s Yugoslavia was practically a NATO member, since it was in a military alliance with Turkey and Greece which were NATO members. At that time however, this was the way to strengthen the power of Tito's "New Class." Agreement on Military Aid between the USA and Yugoslavia, which is signed in Belgrade in October 1951 and lasted until 1957 when Yugoslavia ended it, and during that period the help worth 15 billion dollars was delivered and it was worth then five to six times more than nowadays (P. Simić, *Tito and NATO. Rise and Fall of the Second Yugoslavia*, Belgrade, pp. 75, 81–91).

tegrity. Nothing can guarantee that the disintegration has been 'posed to disintegration ones. The European transverse routes bypass it and it itself is turning into the grey zone outside economic interests and development projects. This is the logic of post-communist Europe, while Yugoslavia is the best example of that historical process.[30]

It is a little-known fact that Yugoslavia had a chance to join the EEC on the most favorable terms on two occasions: in 1974, when Tito resolutely declined the offer, and in 1990, when this was done by Milošević and Tudjman. While Tito's response to a special EEC envoy could be explained by the Cold War logic and bloc division, in which Yugoslavia seemed to play a very favorable role, as well as Tudjman's response in the spirit of ethnocentric populism and separatism, it is hard to understand the logic of Milošević's rejection—"the creation of a strong federation." At that time, the Soviet Union was already disintegrating, while Czechoslovakia disintegrated a little later. In Yugoslavia, the conditions for creating a "strong federation" were still less favorable, especially in the situation of being alone against all. It is highly unlikely that it was the question of Milošević's ignorance. As a banker, he spent a lot of time in the United States. It is more likely that it was the question of the aforementioned interests of the partocratic oligarchy.

The self-reproducing and monopolistic class, whose half-century inviolable rule has indeed thrown Serbia back by one hundred years. Namely, about one century ago, Serbia ranked among the most modern countries in the region as well as in Europe. Although it was a small agricultural country with a predominant patriarchal society, like the greatest part of contemporary Europe to some extent, Serbia was one the first countries in Europe and the rest of the world which introduced universal suffrage, initiated a land reform and had a relatively developed parliamentary system, in addition to significant non-governmental institutions, foundations and other similar institutions. The University of Belgrade and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts had a high degree of financial autonomy, since they were largely supported by charitable endowment funds. Struggling painfully to overcome its backwardness and Ottoman legacy, small Serbia had a long way to go before approaching the civilizational achievements of modernization. The first Yugoslavia[31] was faced with almost insurmountable internal and external challenges, but still achieved significant success in its struggle against backwardness, not to mention land reform, economic growth, stable finance and education. It did not collapse from within,[32] but was forcibly dismembered by the superior external adversary, at the time when Europe fell into the deepest abysses of its history, to the lowest point of its existence.

Over the centuries, the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo of 1389 has been marked not as the celebration of the defeat, as this event is sometimes wrongly interpreted. On the contrary, it has been an incentive and inspiration for new exploits, creation, the struggle for victory over dishonor, hope over hopelessness, faith over little faith, courage over apathy. This is how it has been experienced and understood, as an incentive and challenge of life and history, peace and war, creation and destruction, whereby success can be achieved by overcoming a failure, until victory after defeat, until joy after grief, until resurrection that is not possible without death, until the change of mind and correction, which are impossible without repentance. Therefore, in the spirit of the original ethics and epic, Vuk Karadžić could say in a concise way: "Work and sing at the same time; this way you will take the best revenge on your adversaries and shame them."

Kosovo has always been an indicator of Serbian history and time will show whether it will remain that in the future.

Reconciliation and Human Security.
Proceedings of the Fourth ECPD International Conference
(Eds. T. Togo, N. P. Ostojić), European Center for Peace
and Development, Belgrade 2009, pp. 312–324

[30] A. Lynch, R. Lukić, *Europe from the Balkans to the Urals : The Desintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union*, Oxford University Press, 1996, 436 pp. ; R. Lukić, *L'agonie yougoslave* (1986–2003). *Les Etats-Unis et l'Europe face aux guerres balikaniques*, Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2003, pp. 43–144 ; P. de Bois, "L'Union européenne et le naufrage de la Yougoslavie (1991–1995)," *Relation internationale 104*, Genève 2000, pp. 477–480; Y. Brossard, J. Vidal, *L'éclatement de la Yougoslavie de Tito* (1980–1995), *Désintégration d'une fédération et guerres interethniques*, Paris 2001, pp. 43–50.

[31] A. Mitrović, "Pitanje stvaranja jugoslovenske države kao medjunarodni problem u ratu 1914–1918," in: *Stvaranje Jugoslovenske države 1918 godine*, Belgrade 1989, pp. 21–22; Lj. Dimić, *Srbi i Jugoslavija*, Belgrade 1998; Id., *Istorija srpske državnosti*, Belgrade 2001; *Id.*, "Kuda i kako—Mitovi i znanja o istoriji Jugoslavije," in: *The Shared History. Myths and Stereotypes of the Nationalism and Communism in Ex Yugoslavia*, Novi Sad 2008, p. 9–22.

[32] V. Terzić, *Slom Kraljevine Jugoslavije* 1941, I-II, Belgrade-Ljubljana-Titograd, 1982; B.S. Vukčević, *Diverse Forces in Yugoslavia 1941–1945*, Los Angeles 1990; *The Shared History. The Second World War and National Question in Ex Yugoslavia*, Novi Sad 2008.

The Kosovo Peonies—Gračanica,
Nadežda Petrović, 1913, National Museum, Belgrade

IV

MEMORANDUM
ON KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

The Patriarchate of Peć (recently repainted in dark red color)

MEMORANDUM ON KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

OF THE HOLY ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Bishop Atanasije (Jevtić)

THE CHURCH of Christ among the Serbian people, which has shared the fate of its people throughout its historical, cultural and spiritual existence, demonstrates itself even today to be the most reliable witness of its trials, which are perhaps more dangerous now than ever. These trials are greatest and most tragic in Kosovo and Metohija, the *Holy Land* of the Serbian people. What Jerusalem means to the Jewish people, that is Kosovo for the Serbs. Moreover, Kosovo, like Jerusalem, is not just matter of geography or demography. It is a question of identity: national, spiritual, cultural, Christian and human, i.e. theanthropic, for us Orthodox Christians.

This is why the Serbian Orthodox Church remains at this moment deeply concerned about the fate of Kosovo and Metohija, and all human beings who live there, and all Holy Shrines that exist there. This *Memorandum* is, therefore, an impartial *reminder*, in a countless series of reminders, of the full truth and justice about Kosovo and Metohija, in the past and the present, and for the sake of the common future of all in Kosovo. We have spoken and written about this many times,[1] and this is only the most recent *reminder* because the question of "resolving the status of Kosovo" is imminent.

The problem of KOSOVO is not of recent origin but is several centuries old. In addition to centuries of Ottoman occupation and Greater Albanian expansion, this problem was further compounded by the Nazi occupation (1941–1945), the Communist undemocratic and anti-Serbian government of the past 55 years (1945–1999) and, in the last four years, by Euro-American "robust" intervention in the drama of Kosovo and Metohija, which is still ongoing, and which has not only failed to yield any significant improvement but is making an already difficult situation even worse and consequently, the problem of Kosovo threatens to end in unprecedented tragedy for the Serbian people and its Church in Kosovo and Metohija.

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1 See, for example, *Apel za zaštitu Srpskog življa i njegovih Svetinja* (Appeal for the protection of the Serbian people and its Holy Shrines) from 1982 published in *Pravoslavlje* (Orthodoxy), the publication of the Serbian Patriarchate, on May 15, 1982; and the monograph *Zadužbine Kosova—Spomenici i znamenja Srpskog naroda* (Endowments of Kosovo—Monuments and exponents of the Serbian people), Prizren-Belgrade, 1987, 876 pp., where this Appeal was also published.

IC
XC

Name and Territory

First it must be said that the name KOSOVO itself, which was imposed by the Communist anti-historical and anti-Serbian regime after 1968 instead of the previous, full name of KOSOVO and METOHIJA, is not adequate for the territory it is understood to represent.[2]

Geographically and historically, the name *Kosovo* signifies, first and foremost, *Kosovo POLJE (Kosovo Field or the Field of Blackbirds)*, a plateau (elevation 520–570 meters above sea level) in the basin of the Sitnica and Lab Rivers, which stretches from Zvečan in the north to Kačanik in the south. East of the northern part of Kosovo is *Kosovica* or so-called *Malo Kosovo* (near Podujevo), and east of the southern part of Kosovo is *Kosovsko Pomoravlje*, which was once called *Morava*.[3] West of Kosovo, from the mountains of Čičavica, Goleš and Crnoljev, lies the territory called *Drenica* (Upper and Lower Drenica, with respect to the Drenica River) and further to the west, as far as the high mountains that border with present-day Albania, are the plains of *Metohija* (elevation 350 meters above sea-level), which primarily encompasses the Beli Drim River basin. The northern part of Metohija around Peć as far as Istok was called *Hvosno* in the Middle Ages, and during the later period of Ottoman occupation (17th century) the region around Peć, Djakovica and part of northern Albania was called *Dukadjin*; however, by the 18th century, the name Metohija had been restored.[4] The southern part of Metohija is called *Podrima* (east), *Ribnica* and *Has* (west) and *Prizrenska Podgora* (south), and the entire region from Prizren to Scutari was known in the Middle Ages as *Pilot*.[5]

Because of its accessibility from various sides, especially from Pomoravlje, Povardarje, Šumadija and the Adriatic, the territory of Kosovo and Metohija has been rightly called the most important inland crossroads on the Balkan Peninsula. From here rivers flow into three seas: the Aegean, the Adriatic and the Black Sea. Continental roads between the Christian East and West passed through here, whether going from the north to the south or from the sea to the East. As far as fertile soil and suitability for livestock and agriculture, the growing of grain crops, fruit, vegetables and vineyards is concerned, Kosovo and Metohija are among the most fertile regions in the Balkans. It should be particularly emphasized that Kosovo is very rich in mineral resources (silver, gold, copper, nickel and coal), exploited here as early as the Middle Ages, and in our time the Western NATO countries have shown great interest in nickel production in the Trepča mines in Kosovo.

The present-day Kosovo and Metohija, created by the Communists in 1945 as an *Autonomous Region* and later renamed an *Autonomous Province*, covers a surface area of 10,850 square kilometers. It became clear to everyone some time ago that the Communist and Albanian intentional repression and erasure of the name *Metohija* from the name of this Serbian Province served the purpose of pushing out, erasing from memory and ultimately denying the *Serbian Church character* of this region, and the homogenization of the entire Province and facilitation of its transformation into a republic and later secession from Serbia. This would gradually reduce Serbia to its pre-Kumanovo borders, namely, to the Belgrade pashalic during the Ottoman occupation, thus, a Serbia without Kosovo and Metohija, even though Kosovo and Metohija are and remain the oldest and central districts of the Serbian people, its state and Church, and that is why they were and still are called *Stara Srbija (Old Serbia)*.[6]

The Problem of Kosovo

The problem of Kosovo cannot be understood without a knowledge of the *history* of Kosovo and Metohija, although we know that for some people in the West, e.g. some Americans, as well as the upstarts and left-wingers among our own ranks such as the former Communists and some present-day neo-Communists and so-called liberal "Europe-

[2] Only during the last period of Ottoman occupation was the name "Kosovo vilayet" given—"vilayet" replacing earlier Ottoman administrative units named after cities—but this vilayet at that time included far more territory than present-day Kosovo and Metohija, i.e. also the Novi Pazar Sanjak with Gornje Polimlje, northern Macedonia as far as Veles, and eastern Macedonia with the entire Bregalnica River basin.

[3] This is the district of *Morava* based in Gnjilane, which was also called *Morava*.

[4] A written record from 1737 says: "And in that year Mahmut-pasha devastated the Vasojević clan, enslaving and driving them into *Metohija*, the summer of 7246=1737."—*Stari Srpski Zapisi i Natpisi, knj. 2 (Old Serbian records and inscriptions*, vol. 2*)*, 27-25.

[5] The *Pilot* region is also mentioned by the Byzantine writer Constantine Porphyrogenitus in the 10th century in his description of the settlements of the Slavic tribes.

[6] *Stara Srbija (Old Serbia)* is a region that includes the district of Ras (the *"Novi Pazar Sanjak"* during Ottoman times), i.e. the land from the southern Bosnian border to Kosovska Mitrovica, Kosovo Polje with Priština, Metohija with the cities of Peć, Djakovica and Prizren, as well as areas south of Šar-planina (Mt. Šara) as far as Tetovo and Veles. It is characteristic, however, for maps printed today in Albania and distributed world-wide as propaganda that the name *"Kosova"* is used even more broadly: for parts of Serbia east of Kosovo (what the Albanians call "eastern Kosovo"), parts of Montenegro and Macedonia where Albanians are living today, thus suggesting pretensions to these regions as well, with the goal of creating a *"Greater Albania"* even though neither Kosovo and Metohija nor any of the aforementioned areas have ever been Albanian or an integral part of Albania or inhabited by an Albanian majority population. We note also that the names *Shqiptar* and *Shypnia* are the authentic, autochthonous names for Albanians and Albania in their mother tongue, i.e., what they call themselves. The Communists, first and foremost, the Albanians among their ranks, insisted that Serbs not call *Shqiptars* in Kosovo and Metohija by this name because it is supposedly "pejorative;" instead, they were to call them *Albanians*, thus suggesting that the territory they inhabited is also a part of Albania. But is it pejorative to call Greeks *Hellenes* in their mother tongue or to call the people of Israel *Jews*? By the same token, it cannot be pejorative to call an Albanian *Shqiptar* in the mother tongue of the Albanians.

Ascension of Christ, dome, Church of Saint Demetrius, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1322–1324

Icon of the Holy Healers Cosmas and Damianos,
with scenes from their lives, 1674, painted by Radul,
the Treasury of the Patriarchate of Peć

A long inscription at the feet of the Saints informs us that the icon was commissioned by monk Visarion, a nephew of Patriarch Maksim, and made in 1674. The decorative and narrative icon of the two Holy Healers, in a nicely painted and carved wooden frame, ranks among the best achievements of zoograph Radul and among the most attractive icons of the second half of the 17th century.

ans," the very mention of *history* provokes haughty denial, derision and scorn. This *anti-historicism*, however, especially by the Americans, is nothing more than anti-historical *pragmatism*, as the late academician Dimitrije Bogdanović[7] pointed out, frequently hiding a guilty conscience or a conscious intent to reject *a priori* any opposing or different human and historical experience.[8]

The Serbian people has a developed historical sense and purpose, and this Orthodox Christian, biblical *historicism* of ours is no "nationalism" but a deeply human sense of our worth, identity and dignity before God and humanity. It also means the conscious striving to preserve and renew authentic and intransigent values, which in turn includes in it an interest in and creative endeavor for further development of true culture and compassionate, Christian civilization.

Since Karadjordje's uprising against the Turks (1804) to this day, for two centuries now, we Serbs have been forbidden and even denied the right to *self-renewal* and re-establishment of what we historically have been and what we can be in the Balkans, in the Eastern Mediterranean region, in Europe and in the world. Only those individuals and peoples whose own totalitarian mentality demands that they impose upon all others exclusively their own view of the world and life have no tolerance for any other culture or civilization but their own, as Solzhenytsin has accurately noted. This has, unfortunately, often been and remains today the attitude of a significant number of people, intellectuals and rulers from the West, who publicly advocate and support intolerance toward Orthodox Byzantium and peoples and states, which developed their history and culture in continuity with the Byzantine Orthodox tradition of culture and civilization. This is largely the prevalent attitude today of a part of the international community toward the real, historical and current, problem of Kosovo and Metohija.

Endowments-Holy Shrines of Kosovo and Metohija show the Serbian character of Kosovo

Despite all the present-day tragedy of Serbian Kosovo and Metohija, for which Nazis and Fascists, Serbian Communists and neo-Communists, Albanian neo-Fascists and certain Western neo-colonialists are to blame, the clearest and fullest testimonials about us and our Serbian Orthodox Kosovo and Metohija still remain our HOLY ENDOWMENTS—*the Churches and Monasteries of Kosovo and Metohija*, which have been located here in uninterrupted continuity from the 12th to the 21st century. Consequently, it was with a peaceful conscience that His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle could tell the European and American politicians and NATO generals in Kosovo, upon their arrival in the Serbian Province, on June 18, 1999 in Gračanica: *"All that we Serbs are here is represented by our Holy Shrines."* The Patriarch repeated this many times during the horrible summer of 1999, when the infernal hatred of the Alba-

[7] *Knjiga o Kosovu (Book on Kosovo)*, Belgrade, 1986. There are newer editions, as well as editions in English and French.

[8] Such anti-historicism is actually anti-human, anti-biblical and anti-Christian. Christianity brought a new, truly *historical* concept of humanity, the world and life—because it is in history that God was incarnated and born in the body of a man and it is in history that He founded His Church—and thus the Christian, true understanding of history gives history its full meaning and significance because it assesses its true worth. Hence, the battle against history—which is not just the past but also we ourselves, the living people and nations, our life and work, our deeds and misdeeds, our culture and civilization—is actually a war against humanity, the war against living persons and nations, the repression and eradication of our human and all-human historical *memory and identity*. Only individuals and nations who have no history or who would like to forget history because of their own guilty conscience can be against history.

nian hordes set out to torch and destroy the Holy Shrines of Kosovo and Metohija (based on information we were able to verify, to date they have *burned down, destroyed, desecrated, and demolished 112 churches and monasteries*[9]). It is likely that the toll is even higher but we are unable to visit them and document their condition because Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija lack security and freedom of movement, and KFOR is frequently unwilling to provide escorts.) Especially horrible for the Serbian people and the Church, and disastrous for the international community, is the destruction of the *oldest* Kosovo and Metohija Holy Shrines, which have been *renewed* many times over the course of the centuries, the very ones attesting to the vitality of the Serbian people and its life and presence in Kosovo, its physical and spiritual rootedness and cultural creativity in this *Holy Land* of St. Sava and Holy Prince Lazar and the glorious constellation of other Serbian Saints and Martyrs, champions of justice and freedom, both spiritual and physical, national and human. Hence His Beatitude Russian Patriarch Alexei[10] was right when he wrote the following about Kosovo and Metohija: *"For the Orthodox Serbs Kosovo is not just a geographical concept or an object on the map but the Holy Shrine of their fathers, a land scattered with ancient Orthodox churches and monasteries, which have an eternal spiritual and cultural importance."* Similar letters of protest against injustice and barbarism in Kosovo, appeals for peace, justice and freedom for all, as well as support for the suffering Serbian people came from other Orthodox Patriarchs as well: from Constantinople, Alexandria, the Archbishop of Athens. They, too, testified that Kosovo for the Serbian people really is what Jerusalem is for the Jewish people, and this was also repeated and confirmed by the Jewish Rabbi for Serbia and Montenegro in Belgrade, Mr. Isaak Asiel.

If the Serbs have "a tendency toward mythomania," as we have been maliciously characterized by some dry Western rationalists, as well as by some of their uncritical Serb epigones, and if the Serbian "myth of Kosovo" was created only to serve the purpose of something variously identified and labeled as Serbian "nationalism"—when it is, in fact, the centuries-old Serbian *Kosovo covenant*, the expression of our human and Christian memory, historical continuity and creativity, and still vital striving for desperately needed renewal of our house and our freedom, our dignity and our spirituality, our biblical-Christian, divine-secular patriotism (Hebrews 12:22–24), which signifies the theanthropic *symphonia* of all people and peoples in Christ, and is not "nationalism" or impersonal Communist "internationalism" or Anglo-American colonial syncretism—then how does this supposed "mythomania" explain the fact that in a relatively small area like Kosovo and Metohija, barely 100 kilometers total in length and breadth, the Serbian Orthodox people and its Church have 1,300, to wit, *ONE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED churches and monasteries* dating from the 12th to the 21st century, built and renewed continuously for *eight hundred years*, whether in freedom or slavery, whether in glory or suffering, during centuries of suffering unacknowledged by Christian Europe, starting with five hundred years of suffering under the Ottomans, followed more recently by half a century of suffering under the Communists and, most recently, at the turn of the century and the millennium, suffering under the Albanians and NATO. Among these churches and monasteries there are, both in the cities and outside them, several dozen churches and monasteries imposing by their size, proud in the beauty of their architecture and the masterpieces among their paintings, sumptuous in their interior appointment and the wealth of their treasuries, comparable to few in Europe or the world (Peć, Dečani, Gračanica, the Mother of God of Ljeviša, Holy Archangels, Crkolez, Budisavci and the first ten already *destroyed holy shrines* included in the list at the end of this *Memorandum*). To this number of 1,300 churches and monasteries, let us also add about 80 Serbian Kosovo cities and palaces from the 11th to the 15th century, and several silver and gold mines in Kosovo and Metohija operational since the Middle Ages. All this attests that this traditionally Serbian district developed quickly into "a condensed nucleus of Serbian civilization and into the holy land of Serbian spirituality where, together with piety and theology, literature, philosophy and all sciences of the time were nurtured in the palaces, bishops' residences and monasteries".[11]

Kosovo and Metohija art historian and long-time expert associate of the Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments in Kosovo and Metohija, Milan Ivanović, who is a native of Peć, presented the following facts in his 1986 study *Church Monuments of Kosovo and Metohija, 13th-20th century:*

Of the present officially recorded 1,445 settlements in Kosovo and Metohija, this study established the existence of preserved Serbian Church monuments or their remnants in 1,090 settlements. In the remaining (now Albanian) villages, in most cases information is missing because they were not accessible to either previous or present researchers. In these almost 1,100 settlements information was collected for approximately 1,300 monasteries, churches, sites of former churches and other Serbian Church monuments. Artifacts, of course, are a completely different story: icons, books, textiles and metal. If we keep in mind that during the course of its regular spiritual and religious life, every church had to have an iconostasis, icons, books, vestments and at least three or four vessels (cross, icon lamp, diskos, chalice, incense burner) then we can conclude that in these churches there

[9] During the March pogrom (17–19 March 2004) thirty more churches and monasteries were destroyed or seriously damaged by Kosovo Albanian mob, so the number of desecrated shines has risen to 142.

[10] In a letter to Serbian Patriarch Pavle on March 25, 1999, the second day of the NATO bombing of the Serbian nation and Kosovo.

[11] Radovan Samardžić, *Kosovo i Metohija u srpskoj istoriji* (Kosovo and Metohija in Serbian history), Belgrade, 1989, p. 7

The Sarcophagus of Serbian landlord Rodop in lid the Church of Saint Nicholas, Banja Rudnička, 14th century

were between 10,000 and 15,000 icons, about 7,000 to 10,000 religious books, thousands of vessels and certainly hundreds of church bells or clappers (In: *Zadužbine Kosova (Endowments of Kosovo)*, Prizren-Belgrade, 1987, pp. 385–547).

These numerous Holy Shrines of the Church and the people in Serbian Kosovo and Metohija are neither "mythology" nor "mythomania" but a testimonial to the accumulated Orthodox identity of many centuries of an honorable Christian people, gifted and creative both materially and spiritually, a *historical* people of God in culture and civilization whose origins are not recent but who recently and today have been humiliated by Nazi Fascists, Communists and certain individuals from European and U.S. circles as never before in its difficult but glorious history. Is it necessary to add and emphasize that none of these Holy Shrines of God and the people in Kosovo and Metohija, together with their bones and holy relics, with their living people near them and in them, have ever been or are today a threat to anyone. That is why only barbarians and brutes can raze and torch them and what they represent; unfortunately, terrorists continue to do so under the eyes of enlightened Europe and the whole world at the end of the second and the beginning of the third millennium of Christian civilization! The few protests that can be heard rarely come from those with authority, such as UNESCO, and are usually formal and declarative in nature, yielding no results. For after five years of absolute rule by the international community in Kosovo and Metohija, not one Albanian terrorist, murderer or arsonist has yet been caught, brought to trial and sentenced!

Today's Albanians from Kosovo and Metohija, which was betrayed and sold by the Communists from the upscale Belgrade quarter of Dedinje, having already torched, razed and destroyed more than 110 Serbian churches and monasteries in Kosovo and Metohija, want to raze and uproot the remaining Serbian Holy Shrines in Kosovo and Metohija, too. That is why they continue to attack the Peć Patriarchate, Visoki Dečani and Gračanica despite the protection of NATO tanks, demanding that NATO patrols and armored transporters pull back—*"lest they disgrace our democracy"*! Most recently, the Albanians in Kosovo provisional institutions are demanding that Serbian Holy Shrines be "protected by the Kosovo Protection Corps," i.e. the same people who organized and led the terrorist campaign of torching and razing of everything Serbian and Orthodox in Kosovo.[12]

The Albanians, unfortunately in great number, are doing this with such pathological hatred against everything in Kosovo and Metohija that is Serbian and Slavic and Orthodox that they have even killed a United Nations official (a Bulgarian by origin from New York) for uttering a single Slavic word on the main street of Priština! They lie shamelessly when they tell the West they are destroying only "new churches built during the last ten years under Milošević" because among the 112 Holy Shrines they have torched and destroyed, eight were medieval Serbian monasteries from the 13th and 14th centuries; 30 were churches built between the 13th and the 16th centuries; 20 were churches from the 17th to the beginning of the 19th centuries; ten were from the 20th century; and only ten were more recently built (after 1989) churches, most of these also being restorations or renewals built on older foundations, as in the case of the cathedral in Djakovica (which the Communists and the Albanians destroyed on the feast of St. Sava in 1950) or the cathedral of Christ the Savior in Priština, the endowment church of the Priština and Kosovo Serbs built to replace 12 previously existing churches in Priština. We will not discuss here all the churches destroyed in Kosovo and Metohija during the time of the Ottoman occupation, in place of which or from whose materials mosques were built.[13] Nor will we list here the 26 churches, most of them in Metohija, destroyed by the Albanian Balists (Nazi-Fascists) during the occupation of 1941–1945.[14] However, we will mention the fact that during the half century of Communist rule (when the Albanians held most power) and even under Milošević's rule (1989–1999), the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija built proportionally many more mosques than the number of churches renewed or built by the Serbs, Orthodox churches destroyed and razed by the Albanians and the Communists. (It should be kept in mind that during Tito's Communism Islam derived great benefit while Christianity—especially Orthodoxy—was persecuted).

Unfortunately, despite all this, after five years of their "robust" presence in Kosovo and Metohija two world superpowers, NATO and UNMIK (The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo), are thinking about Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries like one of their conscienceless officials, who said that "the three

[12] Almost two decades ago (1986) inspired poet Miodrag Pavlović wrote the following lines of both the Communists and the Albanians: "No Agarene / or outcast / can defend your sons / No arsonist / can protect you / from the flames" (From the poem "Kosovo III").

[13] For example, Sinan-pasha's mosque in Prizren, built of the stones of the destroyed church of Holy Archangels near Prizren and many others listed by Milan Ivanović in his previously mentioned study in the monograph *Zadužbine Kosova (Endowments of Kosovo)*, pp. 387–448.

[14] They are listed in the monograph *Endowments of Kosovo*.

remaining monasteries (Peć, Dečani, Gračanica) are enough" for the Serbs (!) apparently to assuage their own guilty conscience because under their protection, the Serbian people and Church have suffered the destruction and torching of over 110 churches and monasteries. Consequently representatives of UNMIK recently stated that these Serbian Monasteries "should be placed under the jurisdiction of Priština," i.e. of the very people who want to see these Holy Shrines disappear as soon as possible!

History of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija

During the great migration of the Indo-European peoples, the Serbs finally settled in the region of present-day Kosovo and Metohija in the 7th century and soon thereafter, by christening and establishing a church, i.e. by becoming a part of Christ's Church, they became a part of the Christian civilization of Orthodox Byzantium. From Byzantium the Serbs inherited, among other things, the God-pleasing and compassionate tradition of the building of endowments—the raising of churches and monasteries for God and the people *"that Divine Liturgy may be served in them of this world and the next"* and the tradition of all-peoples' gatherings, assemblies and religious services in these holy Abodes of God and the people, as well as the comprehensive cultural education of the people in and around these Holy Shrines, and the God-loving practice of ascetic life nearer or further to these Holy Shrines in isolated places and caves. In addition to churches and monasteries, the building of endowments also included the building of hospitals, orphanages, bridges, spring wells and other philanthropic endowments. Since the time of the christening of the Serbs (final christening in the middle of the 9th century) to the present day, this has all continuously existed in Serbian Kosovo and Metohija. This is attested to by the aforementioned 1,300 churches and monasteries, sites of former churches and monasteries, ascetic retreats and prayer retreats in Kosovo and Metohija, especially around Prizren, Peć, Istok, Klina, Čičavica, Novo Brdo, and Pomoravlje. Just in the area of Mt. Čičavica, justifiable called the "Serbian Holy Mountain," Turkish censuses from 1525–6 and 1544–5 listed *"a total of 52 monasteries and churches."* So far 36 former sites of churches have been found while *"there is a traditional belief among the Serbian and Albanian people that on Čičavica there are 77 springs, 77 streams and 77 churches."* Similarly, the city of Prizren has 26 churches in almost half of which religious services continue to be held until the arrival of NATO (and since the arrival of NATO out of a population of 8,500 Serbs barely 60 remain in Prizren![15]) As well, the village of Velika Hoča in Podrimlje alone still has 12 churches; most of them dating back to the Middle Ages, and seven of them continue to function even today. All this is quite enough to explain our Serbian, neither "mythological" nor "mythomaniac" but Christian Orthodox historical and eschatological connection to Kosovo and Metohija.

If it still means anything to the enlightened Western world, we again remind that among the endowments of Kosovo and Metohija there are many outstanding church, religious and cultural monuments, artistic achievements and spiritual attainments such as the Peć Patriarchate, Visoki Dečani, Gračanica and the Mother of God of Ljeviša, the likes of which are rare in the entire spiritual and cultural heritage of the world. These monuments are priceless in terms of their artistic value and as such they are part of the general legacy of humanity; therefore, all enlightened individuals and peoples of the modern world should protect them unless they plan to return history to the primeval forest (or Afghanistan or Iraq).

The Sarcophagus lid of Patriarch Maksim, with an inscription and ornament, 1680, the Patriarchate of Peć

The Serbs, therefore, have been present in the region of Kosovo and Metohija since the moment of the arrival of the Slavs in the Balkans, and they formed the great majority of the population there throughout the entire Middle Ages and in the modern age on which there exists indisputable and abundant evidence (archeological finds, linguistic with Slavic names of settlements and regions, anthropogeographical, historical and clerical evidence), which it is not necessary to present here in detail.[16]

[15] During the March pogrom (17–19 March 2004) all remaining Serb homes in Prizren were burned down by Kosovo Albanian mob. Thirty remaining Prizren Serbs found refuge in a nearby KFOR base. During the riots all Orthodox churches in Prizren, including those built in the fourteenth century were burned or seriously damaged by extremists. In one night only (March 17–18) all Serbian cultural heritage in Prizren which survived centuries of Ottoman occupation was set on fire and turned into ashes, despite NATO presence and the UN Mission.

[16] We have already mentioned that as early as 1987, i.e. prior to S. Milošević's coming to power, the Serbian Orthodox Church, in collaboration with 30 eminent scientists and experts, published a monumental book of documents, *ZADUŽBINE KOSOVA—Spomenici i znamenja srpskog naroda (ENDOWMENTS OF KOSOVO—Monuments and insignia of the Serbian people)*, Prizren-Belgrade, 876 pp.; and subsequently an abridged version of this monograph in four major languages: English, French, German and Italian. This capital work of documents about the *Serbian character of Kosovo and Metohija* was neither supported nor promoted in the world by Tito's Communists or Milošević's neo-Communists; moreover, it was consciously dis-

Opening page of the Gospel of the Saint John,
manuscript, Gračanica Monastery, 15th century

The native population found by the Serbs upon their arrival in Kosovo and Metohija, which had already been thinned out considerably in the central Balkans and the region which the Serbs were to give the name of *Kosovo* by previous invasions of Huns, Goths and Avars, consisted primarily of Romanized Dardanians, as well as some Greeks, Romans, Vlachs, Aromanians, Tsintsars and remnants of the Illyrians and Thracians, i.e. those ancestors who would participate in the later formation of the Albanians. These natives had withdrawn toward the coastal towns or hard to access mountain districts. On the territory of Kosovo and Metohija at this time "there is no state entity of the Albanian people nor does any significant ethnic group of Albanians or Albanian ancestors appear during this time as a historical factor."[17]

For the Serbian people it is all the same whether the present-day Albanians are the descendants of the Illyrians, the Thracians or the Pelagians; however, it is not the same if such an essentially racist theory as they have begun promoting recently endangers the survival and rights of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija, and by doing so wishes to turn history upside down and turn it centuries and millennia backwards, in which case all Indo-European people should be sent back from Europe to Asia, all Muslims expelled to Arabia, all Turks to Turkmestan, all Americans to Europe, etc.

Medieval Serbia in Kosovo and Metohija

Upon their arrival in the 7th century, the Serbs inhabited the territory of the then Byzantine Empire and formed their own districts called *sklavinije*. Subsequently, they also accepted Christianity from Byzantium and then created several local princedoms (from the 9th to the 11th century) prior to the ascent of the royal house of Nemanjić in the middle of the 12th century. Stefan Nemanja (1114–13/02/1200) was the first to succeed, by waging war as well as by signing a truce with Byzantium, in organizing a sovereign Serbian state at the end of the 12th century, and at that time Kosovo and Metohija also became part of the Serbian state and soon thereafter its central state and clerical region. Even prior to the creation of a sovereign state the Serbian people had lived on the territory of Kosovo and Metohija since the time of its settlement of the Balkans, which is clearly shown by local Slavic toponyms, which exist in great number even in parts of present-day northern Albania, as well as archeological and other information.

The entry of Kosovo and Metohija into the composition of the sovereign Serbian state is clearly attested to by Nemanja's *Žitije*, written by St. Sava at the beginning of the 13th century, where listed among Nemanja's acquisitions "from the Greek land" are, first, the regions of Metohija and then the regions of Kosovo, followed by other regions further to the east and west: Patkovo, Hvosno, Podrimlje, Kostrc, Dreškovina (Metohija and northern Drenica), Sitnica, Lab and Lipljan (Kosovo); then Glubočica (east) and both Pilots (west). However, these western regions are without doubt outside the territory of the present day Province of Kosovo and Metohija. The district of Suhogrlo in northeast Metohija as well as the district of Ibar in the north part of Kosovo already belonged to the state of Nemanja's forefathers and that is why St. Sava does not mention them as being won from Byzantium. Another biographer, Nemanja's son Stefan the First-Crowned (Stefan Prvovenčani—beginning of the 13th century), specifically lists the cities of Prizren and Lipljan, both administrative and church centers under Byzantium, as being under Nemanja's rule. The seat of the Serbian state was first located in Ras, in immediate proximity to Kosovo, to which it is connected by the Ibar River Valley, through which as well as through northern Kosovo (Lab) there was a connection with Toplica, another old nucleus of the Serbian state.[18]

avowed and even attacked. To this we add that mercenary NATO historian Noel Malcolm in his slapped together and tendentiously written *Kosovo: A Short History* does not even mention the capital work *Endowments of Kosovo* nor any of the multitude of documents in it. (See Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, Grand Bretagne, Macmillan, 1998.)

[17] D. Bogdanović, *Knjiga o Kosovu* (Book on Kosovo), p. 32.

For anyone with the least bit of knowledge about the geography and history of the Balkans, the territories of Kosovo and Metohija, thanks to their fertility, dense population and ready accessibility, very early on became the center of the Serbian state. The transfer of the center of gravity from Ras to Kosovo is especially apparent by the rulers' residences and changes in the organization of the church. Live their contemporaries in many other European countries, the rulers of Serbia at the time did not have a permanent capital but several palaces where they periodically stayed, received foreign envoys, held state assemblies, etc. Ras was abandoned at the beginning of the 13th century and gradually neglected, while the chief role in political life was assumed by Prizren and the palaces in Kosovo: Pauni, Rodimlja-Nerodimlja, Štimlja, Svrčin, Petrič and, during the age of Milutin and Dušan, also by Priština, an unfortified settlement.

The Branković: Djuradj, Mara and Lazar, Seal from Hilandar, 15th century

Serbian Church in Kosovo and Metohija

The two aforementioned Byzantine cities conquered by Nemanja, Prizren and Lipljan, were seats of church dioceses under Byzantium. These two dioceses were to remain in the Serbian Church and state (Lipljan would be replaced at the beginning of the 14th century by *Gračanica* built not far from it), and they would soon be joined at the beginning of the 13th century by a third diocese in Hvosno (Peć area) when the autocephalous Serbian Church would be organized under Archbishop St. Sava (1219–1221). Out of a total of ten dioceses, the Serbian Church would have three dioceses in Kosovo and Metohija, meaning that Orthodox population densely populated these districts. For half a century the seat of the Serbian Autocephalous Archdiocese was in the church of the Savior in Žiča (near Kraljevo); however, from 1253 and on through the centuries the seat of the Serbian Church (which in 1346 would become a Patriarchate instead of an Archdiocese), was in *the Great Church* of Christ the Savior in Peć. These three aforementioned dioceses (along with the somewhat more northerly *Raška* Diocese, which encompassed parts of northern Kosovo and parts of which would later form the *Vučitrn* Diocese as well) in this relatively small territory continued to exist without interruption until the 18th century (to the Turkish discontinuation by force of the Peć Patriarchate in 1776). The Prizren Diocese continued to our times as today's Diocese of *Raška-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija of the Serbian Orthodox Church.* They attest that in Kosovo and Metohija the life of the Church and the people throughout the entire Middle Ages and the modern age was lively and dynamic, which is also borne out by the great number of churches and monasteries we have already mentioned. One hundred years after the arrival of the Ottomans (1455), the renewal of the Serbian Peć Patriarchate occurred here (1557) and many other churches and monasteries were renewed then or new ones built, over 20 of them in just the first few decades. Additionally, in many of them frescos were painted and they were provided with numerous newly written books, icons, church vessels and other requisites, everything that was necessary for the further course and development of the life of the Church and the people, and Christian culture.

Special emphasis should be given to the fact that many tracts of land and villages throughout Metohija as well as a good part of Kosovo was given by the Serbian rulers of the Middle Ages (as well as by individual Serbian nobles who also built endowments) as gifts *(metochia)* to the great monasteries-endowments: Hilandar, Studenica, Banjska, Gračanica, Bogorodica Ljeviška, Dečani, Holy Archangels as amply attested to this day by *rulers' charters (chrysobuls)* which in addition to their state and legal significance also have added importance for the history of Kosovo and Metohija in that they clear indicate which people lived here and how small was the percentage of the non-Serbian population. *"These Serbian monasteries—monuments of faith, spirituality and culture—were not built on foreign soil which subsequently became inhabited by their people in order to create an appropriate and safe environment for them after the fact but, on the contrary, they were built where peace could be ensured for the relics of the holy kings and archbishops, as well as for the monks who were to live there and*

[18] Ras is not present-day Raška, as Noel Malcolm claims in his book *Kosovo: A Short* History but present-day Novi Pazar, the location of the church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, where Nemanja was baptized. Malcolm goes to great lengths to prove that Ras is "far away from Kosovo" only to inadvertently admit that it is some 20 kilometers from Kosovo. He also erroneously depicts the geography of Kosovo and Metohija, claiming that they are "separated by high mountains" from Serbia when, in fact, Kosovo and Metohija are separated by such mountains from the territory considered to be the cradle of the Albanians, i.e. Kroja and the Maća River Valley, i.e. present-day northern Albania.

strive for a spiritual world for themselves and their people. That is why these 'imperial endowments' are the true landmarks of the Serbian people and Serbian lands."[19]

In these rulers' *charters* issued for the Monasteries here, the names of the people, just like the names of the places, indicate that the farming population in Metohija and in Kosovo was almost entirely Serb. The charters from the 14th century onwards mention also Vlachs and Albanians, although in very small number but from this and other information it clearly follows that in medieval Serbia there was no conflict between the Serbs and the Albanians (these problems would appear only after the Islamization of the Albanians from the 17th century onward); instead, there was a common life, peaceful coexistence and cooperation.[20]

The Battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389 and the further history of Serbian Kosovo

That Kosovo was the center of the Serbian people, its state and Church is also apparent from the fact that the Ottomans attacked the heart of Serbia precisely at Kosovo Polje (Field of Blackbirds) where the greatest Serbian resistance was also organized—in the famous *Battle of Kosovo* in 1389, which was fought exclusively on Serbian soil and which was decisive not only for the Serbs but also for other Christian peoples in the Balkans and beyond. Recently (on March 29, 1999), a few days after NATO began its senseless bombing of the innocent Serbian people and Kosovo, His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle made the following historically accurate statement: *"Serbian Prince Lazar and our ancestors came out in Kosovo to defend their land, not to seize land belonging to others; to defend their freedom, not to repress the freedom of others; to defend their faith, not impose it on others. For Abel has the right and the obligation to defend himself from Cain."*

The Battle of Kosovo, on the feast of St. Vitus (Vidovdan), June 28, 1389 (June 15 according to the Julian calendar used by the Serbian Church), was and remains in the national consciousness of all Serbs the central event in all of Serbian history. The Battle of Kosovo became the inspiration of the greatest Serbian patriotic and freedom-loving tradition and the most beautiful national epic poems in which, it is well-known, the poet does not dwell as much on Serbian victory but describes instead the suffering of the Serbs *"for the Holy Cross and golden Freedom."* "This fact demonstrates, first of all, the undeniable vitality of the Serbian people. He who believes that his defeat is final will not write poetry about it. Because with final defeat comes not only the death of the will but also the loss of the capacity to create. He who is preoccupied with his defeat believes that he can ultimately atone for it and that his defeat, no matter how bitter, is at the same time both a consolation and a stimulus due to his honorable and noble effort."[21]

The Serbian idea of Kosovo which emerged from the Kosovo drama is the idea of freedom and of choice in favor of the permanent values of the Kingdom of Heaven; and the Battle of Kosovo, regardless of what biased historians may say, especially some of the more recent ones from the West, is the symbol of the Serbian Christian battle for the freedom and human dignity of an honorable people. Kosovo was also the scene of an attempt, also tragic, by Europe during the Crusades to expel the Ottomans from its territory (in 1448 under Janko Hunjadi-Sibinjanin). These two Kosovo battles, certainly, were not of the same historical significance for the Serbs but they both demonstrate the geostrategic and Christian importance of Kosovo for the entire Balkans and southeastern Europe.

Appearance of Albanians in Metohija and in Kosovo and arrival of the Ottomans

When the Ottomans occupied Kosovo (in 1455 with the fall of Novo Brdo) and the neighboring regions, they found there and registered a population which was almost exclusively Serb, with only 2–3% Albanians west of Djakovica.[22] Their subsequent censuses, frequent in the 16th century, show that ethnic and religious changes did not occur quickly here. The Christian population, predominantly Serb, was overwhelmingly in the majority even in the cities where the Ottomans preferred to settle, transforming them into their own military, administrative, judicial, religious and commercial strongholds. The hypothesis that the numbers of the Christian population also included Albanian Catholics is invalid for the simple reason that this would certainly have been noted by the missionaries of the Roman Curia, who were the most enthusiastic supporters of Albanian Catholicism as well as of Albanian nationalism and later of Albanian literacy as well. Changes in the demographic picture in Kosovo and Metohija did not differ significantly from similar changes occurring in other parts of Ottoman-

[19] D. Bogdanović, *Knjiga o Kosovu* (Book on Kosovo), p. 62.

[20] That is why some of the monastery *charters* regulating the obligations of farmers are referred to in the documents themselves as "*Zakon Srbljem*" *(the law for Serbs)*. However, because the mountainous outskirts of this territory were the location, permanent or period, of the summer pastures *(katuni)* of Vlachs and Albanian herdsmen, separate obligations for herdsmen were drafted for the Vlachs, the primary keepers of livestock, in the form *"Zakon Vlahom" (the law for Vlachs)* in the monastery charters. The Albanians are occasionally mentioned along with the Vlachs, especially in the 14th century charter of the Emperor Dušan for the monastery of Holy Archangels near Prizren, which acquired property in Pilot, i.e. on the other side of the mountains separating Metohija from present-day Albania. (Sima Ćirković, in: *Zadužbine Kosova (Endowments of Kosovo)*, p. 555).

[21] Vladimir Ćorović, "O Kosovskom boju" (On the Battle of Kosovo), in *Zadužbine Kosova* (Endowments of Kosovo), p. 558.

[22] On this subject see the journal *Demografski zbornik: Naselja i stanovništvo oblasti Brankovića 1455* (Demographic anthology: *Settlements and population in the Branković district in 1455*), prepared by academician M. Macura, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade, 2001.

occupied Europe; they were even considerably smaller than in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Bulgaria. The Ottomans lived in the cities and fortified settlements along with other Muslims of various extraction, including a small number of Albanians. This does not mean that there were no Albanians at all in Kosovo and Metohija until the arrival of the Ottomans because the monastery charters, especially the chrysobuls from the mid-14th century such as the charters of Dečani and Holy Archangels near Prizren, as well as in the *Dušanov Zakonik (the Code of Dušan),* do mention a number of Albanians. Their number is somewhat greater in the Turkish census for the Branković District (*"kadiluk Vlk,"* as the Ottomans called it, encompassed the area of Kosovo, a part of Metohija and a few other regions) in 1455 where characteristically Albanian names are found in the households of only 80 out of a total of over 600 villages surveyed, and these Albanians are not territorially grouped which would lead to the conclusion that there were areas which were uniformly and continuously inhabited by an Albanian population. Onomastic study of the aforementioned Ottoman *defter* leads to the conclusion that in the 15th and 16th centuries several Albanian settlements appeared in Altin and Lower Metohija (the Junik area beneath Dečani and in the south between the rivers of Ribnica (Erenik) and Trnava (Trava) toward Djakovica), where the number of Albanians gradually increases; hence, according to the Turkish census of 1571 in Dukadjin Sanjak there are increasingly more of them and they are crossing into the area between the rivers of Ribnica-Erenik and Drim, east of Djakovica.

However, at the same time, there is no support for the hypothesis advocated by Albanian historians and publicists both in Kosovo and Metohija and Albania of a supposedly permanent and massive presence of Albanians in Kosovo from ancient times to today. The territories of present-day Kosovo and Metohija were distant from the home districts where the Albanians were formed in the Middle Ages. The Albanians as a people are not mentioned by that name until the 11th century (whereas every mention of the Illyrians disappears in the 3rd century). These same Albanians, however, in their gradual expansion, by the end of the 12th century had enveloped the district of Upper and Lower Pilot (in today's North Albania) and the plains and mountain hinterlands of Lake Scutari and thus arrived in immediate proximity to those parts of the Serbian state, which would be called Metohija. The arrival of the Albanians, first to Metohija and then to Kosovo as well (at first primarily as workers in the Serbian mines) was facilitated by the fact that from the time of King Milutin (1282–1321) North Albania and from the time of Emperor Dušan all of Albania (except Durazzo) was part of the Serbian state. However, we reiterate, during the period of the free Serbian state there were no problems or conflicts between the Serbs and Albanians, just as there were no problems or conflicts with the Vlachs. On the contrary, there was cooperation, even family relations, and Christian Orthodox solidarity.[23]

Serbian Patriarch Pajsije Janjevac (1614–1647),
Museo Nazionale, Ravena, Italy, 1663

Besides miners, in the first half of the 15th centuries the Albanians also joined Serbian farming settlements in some places, without changing the established ethnic balance in Kosovo and Metohija. This is how things remained throughout the 16th century, despite the fact that after the arrival of the Ottomans several abandoned Serbian villages (in the former Branković district or *"kadiluk Vlk"*) were settled in the 16th century by Albanian herdsmen, and that is the settlement of Medjuvodje near Djakovica, which we have already mentioned.

In the 17th century began the period of Islamization of the Albanians, first in Central Albania (over 50%) and then beyond, and since then the problems began for the Serbian Christian people in Metohija and in Kosovo, even though even in the 17th century the demographic structure still had not changed significantly. The Serbian population, despite wars, epidemics, increased violence and looting, lost only a few percentage points in terms of its total numbers in

[23] Repoš, the brother of George Kastriotić-Skenderbeg, the last Albanian fighter for Christianity against the Ottomans (1443–1468), was buried in the Serbian monastery of Hilandar to which his father Ivan made contributions, following the example of Serbian rulers. A Chrysobul of Ivan Kastriotić, written in Serbian, is preserved in Hilandar monastery archives.

Kosovo and Metohija. The decisive collapse occurred with the Great Migration of 1690 followed by the descent of large numbers of Albanians into the territories of Metohija and Kosovo, as well as by the partial Islamization and subsequent Albanization of the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija, which was stripped of its rights. As the large and powerful Ottoman Empire began to fade, the forcible conversions to Islam increased and the Albanians, unfortunately, became the chief Ottoman fist in this effort and a blood whip against the Christian Orthodox common people of Kosovo and Metohija and throughout the Balkans.

Great Migration of 1690 and the further migrations of the Serbs

The Great Migration of the Serbs of 1690, which the newest Albanian historians and some biased, frequently mercenary "NATO historians" intentionally deflate and almost deny altogether[24] resulted in a double tragedy for the Kosovo Metohija Serbs. On the one hand, the migration severely reduced their numbers there; on the other, those who remained, although still the majority population, continued to be persecuted and exterminated by both the Ottomans and the newly arrived Albanians. Namely, after the crushing defeat of the Christian, Austro-Serbian army near Kačanik at the beginning of 1690 where the Ottoman troops were fortified by significant numbers of Tartars and Albanians came their revenge attack on the lands of Old Serbia with the most wild destruction in the flatlands of Kosovo. A time came of re-conquest and another round of devastation of this Holy Serbian Land. Three hundred years after the monumental Kosovo defeat, general evil, massacres, enslavement of the people, transformation of cities and villages into ash heaps began once more with a defeat in Kosovo. It was in 1690 and the subsequent year that many of our endowments, churches and monasteries from the Middle Ages were reduced to pathetic ruins. The people took refuge in flight, as they had done countless times before in history, and the sultan's orders to stop decimating the people because they were necessary to work the land and support the Ottoman Empire arrived, as a rule, too late. This breach by the Tartars and the Albanians and their intolerable crimes against the Serbian population and its Holy Shrines forced Serbian Patriarch Arsenije III Crnojević to set out in the fall of 1690 with the people and following the people, some 37,000 families (approximately 185,000–200,000 souls) on what is known as the Great Migration after receiving assurances from Vienna that the Serbs would at least have the freedom to practice their Orthodox religion in Austria.

[24] We refer primarily to Noel Malcolm's book, which has been translated into Serbian and published in Sarajevo in 2000, and which consciously ignores domestic Serbian sources and scientific works, presenting a caricature of the "Great Migration" (and doing so *in quotation marks*, pp. 187–209).

Several moving testimonials remain in contemporary records about the Great Migration of the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija, and from other Serbian lands, too, for not all Serbs from Kosovo and especially from Metohija left in this exodus to the north.[25] Thus a manuscript from Dečani Monastery (number 97, page 1b), records the following testimonial:

In the year 7198 (1690) there was a great war and looting throughout the Serbian land. And the Germans came as far as Štip and the Turks fled, only to return and chase them back across the Danube. Oh, woe is me! Fierce terror and tragedy then ensued: mothers were separated from their babes and sons from their fathers, the young were enslaved, the old slaughtered and strangled. People invoked death rather than life. From the cursed Turks and Tartars, woe is me, a great tragedy ensued. And after the Agarenes (Muslims) seized it, a great dragon ascended on the monastery (Dečani), pasha Gasli-pasha, and he looted the monastery and the abbot and left him barely alive and the monastery in total devastation. The abbot could not bear this and on the third day he passed away, Abbot Zachariah.

We cite another contemporary record by Stefan of Ravanica from the year 1690:

In the spring of 1690 the Patriarch—Arsenije Crnojević of Peć—rose up with many of the Serbian people, 37,000 families in all, and that is how many entered the military service of the (Austrian) emperor... In this same war great looting and displacement of the Christian people ensued and devastation of the entire Serbian land: monasteries, towns and villages were devastated, and some were completely burned down. So it was that our monastery of Ravanica in Serbia was completely devastated... Stefan the scribe, hieromonk of Ravanica, wrote this.[26]

We will cite also the testimonial of an Italian regarding the suffering of the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija during the Great Migration. Simplician Bizozeri wrote this text:[27]

Finding no further obstacles to their bestiality, the Muhammadans forced the Serbs, who had nested in Novi Pazar, to seek shelter in the monastery of Studenica; during that time, both the Turks from Bosnia and Tartars from the Kosovo plains hurried to hasten their ruin. The Christians were similarly expelled from Prizren, Peć, Vranje, Vučitrn, Mitrovica and so many other places, even those far away from Kosovo. A spectacle of misfortune ensued, for the barbarian non-believers who arrived were merciless toward these innocent habitants whom they all massacred without any regard for their age and sex; also slaughtered were those who, enticed by promises, abandoned their shelters in the forests where they had fled to save their lives. After all the

[25] Historian Noel Malcolm in his *Kosovo: A Short History* ignored these precious historical documents, old records and inscriptions.

[26] Lj. Stojanović, *Stari srpski Zapisi i Natpisi* (*Old Serbian Records and Inscriptions*), vol. 3, № 5283 and 5302.

[27] In his book *La Sacra Lega contro la potenca Ottomana*, II, published in Milan in 1700, pp. 5–6 and 8.

habitants were butchered, their humble huts were also torched reduced to ashes; spared from flames were only the cities of Priština, Peć and Prizren for the Albanians had settled in them for the winter... There was a horrible scene with Mahmud-pasha of Peć... who set out with the Albanians to destroy those villages he knew had accepted the protection of the (Austrian) emperor, cutting any inhabitants he found in them to pieces, despite the fact that Serbia was their common homeland.[28]

Even after this Great Migration, despite all exterminations and migrations, the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija and throughout the entire territory of Old Serbia still remained in the great majority. Until the mid-18th century Kosovo and Metohija were still homogenous, largely Serbian environments, a relatively densely populated Serbian land. However, by the first decades of the 18th century, the Albanians began to descend massively from their mountains into the cultivated regions of Metohija and Kosovo, where they formed military units *(čete)* notorious for their crimes or volunteered as Janissaries to gain special privileges from the Ottomans and then proceeded to loot and rob Serbian villages, churches and monasteries prior to settling here. Some of these Albanians arrived as Roman Catholics and were subsequently Islamized in Kosovo and Metohija. Thus it is still known today when the Albanians occupied certain villages or entire regions of Kosovo and Metohija and the local Serbian Christian population then forcibly Islamized and later Albanized, too. By way of example, we cite the settlement of the Albanians in Bajgora and Šalja (east of Mitrovica in the hinterlands of Kopaonik) in the 18th century. The majority of them were Catholics from Malesijska Šalja and they brought the name with them as well to what had previously been a Serbian district; however, they were soon Islamized because this brought them privileges.

To be sure, mention should also be made of the fact that as early as the 15th century, when the Serbian state collapsed, some departure by Serbs from Old Serbia, i.e. Kosovo and Metohija, began; however, there were also Serbs coming to Kosovo and Metohija, e.g. from North Albania, Polog (near Tetovo) and the Škumba River district.[29] However, the migrations of the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs to many other Serb regions, including Herzegovina and Bosnia, were obviously greater than the number of new arrivals to Kosovo, and the greatest known and historically established migrations occurred at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century. As we have already mentioned, in the largest of these migrations, in 1690, approximately 37,000 families (about 185,000–200,000 souls) left

Great Serb Migration in 1690 (Serbian refuges crossing into Habsburg Empire), ink drawing, Vaclav Juza, 19th century, Belgrade City Museum

Old Serbia, even though it must be admitted that by their move to the north these Serbs significantly fortified the previous Serbian population on the other side of the Sava and Danube rivers and brought with them the living and unforgettable traditions of Kosovo and Metohija.

A second, likewise numerous migration of the Serbs occurred in 1737 during the time of Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović-Šakabenta after the second great Austro-Turkish War. We quote from a contemporary testimonial regarding this exodus, a record from Peć in 1737 which says:

Oh, in the year of Our Lord 1737 there was great unrest when the Germans took Niš... After came the pasha called by the name Ćuprili Oglu... and took Niš again... At that time Serbian Patriarch Arsenije the Fourth fled. Oh, is there any way in which the Christian faithful did not suffer then and any torture by which they were not tortured. It is not possible at this time to write of this for fear of the Turks. Then Kosovo was plundered, too. What else can I say: it was not in the days of Diocletian (when the Christians were horribly persecuted) as it is now for God has unleashed it because of our sins. Written by Petar Andrejić.[30]

However, even then Kosovo and Metohija were not emptied of Serbs because, in addition to other evidence which speaks of the further suffering of the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs during the 18th and 19th centuries, we have clear evidence in the form of the *katastih* of the monastery of Devič and a similar *katastih* of the monastery of the Holy Trinity near Mušutište (Suva Reka) listing numerous

[28] *Zadužbine Kosova* (*Endowments of Kosovo*), p. 608.

[29] West of Struga and Lake Ohrid where in the year 1920 there were still several dozen Serbian villages which were recorded at that time by Bishop Nikolai of Ohrid and presented to the Holy Assembly of Bishops and the state of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (*Archive of the Holy Assembly of Bishops*).

[30] *Stari srpski Zapisi i Natpisi (Old Serbian Records and Inscriptions)*, vol. 5, nos. 7734–7737.

The Great Serb Migration, Paja Jovanović, 1896

Serbian donors to these and other monasteries from dozens and hundreds of villages with their priests and parishioners. Thus, just the Devič *katastih* lists at least 200 Serbian villages with their parishioners and their own priests as donators to this popular and highly respected great Orthodox Holy Shrine, the resting place of St. Ioanichius (Sv. Joanikije) the Miracle-Worker of Devič. But no matter how vital and resilient the Serbian people were, enduring great persecution and suffering, nevertheless the pressures and terror campaigns of "the wild Albanians" and the lawless Ismailites, the Turks continued and grew worse, as did individual, family and group flights from our tragic Kosovo and Metohija, regarding which the number of written and moving testimonials increases. One of the permanent characteristics of Serbian continuity in Kosovo and Metohija is support and assistance, as well as renewal after destruction of their Christian Holy Shrines, churches and monasteries. However, by the same token the continuity of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija became increasingly characterized by the suffering and migrations of the Serbs, followed by their subsequent returns to their heritage and native land whenever it was possible.

According to calculations by historians and anthropogeographers during the course of the 18th and 19th centuries approximately half a million people were relocated from Old Serbia into the territory of Serbia north of Kosovo and Metohija and other, more westerly Serbian districts. The most numerous migrations were connected with the wars between Serbia and Turkey at the beginning of the 19th century (Karageorge's and Miloš's rebellions in 1804 and 1815, respectively) and during the years 1876–78 at the time of the Serbian-Turkish wars when the liberation began to draw nearer to Kosovo, especially after the Berlin Congress of 1878. At that time the persecution of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija was almost completely like their persecution and suffering in Kosovo and Metohija today.

The Kosovo and Metohija migration wave was one of the oldest, and it has lasted longest, until the present day. We will mention only, by way of example that entire districts in Kosovo and Metohija that were both emptied of Orthodox Serbs or Islamized and thus lost for Serbdom during this time, regarding which we have reliable data. Thus, during the course of the 18th and in the first decades of the 19th centuries the district of Gora in Šar-planina was completely Islamized while its residents—the Goranci—still speak only the Serbian language. Likewise, only a little earlier, the fertile district of Drenica west of Kosovo and the regions of Prekoruplje (from Klina toward Lapušnik and Mališevo) and Medjuvodje in Metohija were Islamized while the habitants of these regions until recently knew the Serbian language as well as Albanian. These Islamized and subsequently Albanized Serbs, who were known to have

changed their religion and nationality, were given the name "*Arnautaši*" by the Serbs. To the extent that it is possible to convert historical information into percentages, approximately 30–40% of Albanians in ex-Yugoslavia are of direct Slavic descent (historian Radovan Samardžić).

Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija in the 19th century and their persecution until the liberation of Kosovo in 1912

Regarding the suffering of the Serbs in Metohija and in Kosovo we will quote a Dečani record from the year 1857–58 written Serafim Ristić, from Tetovo by origin:

During this period the Slavic Serb and Slavic Bulgarian and Greek and all Orthodox Christians who are sons of the Eastern Church suffered greatly. They suffered at the hands of the cursed Turks but most at the hands of the Albanians. May Heaven help us and the Earth hear our cries; may Europe and all who believe in Christ come to the aid of the suffering people. Just and all-knowing Creator, have mercy on your flock of Christ. The calm and sinful Archimandrite Serafim recorded this.[31]

Similarly moving is another testimonial by the same Serafim Ristić, abbot of Dečani, also from the mid-18th century. On behalf of the repressed and persecuted people of the Peć *nahija*, the Dečani abbot complains to the Ottoman sultan of:

the violent persecutions by the Albanians and mistreatments which exceed every measure which, if not stopped will force us out from our land drenched with the blood of our ancestors and from our hearths to flee... For not even our Holy Shrines by the criminals remain untouched. There is no Christian house that has not been looted, no village, no city, no church or monastery that cries not under persecution... That is why it is no use to say who did this because what we have said so far has brought no benefit.[32]

We will quote one other testimonial regarding the suffering of the Kosovo Serbs in the second half of the 19th century. This is the letter of the priest Petar with a group of Serbs from Nerodimlje, written as an appeal on March 4, 1872:

Here an Albanian ox is worth more than all the Christians and all the Christian churches. Tragic is our situation, which cannot be described... Twice in two years we have burned and only so that our property could be looted and taken away. Old churches are falling apart and cannot be renovated... We weep yet no one hears us but instead we are told: 'I am your law.' We sue but no one recognizes our right but instead we are told: 'Your right in Kosovo disappeared when Laza (very familiar form of Lazar) was killed.' We hope for improvement but instead things grow worse.[33]

This second to the last sentence, spoken with malice by a Muslim Albanian to mock the poor Kosovo Serbs, attests to the fact that both Albanians and Turks were well aware of the Serbian ties to Kosovo and Holy Prince Lazar, and that this is not a "mythomaniac" creation of "Serbian romanticism" of the 19th century, as maliciously written by mercenary NATO historian Noel Malcolm and other pseudo-historians like him. That is why we will quote on this occasion only one other, again Turkish but older testimonial which in itself best speaks to the presence and strength of Kosovo thought and choice among the Serbian freedom-loving people. Namely, in the year 1806 the *vezir* of Travnik, Sejid Mustafa-pasha wrote to the Porte in Istanbul (on the fifth day of Muharem in 1221, i.e. March 1806) and attached a written testimonial by a Valjevo *naib* (assistant to the *kadija* or judge), Osman-efendija, who fled to Bosnia from the rebellion in Karadjordje's Serbia and says he spent a year and a half imprisoned "among renegades... with cursed Jakov (Nenadović)" in Valjevo and thus learned of their desires and intentions. The rebels, he says, continue to prepare for battle. "They have now sent letters to all sides full of lies and deceit. Their evil intentions are to delay until the feast of St. George and after that, like Prince Lazar once come out to fight in Kosovo, all of them will come out in Kosovo. They constantly hold in their hands books on the history of this prince and he is the great instigator of rebellion in their minds."[34]

More data on the suffering, persecution, Islamization and Albanization of the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija during the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century, although far from all, is presented in the aforementioned anthology *Zadužbine Kosova* (*Endowments of Kosovo*—pp. 611–728). For purposes of illustration we cite the fact that just one list of Albanian crimes against the Serbs in Kosovo composed at the beginning of the 20th century for the period from January 1, 1904 to the end of December 1905 includes no fewer than 280 victims, including approximately 100 murders and almost the same number of woundings of Serbs, several dozen rapes of Serbian women and girls, and heavy beatings of innocent Serbs while the rest involve looting of money, property and livestock from Serbian households. This increased persecution of the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs during this time occurred at the same time as the influx to Kosovo and Metohija of some 30,000 Albanians who, after the liberation of Toplica and recognition of the state of Serbia by the European powers at the Berlin

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31 Record in *Dečanski rukopis* (*Dečani manuscript*), № 64, folio 8.

32 This same Dečani abbot, Serafim Ristić, collected and published a separate book of moving accounts of the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs regarding the persecution against them by the Albanians and the Turks. Appeals were sent to various sides: Istanbul, Petrograd, Belgrade, Vienna, and elsewhere, and he gave this book of dramatic testimonials the characteristic name *Plač Stare Srbije* (*The Cry of Old Serbia*). It was published in Zemun in 1864 and contains the text of the cited appeal.

33 See *Zadužbine Kosova* (*Endowments of Kosovo*), where there are many similar testimonials from the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

34 *Zadužbine Kosova (Endowments of Kosovo)*, p. 611.

Congress of 1878, left the newly liberated areas and moved to Kosovo and Metohija. They were called "*muhadžeri*"and they were especially bloodthirsty; the Serbian population in the Gnjilane area and throughout Kosovo and Metohija suffered especially by their hand during this time. During this period from 1880 to 1912 approximately 150,000 Serbs were expelled from Kosovo.[35] During this time the awaking of national consciousness among the Albanians also began and the creation of the so-called *Albanian League* supported by the Ottoman Porte and even promising the Albanians *autonomy* within the Ottoman Empire in order to win the help of the Albanians in keeping the Serbian Christian population subjugated and preventing Serbian rebellions for liberation.

This is how the renowned anthropologist and geographer of the Balkan Peninsula, Jovan Cvijić, described the tragic situation of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century:[36]

In the years between 1876 and 1912, according to anthropo-geographical and historical data, approximately 150,000 Serbian refugees fled from the region of Kosovo and Metohija... I traveled throughout the districts of Old Serbia for the purpose of scientific study for 20 years full years (prior to 1912) as well as through Macedonia, Epirus and Thessaly, and can state with complete confidence that land (Old Serbia) is the land of greatest anarchy and violence, not only in the Balkan peninsula but perhaps in the world. I am convinced that this will be confirmed by the English politicians and travelers who have conducted autopsies of Old Serbia. There is no government or else it is powerless. Two population groups of different religion live intermixed and human relations between them are unregulated and there are no standards. One is the Muhammadans, especially the Albanians, all of whom are armed; the other is the Serbs, who are forbidden to carry arms. In some areas strongmen are in complete control who are surrounded by units of armed men, mostly of Albanian extraction, and the entire land seethes from outlaws who, like the former, live by looting and theft. Because of such banditry and attacks the Serbs were forced from their villages and they were settled by the Albanians. Especially depleted are Serbian herdsmen in the high pastures of the mountains of Old Serbia because almost all of the Serbs' livestock has been stolen. These Albanian groups of outlaws are coming chiefly from central and northern Albania. The expelled Serbs are going to (northern) Serbia. Thus in Old Serbia there are villages which have been forcibly settled by Albanian colonists while the Serbs who have deeds (tapije) to the lands have been expelled; just in the period from 1876 to the beginning of the Balkan War (1912), there are about 150,000 of them in Serbia. But all the local (Kosovo and Metohija) Serbs could not flee to (the state of) Serbia and many are becoming cifcije to the Arbanas bandits or begs. Because of this many Serbs have converted to Muhammadism... usually only the man of the household while the wife refused to permit the conversion of the children to a different religion... however, frequently entire families were Islamized. Serbian women and girls are constantly kidnapped and converted to Islam. It is true that in more recent times women or girl must appear in person before a Turkish court in which a Serbian priest takes part and declare that she desires to change her religion. Frequently priests are successful in eliciting the exact opposite statement from the women before the court, that is, that they do not wish to change their religion and then they would return to their homes. I have heard very touching stories of scenes of this sort. However, once the woman returns home the husband or father (of the woman) becomes subject to great danger and if they do not quickly flee to Serbia generally they are killed by the Albanians. The Islamization of these Serbian peasants is completely understandable because with Islamization comes the end of all their suffering and misery. In these districts as well there are secret or crypto-Serbs who from external appearance have adopted Albanian customs, especially their manner of dress and behavior, and who in addition to the Serbian language, are fluent in Albanian. Near the town of Gnjilane there are Serb crypto-Catholics who have gone even further and accepted Islam as well but who on their own hearths, in their homes, are still Christians... It is very rare that anyone be held accountable for these crimes, and even when this does occur, as a rule the perpetrators are not punished. This awful situation has not improved even with the introduction of a constitution in 1908. What is more, due to Young Turks' desire for Ottomanization, the situation of all Christians in Turkey has deteriorated... Many church and monastery properties have been nationalized (by the Young Turks) and settled with Muhammadans who emigrated from Bosnia and who, it is true, speak only the Serbian language. The same Muhammadans were settled on the meadows and pastures of Serbian villages in order to take away the peasants' means of subsistence. That is how they destroyed the compact Serb masses and created oases of mixed Christian-Muhammadan population... by Turkish administration and Albanian crimes and violence! For even the most compassionate people of Western Europe these are nevertheless faded images. For us Serbs these are acts, events leading to the destruction of our people... The former center of the Serbian state is of concern to the people. Our most beautiful church buildings from the Middle Ages—Gračanica, Dečani, Peć, Sopoćani, Banjska and others—are in Old Serbia. At the center of this region is Kosovo, for us a tragic memory, for it is there that in 1389 a battle between the Serbs and their allies on the one side and

[35] For more detailed information regarding the suffering of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija after the Berlin Congress of 1878 through 1912 see *Zadužbine Kosova* (*Endowments of Kosovo*).

[36] Jovan Cvijić in: *Zadužbine Kosova (Endowments of Kosovo)*, pp. 580–581. We note that this description, unfortunately, in many ways resembles the situation of the Serbian people in the period since the arrival of international KFOR forces in Kosovo and Metohija.

the Turks on the other side led to the loss of independence of the Balkan Christians. Defending its state in Kosovo, the Serbian people perished in droves and the cream of the Serbian nobility was killed. In Kosovo the greatest resistance was offered to the Turks during their conquest of the Balkan Peninsula. For centuries the Serbian national consciousness has dreamt of its return and liberation of Kosovo, the theme of the most beautiful cycle of Serbian epic poems. The Serbian national spirit is so enthralled by the Kosovo catastrophe that it has become a permanent national memento and a source of national strength.

Kosovo and Metohija during World War I to World War II

Upon the liberation of Kosovo and Metohija in 1912–1913, there was neither expulsion of the Albanian population from this territory nor Serbian revenge taken against them. At that time the great powers created the Albanian state, which naturally did not include Kosovo and Metohija because even though there was some Albanian population on these territories, the European states recognized Kosovo and Metohija as classic Serbian regions. At the same time the European states ordered the Serbian army, which had reached the shores of the Adriatic, to withdraw from North Albania, even though there were still Serbs living on the territory of the newly created state of Albania. Unfortunately, World War I soon followed and once again the Serbs endured heavy losses.

The suffering of the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija during World War I and the Austrian-Albanian occupation was also great, beginning with the withdrawal of the Serbian army from Albania and continuing through the entire occupation; especially during the crushing of the Serbian rebellion in Toplica in 1917, where the Albanians actively participated on the side of the Germans, Austrians and Bulgarians. During this time, by way of example, a group of Serbian soldiers was perfidiously and bestially slaughtered, an entire company comprised of about 60 soldiers and three or four officers, who had stopped at the monastery of St. Marko of Koriša above Prizren on November 26 (Nov. 13 according to the Julian calendar), 1916 to briefly rest as they withdrew from Albania and the Adriatic Sea. While there they were besieged by Albanians from the neighboring village of Kabaš to whom they surrendered their arms upon receiving an oath *(besa)* that no harm would befall them. They were all then promptly slaughtered by the Albanians. Two elderly Serbs from Prizren, who were the only other visitors to the monastery at the time, Kosta Djordjević (60) and grandmother Mitra (80), were also murdered by the Albanians and thrown from the cliffs into the Koriša River gorge. They then completely looted the monastery of St. Marko, destroyed the monastery buildings, and desecrated and vandalized the church itself, destroying the iconostasis and old frescos, and vandalizing and desecrating the grave of Simon Igumanov of Prizren, a great Serbian philanthropist.

During the course of the occupation from 1915–1918, the following *Serbian hierarchs and priests* were killed in Kosovo and Metohija:

1–2) Metropolitan Vićentije and his deacon, Cvetko Nešić, who on November 23, 1915 were taken by night from Prizren to Uroševac, where on the night of November 25 they were tied to stakes with wires, doused with gasoline and burned alive;

3–9) Hieromonk Danilo, the elder of the monastery of Saint Marko of Koriša, slaughtered by the Albanians on November 17, 1917 with six other members of the clergy;

10) Hieromonk Sava Popović of the monastery of Gračanica murdered the night of April 16, 1916 by Albanians in his house in Prilužje;

11) Abbot Rufin Nikolić, the elder of the monastery of Devič, poisoned by the Albanians in November 1917;

12) Priest Kosta Jovanović of Prizren murdered in December 1915;

13) Ljubomir Repić, the parish priest in Prizren, tortured to death on November 17, 1917;

14) Srećko Djurić, the parish priest in Peć, murdered in 1917;

15) Priest Dena Debeljković, the parish priest of Lipljan, slaughtered on November 12, 1915 in the village of Suvi Do near Lipljan in the house of an Albanian and thrown into a ditch;

16) Priest Miljko Simić of Suho Grlo in Metohija, murdered in November 1915 in Suho Grlo;

17) Vićentije Simić, the parish priest in Sočanica, hanged with 12 other eminent Serbs from Soćanica and Kosovska Mitrovica on January 30, 1917;

18) Djura Stojanović, the parish priest in Zočište (near Velika Hoča), murdered by Albanians on April 20, 1918 on the road from Zočište to Retimlje;

19–20) Priest Toma Protić of Novi Pazar and his co-priest in that parish, Kosta Kulagić of Novi Pazar, captured in a Serbian house in Mitrovica on November 9, 1915, taken away and murdered where the Sitnica River flows into the Ibar;

21) Petar Bačanin, the parish priest in Vračevo, murdered on September 28, 1915;

22) Petar Popović, the parish priest in Štavica near Rožaj, murdered with two other Serbs near Sopoćani on November 10, 1915.

Following the liberation of 1918 and the creation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, subsequently Yugoslavia, the Serbian population of Kosovo and Metohija, decimated during the preceding war and occupation, was reinforced by partial colonization which was not, however, systematically implemented nor did the state take proper care of the population of Kosovo. This created opportunities and possibilities for Communist propaganda to conduct anti-Serb and anti-Orthodox propaganda in

those interwar years in Kosovo and Metohija, which was greatly encouraged and taken advantage of by the Albanians. Consequently there were terrorist "rebellions" by Albanian *kachak* guerrillas who gave the Serbian population no peace or rest. This was followed by the quick collapse of Yugoslavia and the well-known division of Serbian districts, which was pretty much along the lines which would subsequently become the borders of the Republics and Provinces under the new Communist regime of Josip Broz Tito, i.e. according to the occupationist and Communist plans to tear up the Serbian people. Kosovo and Metohija were divided up among the Germans, Italians and Albanians; during the occupation, the latter had their own armed forces called the Balists, which carried out great crimes against the Serbs, Serbian Holy Shrines, the clergy, monks, and the people.

The Suffering of Kosovo and Metohija Serbs during the Period from 1941 to 1945

During the course of the Nazi-Fascist and Balist occupation of 1941–1945, numerous priests and monks in Kosovo and Metohija were killed such as:

1) Hieromonk Damaskin Bošković of the monastery of Devič, murdered by local Albanians in the cruelest fashion: beaten with rifle butts and tortured, dragged across rocks and nettles, and finally shot in mid-October 1941 and the monastery of Devič torched and destroyed;

2) Abbot Jovan Zečević of the Peć Patriarchate, murdered in 1944 by Balists in Albania;

3–4) Priest Andrija Popović from Istok and Hieromonk Nikodim Radosavljević from the monastery of Gorioč, murdered together with 102 Serbs from the parish of Istok by Albanians in 1941;

5) Hieromonk Aleksandar Perović murdered in Podujevo in October 1944 by Albanians;

6) Hieromonk Janićije Minović of the monastery of Binča near Vitina disappeared;

7) Monk German from the monastery of Dečani taken away to Albania where he was shot;

8) Monk Stefan Živković of the monastery of Dečani murdered in Zočište on January 8, 1945 by an Albanian soldier;

9) Priest Stajko Popović of Prizren murdered in Kačanik on April 17, 1943;

10) Priest Todor Sekulić of Ljubižda near Prizren killed by a bomb planted by Albanians in the monastery of Dečani;

11) Priest Krsta Popović, the parish priest in Ranilug, murdered in 1944 by the Balists;

12) Priest Momčilo Nešić, the parish priest in Mitrovica, murdered in 1943;

13–14) Priests Čedomir Bačanin and Tihomir Popović shot at midnight on November 28, 1942 in Kosovska Mitrovica;

15) Priest Dragoljub Kujundžić of Uroševac murdered on November 30, 1942;

16) Slobodan Popović, the parish priest in Djakovica, murdered in front of his residence on February 8, 1942;

17) Mihailo Milošević, priest from Peć, murdered on December 9, 1944;

18) Priest Radule Božović of Pridvorice murdered;

19) Priest Tihomir Balšić from Peć murdered;

20) Priest Mitar Vujisić from Vitina murdered;

21) Hieromonk Simeon Gojković from Babin Most murdered;

22–23) Priests Uroš Popović and Luka Popović from Tutin, together with the sexton of the church in Tutin, murdered during religious services on February 21, 1943 in the church in Tutin;

24) Sister Pelagija, a nun from the monastery of Sopoćani, murdered on the feast of St. Luke in 1942 in the monastery of Sopoćani.

During 1941–1945 numerous churches were devastated, torched and destroyed in Kosovo and Metohija (here we list 26):

Monastery of Devič in Drenica completely looted and destroyed;

Monastery of Gračanica looted;

Monastery of Sokolica near Mitrovica also looted;

Monastery of St. Marko in Koriša looted, demolished and an attempt made to set it on fire;

Church of the Monastery of Gorioč near Istok desecrated and used by the Albanians as a prison during mass arrests of Serbs.

The following churches in Serbian villages in Metohija were burned down and destroyed:

Church of St. Peter from the 14th century in the village of Koriša near Prizren;

Churches in the villages of *Bistražin and Šeremet* near Djakovica, *Donji Ratiš* near Dečani, *Pacaj, Nec, Ponoševac and Rastavica,* the village of *Brnjača* near Orahovac, and *Čikatovo* near Glogovac.

Looted and demolished were the churches in *Vitomirica* near Peć, *Kačanik, Veliki Belaćevac* near Priština, the *church of St. Nicholas* in the village of Banja near Rudnik-Srbica, and the *church of St. Nicholas* in the village of Banjska near Vučitrn; as well as the *churches* in the villages of *Siga* near Peć, *Crkolez* near Istok, *Pomazatin* near Priština, *Podujevo, Štimlje* near Uroševac and others.

It should be emphasized that some of these churches remained in ruins under the new Communist government while others were renewed and repaired; however, under the NATO occupation all of them have been again destroyed, torched, demolished or desecrated by the Albanians (as can be seen from the list of destroyed churches enclosed at the end of this *Memorandum*).

A large number of Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija were arrested by Albanian Balists and taken to *concentration camps in Albania*: about 900 Serbs were sent just to

the Porte Romano camp in Durazzo, of those 600 just from Gnjilane, and there were others from Prizren, Uroševac, Priština, Peć and Lipljan. From Gnjilane 600 Serbian prisoners were put on a cargo ship bound for Trieste and drowned in the Adriatic Sea. In Prizren there was a prison of the Italian-Balist *kvestura* in the building of the Roman Catholic seminary where Serbs were tortured horribly and many of them died there. A large number of Serbs was murdered throughout Kosovo and Metohija and a far great number was expelled for all time.

Namely, during the course of World War II approximately 10,000–15,000 Serbs were murdered in Kosovo and Metohija while approximately 70,000–100,000 Serbs were expelled. A large number of Serbian villages and churches were destroyed and burned down, especially in Metohija (the agricultural combine of Erenik near Djakovica, the Peć agricultural combine and others were built after the war on the property of expelled Serbs).

Kosovo and Metohija under Communist rule, 1945–1990

At the session of the National Assembly held on March 6, 1945, Tito's Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia officially prohibited the return of Kosovo and Metohija Serbs expelled by the Albanians during the war and the occupation. Milošević's later neo-Communist regime, in power from 1990, was the direct heir of Tito's Communist regime: it never rescinded this illegal decision by Tito's Assembly, a decision that in fact sanctioned Albanian occupationist, Fascist and Nazi brutal persecutions of the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija thus finally changing the ethnic percentages of the population to the detriment of the Serbs. Throughout World War II the overwhelming majority of Albanians were Balists (Nazi Fascists) and when they turned into Communists at the end of the war, Tito's regime accepted them without punishment into its ranks, and failed to expel the Albanians from Albania who had settled in Kosovo and Metohija during the occupation. Under the Communists the Albanians continued their campaign of cleansing Kosovo and Metohija of Serbs begun during the occupation because they were rewarded by the Communist Party first an *Autonomous District* and then with an *Autonomous Province*, which starting in 1968 and especially after 1974 was almost like a republic. The Albanians held full power in which the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs had no part, except for small groups of Communist poltrons, which served only to cover up the abuse of the Serbs and, using propaganda, to dispel rumors of an increasingly large exodus of Serbian population from Kosovo and Metohija in which they were supported by Zagreb, Sarajevo and other anti-Serbian centers in Tito's Yugoslavia. When some Serbs and especially the Serbian Church began to raise their voice and inform the public of the highly confidential "state secret" regarding the persecution of the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija, Tito's Communists, among whom there were Serbs, persecuted anyone who so much as mentioned it, and accused the Serbian Church of "prohibited interference in politics" and of "spreading nationalism" with the first accusation repeated until recently by the Milošević regime, and the second still being repeated by some individuals from Europe and America and their uncritical followers in Belgrade.

The Serbs were gradually but systematically expelled from Kosovo and Metohija, especially after 1965, and from 1966 to 1971 approximately 35,000 of them were expelled from Kosovo and Metohija. From the end of World War II to 1961, a total of 338 Kosovo and Metohija settlements were ethnically cleansed of Serbs. In the following years the persecution intensified and thus from 1971 to 1982 a total of 220,000 Serbs were expelled while from 1961 to 1981 a total of 606 Kosovo and Metohija settlements were left without Serbian inhabitants. By way of example, 90% of Podujevo's population after World War II was Serb; by the previous decade, the Serb population had almost entirely disappeared; and today under KFOR and UNMIK there were only three elderly Serb ladies left, one of whom recently died! Another example: in 1961 the village of Ajvalija, located between Priština and Gračanica, had 513 Serbs, 597 Albanians and 82 Roma; by 1988, there were more than 5,000 Albanians and only about ten Serb families; and now under KFOR and UNMIK, the village has been left without a single Serb or Roma.

We have no more room here to present in greater detail the suffering and persecution of the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs by the Albanians during the course of these 55 years of Communist rule and their *high degree of autonomy* (which is what the Europeans and Americans seek for them even today). The greatest number of documents about the persecution of the Serbs during the period from 1941 to 1944 and their expulsion after the so-called liberation from 1945 to 1989 are in the archives of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren and the Holy Assembly of Bishops in Belgrade.[37]

The well-known big Albanian demonstrations of 1968 (when they were already demanding a *"republic of Kosovo"*) and 1981 resulted in increasingly greater and more frequent expulsions of the Serbian population and increasingly brutal attacks on Serbian churches, monasteries and cemeteries, increasingly flagrant looting of church property and systematic destruction of everything of Serbian character and symbolism. It is characteristic that in 1981, prior to the March 26 demonstrations and later the April 1, three daylong student demonstrations in Priština (allegedly according to *"dissatisfaction with the food in the student cafeteria,"*

[37] A part of this has been published in the aforementioned book *Zadužbine Kosova* (*Endowments of Kosovo*) and in the books of Hieromonk Atanasije Jevtić: *Od Kosova do Jadovna* (*From Kosovo to Jadovno*), Belgrade, 1987, pp. 1–202; and *Stradanje Srba na Kosovu i Metohiji od 1941 do 1990* (*The Persecution of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija from 1941 to 1990*), Priština, 1990, 470 pp.

according to the Communists at that time) which were accompanied and reinforced by even greater demonstrations by Albanian masses throughout Kosovo and Metohija, on the night of March 16, that is, on Orthodox Sunday, Albanian arsonists set fire to the Peć Patriarchate (the large two-story monastery residence hall, 60 meters long, where there were 30 nuns of the sisterhood, as well as outside visitors, clergy and laypersons) and the Communist authorities from Priština and Belgrade at the time covered up the incident for a full year. After this crime, the Yugoslav government and the global community were sent an *APPEAL for the protection of the Serbian population and its holy shrines in Kosovo and Metohija* signed by 21 priests and priest-monks from throughout the Serbian Patriarchate including, of course, Kosovo and Metohija, in which the problem of the Serbian Church and people in Kosovo and Metohija was presented in an exceedingly sincere and honorable manner. We cite only the concluding words from this appeal: "God is our witness and our conscience: we wish the Albanians no ill but we only wish to preserve our people and our Holy Shrines in Kosovo, for our sake and for their sakes… We wish everything God for the Albanian people, as God himself knows.[38] However, the authorities at that time not only remained deaf to our appeal but persecuted some Serbs because of it and some Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija were beaten and imprisoned simply for having and distributing this *Appeal*. Senior Communist officials from Belgrade as well as from Sarajevo, Zagreb and Novi Sad publicly attacked its signatories and the Serbian for "meddling in politics." The politics in Kosovo and Metohija was anti-Serbian and pro-Albanian, which is why the Albanians do not complain about the Tito regime and the period of Communism in Kosovo and Metohija from which Serbs suffered the most.

Kosovo and Metohija under the neo--Communist Regime of Slobodan Milošević

Under the Milošević regime and from 1990 onward, when the Albanians withdrew from the remaining symbolic institutions of the Republic of Serbia, the emptying of many Kosovo and Metohija villages and settlements of Serbs also continued; and now under NATO and UNMIK most villages and settlements and almost all cities (with the exception of the north part of Mitrovica) have been emptied; consequently, of approximately 300,000 remaining Serbs and Gypsies during the second half of June and July 1999 two-thirds were expelled and the remaining one-third is constantly under attack and existentially threatened, without the right to defend itself and despite futile attempts to obtain from anyone real protection for lives, homes, property, its holy shrines and cultural and national monuments.

A delegation of the Serbian Church headed by then Bishop from Kosovo and Metohija and now Serbian Patriarch Pavle testified on April 24, 1999 before the U.S. Congress, where the representatives of the Kosovo Albanians headed by Mr. Ibrahim Rugova were twice as numerous. This *statement* has been published in both English and Serbian languages, and reflects the truly Christian and democratic position of our Church toward the Kosovo problem.[39] In this statement before the U.S. Congress and in general during those years before the global community the Serbian Church was highly critical of Milošević and his undemocratic regime. We mention only the *Memorandum* of the Holy Assembly of Bishops from their session held May 14–27, 1992, which was hailed by the European community at the time because of its Christian and democratic position. We cited two sentences from the *Memorandum*:

The Serbian Orthodox Church and the Serbian people have never been adherents of Godless Communism nor any other totalitarian ideology… The Serbian Church openly disassociates and distances itself from this and such a government and its advocates. We wish to remind all in power, especially in Serbia, that no one's chair is more important than the fate and freedom of the entire people and that no one has a monopoly over the people and the future of our children… We also appeal to all authorities in Serbia and all factors in Europe and the world that the rights and responsibilities of all who live in Kosovo and Metohija may be respected, and also that solutions are not imposed under pressure from any side; instead, that there is true support for a compassionate and just democratic order that will give protection to all people and nations in this region, which because of its spiritual, national and cultural significance is to the Serbian people what Jerusalem is for the Jews."[40]

Instead of really working on and resolving the *Kosovo problem* in a constitutional manner, Milošević's neo-Communist and undemocratic regime by its essentially monopartite, neo-Communist manipulations of the Serbian national tragedy "*from Kosovo to Jadovno*" by working in the reverse direction and through its own corruption only made it possible for the Albanians to bribe and lobby their way (through funds received from the drug mafia and who knows what other sources) to internationalizing their propaganda regarding their alleged "endangerment" from "Greater Serbian hegemonism" (a propaganda slogan first launched and continuously used by the Communist totalitarian, exception-

[38] This *Appeal*, which was written and sent long before the appearance of Slobodan Milošević, is included with this *Memorandum*.

[39] From this text we cite only this sentence: "The Serbian people and the Church in Kosovo has far more real reasons for dissatisfaction toward the Communist government but Serbs are not using their misfortunate and dissatisfaction against their Albanian neighbors with whom they seek to live in peaceful coexistence, respecting their ethnic and religious identity." (See Hieromonk Atanasije Jevtić, *Stradanje Srba na Kosovu i Metohiji 1941–1990 (The Persecution of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, 1941–1990)*, Priština, 1990, pp. 444–451).

[40] The entire *Memorandum* was published in the *Glasnik (Herald)* of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate, № 6, June 1992, pp. 94–97; it has been translated and published in English as well.

ally anti-Serbian system and subsequently adopted by all Serb haters near and far, including many Europeans and Americans). When the Albanians began to arm themselves, the weapons trading involved participation by the regime's mafia; then Milošević with his Communist arrogance and pretentious incompetence only increased the existing Albanian lawlessness, and provided suitable excuses for the existing hatred of the Serbs among some people in the West for the imposition of their neo-colonialist expansion and imposition "by hook or by crook" of their own interests in the Balkans.[41] Thus Milošević and his regime created, out of a few hundred Albanian armed "Kosovo Liberation Army" members, an entire armed guerrilla consisting of tens of thousands of armed and fanaticized Albanians, among whom there were more than a few notorious terrorists, and with the help, of course, of U.S. diplomat Richard Holbrooke with whom Milošević exclusively spent days and weeks—in October 1998—"talking and negotiating" without anyone knowing what or how or what he promised or agreed to for he submitted no reports to anyone regarding these matters (just as in the case of his secret talks with Franjo Tudjman). Only after the famous "agreement" between Milošević and Holbrooke in October 1998, when the Serbian state, albeit in the form of the neo-Communist Republic, completely lost authority in Kosovo and Metohija—against which the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija and with them, i.e. before them the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Raška and Prizren immediately reacted but no one listened or heeded them—the double-sided, lethal, tangled web of terror and anti-terror throughout Kosovo began to unravel, finishing with the NATO bombing of the doubly unfortunate Kosovo and Metohija Serbs and the triumph of the KLA over Serbian national and spiritual being and life, cities and villages, churches and monasteries in Kosovo and Metohija.

After the Kumanovo capitulation (June 10, 1999) and the unprecedented in Serbian history general flight from the Field of Kosovo, while Milošević and his regime shamelessly celebrated their "victory" over the NATO aggressor, throughout Kosovo and Metohija NATO and the KLA celebrated their "victories" over 200,000 expelled Serbs, over a thousand murdered, slaughtered and massacred, even more kidnapped, over 110 and more burned, destroyed and blown up Serbian Orthodox Holy Shrines from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, over the emptying of almost all of Metohija and all cities in it, and the tragically more than half emptying of Serbs from Kosovo. If both Milošević and NATO are "victors" in Kosovo then either both of them are truly humanly defeated before God and divine and human justice or this is a lie unprecedented in history by its impudence and just another, if not the last, post-modern farce of the "New World Order" over the sad and tragic history of Crucified Serbian Kosovo.

Situation in Kosovo and Metohija immediately prior to the beginning of the most recent conflict

The tragedy of the Kosovo and Metohija drama was especially intensified at the end of the 1990s when the Kosovo Albanians, in conjunction with intensive activity by their lobbies among the emigrant community and arms deliveries following the state crisis in Albania in 1997, created the necessary conditions for the organization of an armed rebellion. Unfortunately, the erroneous policies of the corrupt Milošević regime provided an immediate cause and even greater élan for the decades-old plans of the Albanians, which are based on the idea that all Albanians throughout the Balkans should be united "in one state"—Greater Albania—whose new center would be Kosovo, the richest and most developed region in which they live.[42]

Even though the Serbian state at the end of the 1980's was forced to prevent the realization of a plan for secession by limiting the so-called autonomy of Kosovo and Metohija, nevertheless since 1989 Kosovo and Metohija was not ruled by the Serbian people but by a team of state apparatchiks and rich Albanian private businessmen who concentrated their great personal wealth through various illegal businesses while the majority of the ordinary population, especially the Serbs, continued to live in misery and poverty without any positive outlook for the future. Easily bought state and police organs enabled the illegal delivery of larger quantities of weapons from Albania but also from Serbia and Bosnia. Unfortunately, cases where the Serbs themselves sold weapons to the Albanian separatists were not rare. Instead of a constructive, rational, democratic and domestically prudent state policy to discourage the uncontrolled demographic and economic growth of the Albanians by legal measures, especially their accumulation of wealth by smuggling, drug trade and other illegal activities, while on the other hand economically encouraging the development of Serbian regions and settlement by young, well-educated cadres from other parts of the country, the state did just the opposite. While the political regime silently tolerated coexistence with Albanian parallel political structures along with regular acceptance of bribes which slid into the private pockets of Milošević's clerks, the illusion of some form of activity was reflected in haughty and

[41] According to *The Washington Post* "the CIA and NATO have been working with the KLA since last April," i.e. since 1988 (D. Simeunović, *Bitka za Kosovo (The Battle for Kosovo)*), presentation at the All-American Congress, Pueblo, Mexico, autumn 1999; in the anthology *Nova Kosovska Golgota (The New Kosovo Golgotha)*, Svetigora, Cetinje 2000, vol. 3, p. 428).

[42] This is confirmed not only by the existence of published maps indicating the borders of "Greater Albania" but also by books and propaganda materials being distributed throughout the Balkans, Europe and America without anyone in the international community reacting to this Nazism, in whose service even the Islamic propaganda of "genetic engineering" has been placed.

occasionally very brutal police repression which was frequently directed where there was least danger.

From the beginning of armed conflict to the NATO bombing in March 1999

Even though the first serious armed actions of the Albanian separatists began as early as 1996, and sporadic violence continued during 1997, the armed conflict in Kosovo and Metohija finally began in 1998, gradually growing into open rebellion and war. By the end of 1997 extremist nationalist Albanian forces consisting primarily of younger people from rural areas began to organize increasingly frequent terrorist actions with the goal of liquidating certain eminent Serbs in the service of the state, first and foremost, policemen, as well as to frighten the Serbian population as a whole. In Albanian society the conviction increasingly prevailed that the so-called "pacifist policies" of Ibrahim Rugova must finally transform into a general people's rebellion which the world would have to support. Rugova, however, was no less disposed against the Serbs in his Greater Albanian demands, only more cunning and perfidious.[43]

The West, first and foremost, the United States, viewed the entire cause of the problem one-sidedly and from the perspective of the last decade. Hence the entire blame was laid on the Serbs, who continued "to keep Milošević in power" and refused "to grant rights to the Albanian minority." The already well-known, decades-old idea of a *Greater Albania* was very skillfully masked by Albanian politicians and intellectuals with stories of "human rights violations" and the need for the democratization of Kosovo. Human rights certainly were and remain an important part of the problem in the Province but the Serbs did not have them either, either, so this was not the essence of the problem. The best indicator that the fight for human rights was not the true goal of the Albanian political battle is the fact that Albanian politicians in Kosovo stubbornly rejected every form of cooperation and support for the democratic forces in Serbia, precisely because with Milošević it was easiest for them to achieve their centuries-old dream. During this process many Albanians from Kosovo and Metohija acquired enormous wealth, and their economic strengthening and building of many facilities and mosques did not stop even under Milošević.

Younger extremist forces close to the former Marxist-Leninist cliques from the time of Enver Hoxha believed that it was necessary to put Kosovo on the front page of the world media and sufficient to provoke the state government so that it would compromise itself as much as possible in repression against civilians. Thus, the Albanian people would be incited to rise in rebellion, which would also be fueled by increasing dissatisfaction due to police brutality. After a brutal response by police in the village of Prekaz near Srbica in February 1998 when, in addition to several known Albanian terrorists led by Adem Jashari, several civilians (women and children) from his extended family were also killed, Milošević thought the Albanians were sufficiently frightened to desist from further rebellion. The effect was just the opposite. In just a few months rebellion spread like a flame throughout all of Drenica and the Metohija valley, especially in the hinterlands of the state border toward Albania and the Mališevo area. For months before enormous quantities of weapons had been brought in from Albania and an entire strategy for rebellion was already formed. Local Albanian *fishes* with members trained in terrorist activities and guerrilla warfare in special camps in Albania organized the first units of the so-called KLA (*Kosovo Liberation Army*), which just in the period from February to May 1998 grew from approximately 200 active members to several thousand armed men. The rebellion spread exclusively in rural districts while the cities, especially the eastern part of the Province, were almost completely spared of any disturbances.[44]

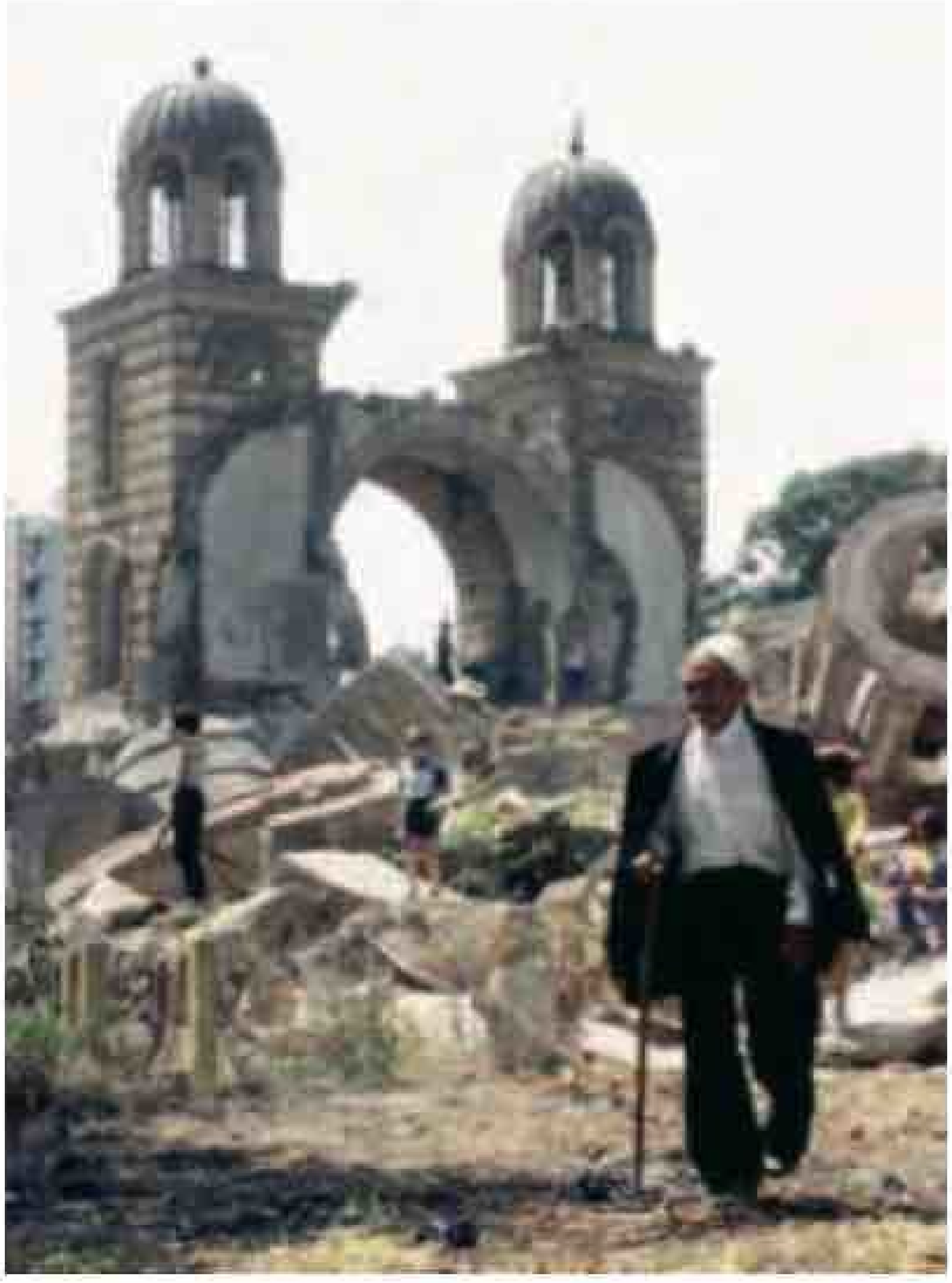
As a direct consequence of the first clashes of the police and the KLA, and especially of the organization of the so-called KLA free zone in the hinterlands of Dečani as far as Mališevo, the first Serbian refugees began to leave, having first been told to leave their homes, only for several of them to be killed by members of the KLA. Even though the Church at that time appealed with increasing intensity both to the state and international circles to prevent the outbreak of war, it became apparent that neither the state nor the international community had control over events in the field. The Western papers were overflowing with awe before these young rebels who practically barehanded rushed the Serbian police and army to defend their homes and houses. Unfortunately, it was almost unknown that in just a few months, several dozen Serbian villages in Metohija had been emptied and that the number of Serbian refugees even at that time was proportionally greater than that of Albanians.

With the intent of creating a land-based connection with their bases in north Albania, members of the KLA

[43] For example, in 1998 when clashes began between police and the KLA in Drenica, Rugova announced that the KLA was "a creation of the Serbian police"! He then announced that the monastery of Devič in Drenica was "a warehouse of arms and munitions." The Serbian Patriarch protested against this statement to the U.S. ambassador in Belgrade, asking that it be verified by a visit to the monastery of Devič. When the Patriarch himself set out for Devič, he was stopped in the village of Lauša near Devič by armed members of the KLA, who verbally abused him, demanding documents and limiting his time of departure and return from the monastery.

[44] In February 1998 Bishop Artemije of Kosovo and Metohija and Mr. Momčilo Trajković spoke before the U.S. Congress and most harshly condemned violence by both sides in Kosovo and Metohija, appealing to the U.S. to take an objective stand which would bring both sides to the negotiating table and stop the further spread of violence.

began with bigger operations in the Dečani area in May and June 1998, which led to the practical destruction of this small town since the police and Yugoslav Army responded so fiercely that almost all the Albanian population fled before them into the Dečani hinterlands where the KLA already had independent rule. In those very difficult and trying times, worthy of mention is the activity of the monastery of Visoki Dečani whose brotherhood on several occasions appealed for peace and restraint in the region through the media.[45] The monastery's communiqué of June 12 is an example of the condemnation of violence regardless of from which side it was coming, and a clear testimonial of the Christian Orthodox position that no one's happiness can be built on the unhappiness of another. In the summer of 1998 Albanian extremists from the direction of Mališevo conquered Orahovac, which led to serious and bloody shootouts and great material damage. In the area around Orahovac the KLA set out to *liquidate* the remaining Serbian settlements, killing or abducting several dozen of Serbian civilians from the Retimlje, Opteruše, Zočište and Orahovac areas in the process. The monastery of Zočište itself was occupied and the entire brotherhood, together with Abbot Jovan, taken away and imprisoned for one day; they were released after one day of imprisonment thanks to the International Red Cross. The monastery remained for more than two months in the hands of the Albanians, who partially looted it even though they did not destroy it at this time. The clash between state security forces and the Albanian rebels continued at somewhat reduced intensity during the course of the autumn and winter of 1998.



Destroyed Church in Djakovica

In this period in the West the position was increasingly built up that Milošević must be stopped, even using NATO military intervention if necessary. That is why increasingly greater political and diplomatic pressure was placed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia government to find a solution through negotiations as well as to show greater restraint toward the Albanians. As a result of those pressures and compromises by the Government, the so-called Kosovo Verification Mission arrived in Kosovo and Metohija with the task of overseeing the observance of one of a series of cease-fires between the rebels and the state police. On the other hand, the Albanian extremists continued to provoke the police and terrorize the Serbs according to plan. It should be noted that one Albanian crime in January 1999 involved the machine gun shooting down of six Serbian children in the Panda cafe in Peć immediately after police broke up an extremist Albanian group attempting to enter the Province from Albania by crossing Mt. Paštrik.

The turning point occurred in February 1999 when the police allegedly murdered several dozen *Albanian civilians* in the village of Račak near Štimlje. The government claimed that the victims were armed Albanians, and that some of the bodies had been brought in later from other locations. The report of a team of Finnish pathologists headed by Helena Ranta concluding that there was no massacre of civilians brought no significant turnaround in the interpretation of the incident. Serbian media and officials saw the event as a classic staging in order to create a reason for intervention while international circles insisted that a massacre had occurred. In any event, the Račak incident would become the initial capsule for NATO military intervention in March 1999. Hasty and feverish diplomatic activities and negotiations lasted until mid-March 1999 and were unsuccessfully concluded in the castle of Rambouillet near Paris and in the French capital itself, as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was not prepared to accept certain provisions insisted upon by the international community. It soon emerged that Rambouillet was just a scenario for attack by NATO aviation (similar to the recent attack by the United States and England against Iraq). However, it was also humiliating that the state delegation of Yugoslavia in Rambouillet did not include real representatives of the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs, which awoke the fear of decisions being made to the detriment of our people.

While the representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church in their statements at that time took a very objec-

[45] See the *Appeal* of the monastery of Dečani dated May 30, 1998 in the anthology of documents *Nova Kosovska Golgota (The New Kosovo Golgotha)*, Svetigora, Cetinje, 2000, vol. 1, pp. 17–18.

tive stand, as was the case during a meeting in Vienna at the beginning of March 1999 under the auspices of the U.S. organization Appeal of Conscience, viewing the problem of Kosovo and Metohija not only from the national but also from the humanitarian and Christian perspective, it could be observed that the Albanian religious representatives (Efendi Morina and Bishop M. Sopi) during this period as well as later avoided every form of self-criticism and did become very actively engaged in stopping the violence.

After Rambouillet and Paris it became apparent that the NATO military alliance would finally become involved in the Kosovo crisis. The very thing that the state government should have sought to avoid at any price now became inevitable and the beginning of the tragic "resolution" of a crisis lasting many years and many decades. This resolution, as we will see later, would resolve nothing but become a new tragedy for the Serbian and other non-Albanian population in Kosovo and Metohija.

The NATO bombing of Serbia and Kosovo and Metohija (March 24-June 10, 1999)

The conflict between NATO and FRY began with the massive bombing of Yugoslavia on *March 24, 1999* and lasted *no less than 78 days*; it concluded on June 10 of the same year with the signing of the dictated Military-Technical Agreement in Kumanovo. The bombing of FRY opened a new phase in the conflict in Kosovo and Metohija. During this period FRY security forces launched a "final campaign" against the Albanian rebels. Even though some Albanians left the Province of their own accord out of fear of repressive measures or encouragement by Western friends and allies in order to produce as great an effect as possible of "humanitarian catastrophe," a good number of Albanians—about 700,000 refugees left the Province according to UNHCR statistics by June 1999—were expelled by the state police and army. This action was accompanied by violence, murders, looting and destruction of Albanian property. The Church through its parish priests did everything possible to prevent violence, urging everyone to act in a civilized and dignified fashion. During the Great Fast of 1999 Bishop of Kosovo and Metohija issued a Public Communiqué to all parishes and monasteries, calling on the people to exercise restraint and repentance and most strongly condemning acts of looting and violence. Some of our monasteries, such as the monastery of Dečani, organized humanitarian aid for Albanian refugees as they had previously done for Serbs fleeing from the KLA. In the course of the winter of 1998/99 Dečani Monastery, together with *International Orthodox Christian Charities* (IOCC) from the U.S. distributed aid to all the unfortunates in the Dečani area, primarily to Albanians. Similar activities were organized by other parishes throughout the Diocese of Raška and Prizren, especially for persecuted Serbs and Serbian refugees from Krajina living in the Province. During the time of greatest persecution, the monastery of Visoki Dečani sheltered some 200 Albanian women and children from Dečani whose lives were endangered due to wartime events.

During the course of the bombing itself, bombs of destructive strength frequently fell near our great Holy Shrines, especially in the area of Gračanica and Dečani; however, they sustained no direct material damage. The Serbian Orthodox cemetery and the cemetery chapel in Priština suffered significant damage from large bombs falling in the area and in the cemetery itself. (Upon the arrival of NATO troops, their troops spent almost the entire summer of 1999 collecting and destroying unexploded bombs above the monastery of Gračanica in the Kišnica mine). This in no way justifies the bombing, which was openly called an inhuman act against civilization by the Church and condemned.[46] The senseless NATO bombing against the Serbs and against civilization has not solved a single essential problem, leaving instead lasting negative consequences in Kosovo and Metohija and throughout Serbia.

The Tragic situation of the Serbs and of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo and Metohija from June 1999 till today

When the Government in Belgrade finally accepted the plan of the international community regarding the deployment of KFOR (NATO forces in Kosovo) and the withdrawal of Yugoslav Army and Serbian state police by the signing the so-called Military-Technical Agreement in Kumanovo (May 10, 1999),[47] real confusion and panic broke out among the Serbian people in the Province. Within several days of the withdrawal of the army, a significant number of Serbs also left Kosovo and Metohija, judging from everything, approximately 30,000 in the first wave. This occurred prior to the arrival of KFOR and the return of the Albanians. The priests and monks appealed to the people to stay in their homes whenever possible and offered a selfless example by staying in their own parishes and monasteries. All monks and nuns stayed in Serbian monasteries and a direct daily connection with the Bishop's residence in Prizren was established via short-wave radio. During the period immediately preceding the arrival of KFOR, it is important to mention the very negative conduct of some members of institutions of the regime, who were the first to flee from their homes with trucks full of goods, not infrequently looted from the Albanians. Some of them actively spread

[46] See the letters-appeals of the Serbian Patriarch and Bishop of Kosovo and Metohija to the leaders of the Western NATO countries during April 1999 in *Nova Kosovska Golgota (The New Kosovo Golgotha)*, Svetigora, Cetinje, 2000, vol. 1, pp. 203–206, 220–223 and 313–315.

[47] The question is: why precisely in Kumanovo unless it is to rescind the liberation of Kosovo in 1912 following a decisive Serbian battle against Turkey which took place at Kumanovo.

propaganda that Serbs should leave Kosovo and Metohija, while in the state media one could hardly hear news about the increasingly greater waves of refugees from our southern Province above the fanfare over "victory" (!?) For the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija it became increasingly clear that this was a capitulation and a terrible defeat, for which those who decided to stay in their homes and in their homeland would pay a bloody price in the coming months.

KFOR troops began to enter the territory of the Province on June 10 from the direction of Skoplje and the Albanian city of Kukeš, not far from Prizren. KFOR officially entered Priština on June 12 amid the thunderous welcome of thousands of Albanians. At the same time, with the entry of international forces, the KLA intensified its activities, both by groups remaining in the Province, which immediately assumed power in the cities, as well as by units entering unhindered and with weapons from Albania regardless of the presence of KFOR. While KFOR units were choosing suitable locations for the construction of their military bases, a wave of unprecedented violence, looting, murders and abductions spread throughout the Province, especially in the cities, the victims of which were the remaining Serbs, Roma, Goranci and Muslim Bosniacs. On June 12 five Serbs had already been kidnapped on the streets of Priština while news arrived of a campaign of terror against the Roma. The Serbian population of the village of Zočište near Orahovac fled from the village on June 14 while their homes, together with the monastery of the Holy Unmercenary Healers Sts. Cosmas and Damian (14th century) were torched by Albanian extremists. The monastery church would also be blown up completely a short time later. On June 12 the monastery of the Holy Trinity in Mušutište (14th century) was looted, set on fire and then blown up. The sisterhood of the monastery barely managed to get out alive.

On the same day German KFOR troops entered Prizren. On the streets of Prizren on June 16, 1999 armed members of the so-called KLA military police ambushed Monk Hariton Lukić of the monastery of Holy Archangels near Prizren, kidnapped him and took him in an unknown direction. After more than a year his body was found near Prizren, mutilated and headless, showing signs of bestial torture. Father Hariton, with the blessing of Bishop Artemije, had just evacuated the sisterhood of the monastery of Mušutište. The monks of Holy Archangels were also evacuated and, together with the brotherhood from Zočište, found temporary refuge in the monastery of Gračanica.

Within days Bishop of Raška-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija had established contact with the German military authorities, appealing to them to protect the remaining Serbs; however, they failed to do this. On June 15 at 11:00 p.m. they protected the besieged Cathedral and Bishop's residence after the Albanian mob had already destroyed all Serbian monuments around them. It was already completely obvious that time that KFOR could not, and apparently did not want, to stop the wave of systematic reprisals and terror by the Albanians. The only option remaining was the evacuation of the remaining Serbian population of Prizren, which was done with the help of Bishop Atanasije Jevtić of Zahumlje and Herzegovina, who brought five buses from Vranje to Prizren to help, and together with Bishop Artemije evacuated several hundred Serbs from Prizren in the direction of Gračanica (in five buses, which were joined by about 40 families in passenger vehicles). Almost 200 Serbs, Roma and Muslims stayed on in the Seminary in Prizren under German guard, together with several Albanians whose lives was threatened by their compatriots for associating with Serbs. They were taken care of by one Serbian Orthodox priest. Another priest stayed in Prizren in the Bishop's residence under the guard of NATO troops. To this day the Bishop's residence and Cathedral in Prizren remain under the strong armored guard of German KFOR.

Every day news arrived of abductions and individual murders of Serbs from every region of the Province. One need only look at the weekly and monthly reports of priests and church-people's councils, such as the reports from Gnjilane, Vitina, Lipljan, Uroševac, Prizren, Orahovac and Peć[48] to see the kinds of every day crimes the Albanians were committing against Serbs, their homes, property, churches and against everything else that was Serb. Even Serbian centuries-old Serbian oaks and pine trees next to churches and monasteries were cut down or torched, as was the case in Petrič near Peć, Nerodimlje near Uroševac and the monastery of Binča near Vitina. Within a short time 50 churches and monasteries were destroyed and even more cemeteries, while the number of looted, torched and blown up Serbian homes and buildings is still not known to this day. Simply said, the Albanians set out to systematically destroy everything Serbian, every vestige of Serbian being and presence in Kosovo and Metohija. The frequent verbal and written appeals, protests, reports, pleas and entreaties addressed to the NATO command and the international community by the Bishop of Raška and Prizren, as well as by the Serbian Patriarch, the Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral and the Bishop of Zahumlje and Herzegovina, who frequently visited Kosovo and Metohija, were to no avail. All pleas and appeals yielded no results for the crimes continued and multiplied: murders, kidnappings, lootings, torchings, expulsions of Serbs from all public institutions: hospitals, primary health centers, schools, post offices, municipal administrations, factories, jobs. None of the kidnapped Serbs has been found to this day, none of the expelled has been returned to his home or job, none of the criminals have been captured and when, later on, an occasional Albanian terrorist was caught, he was

[48] These *Reports*, especially during the horrible first months—from July to October 1999—from Gnjilane, Vitina, Lipljan, Prizren, Orahovac and Peć have been partially included in the anthology of documents *Nova Srpska Golgota (The New Serbian Golgotha)*, vol. 1–3, Cetinje, 2000.

released soon afterward for "lack of evidence"! The impression was clear: that those responsible in NATO and other international forums had simply allowed the Albanians to carry out their revenge, to expel as many Serbs as possible in order to achieve an "ethnically pure" Kosovo, i.e. less Serbs and other non-Albanians, and thus prejudice the future "solution" of the Kosovo issue in the direction of absolute predominance and outvoting by the Albanians. This was also demonstrated by the one-sided and biased work of all four of the UN High Representatives and other UNMIK structures, which were slow to be established, and for the Serbs have been and remain today ineffective and unjust. For despite the presence of NATO and UNMIK the cities of Prizren, Peć, Klina, Uroševac, Gnjilane, Vitina, almost all of Metohija and many other previously mixed settlements throughout Kosovo and Metohija have been emptied of Serbs.

In Orahovac just between June 14 and 16 approximately 600 Serbs from various parts of the town fled to the Serbian quarter near the church, where the people organized themselves, ready in case of need to offer resistance to the Albanians who were appropriating Serbian property and torching Serbian houses. However, this was not very successful because in Orahovac out of over 6,000 Serbs barely 2,000 remain. The situation grew more and more difficult from day to day in other parts of the Province, too. Thus on June 17 about 5,000 Serbs left Uroševac and area under armed KFOR escort. About 500 Serbs were left stranded at the railway station from where they were evacuated with great difficulty on June 18. According to UNHCR reports, at the same time thousands of Albanians from all sides were entering the Province. In just five days about 50,000 people entered the Province while, according to the report of the International Red Cross, a total of 50,000–60,000 Serbs left Kosovo and Metohija in the period from June 13–18, 1999. The situation was became increasingly difficult in the Gnjilane area where several attacks, murders and kidnappings of Serbs by the Albanians were recorded in the first days, even though there had been no persecution of Albanians nor looting or destruction of their homes in Gnjilane or anywhere in Kosovsko Pomoravlje.

At the same time on the territory of Metohija around Peć and Dečani the remaining Serbs were quickly leaving their homes. During those days some Serb peasants were found dead while large villages such as Belo Polje and Vitomirica near Peć were completely emptied of Serbs. The Serbs of Belo Polje were forced from their houses and left in the direction of Montenegro on June 19 after three Serbs were found slaughtered by the Albanians. In the ensuing days the Albanians looted and torched all Serbian houses and burned down and ruined the old village church in Belo Polje. In the first few days Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Littoral arrived in the Peć Patriarchate with his monks, who received several hundred people fleeing out of fear of the Albanian terror. The Metropolitan established contact with the Italian KFOR command and made great efforts to stop the crimes against the Serbs. In the city of Peć itself soon there was not a single Serb left; those who wanted to leave out of fear in the direction of central Serbia or Montenegro were escorted in convoys by the Italians from the Peć Patriarchate. During the first two months (June-July 1999) the Metropolitan and his monks found and buried about 30 Serb bodies, mostly of elderly men and women, who were found throughout the Peć area, usually massacred in the most brutal manner (the pictures of these bodies have been published). The monks of Visoki Dečani Monastery also immediately established contact with the Italian forces and requested guard posts around the Monastery. A few remaining Serbs from the small town of Dečani itself found sanctuary in the monastery while four people were kidnapped by the KLA. Soon there was no longer any Serbian population left in the entire municipality of Dečani and all Serbian property was immediately seized and partially destroyed. Dečani Monastery, having already received Serbian and Albanian refugees, now gave shelter not only to Serbs but also to Roma, with some 50 of them staying in the monastery after the Albanians torched their houses. Also staying in the monastery was one Muslim family of Goranci.

Almost all Serbs from Djakovica left their homes during the first days. The last ones remaining gathered around the small parish church of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God in the well-known old *Srpska ulica (Serbian street)*, where after a series of evacuations only six Serbian old ladies remained, who today live in complete isolation under the protection of Italian KFOR.[49] These six old ladies, led by retired schoolteacher Poleksija Kastratović, will be remembered as a model of courage and Christian faith during this tragic period in the history of Metohija and Kosovo. A number of Serbian residents of Djakovica disappeared without a trace; according to the testimony of a number of witnesses, they were taken to private KLA camps, where some of them were tortured and immediately executed.[50]

[49] These elderly ladies were evacuated by Italian KFOR on March 17 when thousands of Kosovo Albanian rioters attacked their parish home and church with stones and petrol bombs. After their evacuation to Dečani Monastery, the church and their home were looted and set on fire. In the following days all remnants of the church were completely removed.

[50] Recently 37 bodies were found in a cemetery in the village of Piškote near Djakovica and the majority of them have been identified as Serbs. In general during the past year and a half many mass graves have been found, the largest in Suva Reka with 150 graves; at the Orthodox cemetery in Prizren, 34; in Dragodan I and II near Priština, 114—in which the bodies of murdered Serbs have been identified who were first tortured and massacred, according to the head of the Office for Exhumation and Identification of the Coordinating Center for Kosovo and Metohija, Professor Dr. Slaviša Dobričanin. Unfortunately, there are still many mass graves in Kosovo and Metohija where kidnapped and murdered Serbs are buried. NATO and UNMIK know this but they are gradually releasing information re-

The KLA broke into the monastery of Devič on June 10 and stayed there until June 12 until the arrival of French KFOR troops. For three days they looted the monastery and abused the nuns and Hieromonk Serafim, who was beaten in the church altar until he bled from injuries to his teeth and jaw. It is a true miracle of God that no one was more seriously injured during this frenzy and that the Monastery was not completely destroyed (as it had been in 1941 by the Albanians) although the church was damaged, the icons beaten up (the acronym UÇK—KLA in Albanian—was carved into one) and the tomb of St. Joanakius of Devič desecrated. The Albanians tried to open the tomb and used dowels to break the marble tomb cover. The Devič nuns and Fr. Serafim would probably have been killed if Priest Radivoje Panić and Abbess Makarija of the monastery of Sokolica had not arrived at the last moment, bringing with them French troops and immediately establishing permanent protection for the Monastery. The sisters of the monastery of Gorioč, having spent several days locked inside the Monastery, were very relieved to see the first Italian troops who later organized the protection of the monastery together with the Spaniards. A similar situation occurred on the estate of the Peć Patriarchate in Budisavci, which was first protected by soldiers of the Italian contingent and then by the Portuguese.

At the end of June 1999 representatives of the Diocese of Raška-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija with an armed KFOR escort visited some parts of Kosovo and Metohija, and saw for themselves that the systematic destruction of our Holy Shrines had begun. The monastery of the Unmercenary Healers (Sts. Cosmas and Damian) in Zočište and the monastery of the Holy Trinity in Mušutište had already been burned down; shortly afterward, in the month of July, the church of the monastery of the Holy Trinity was also dynamited. In the Suva Reka area both the parish church in the town as well as the beautiful medieval church of the Most Holy Mother of God in the village of Mušutište (built at the same time as Gračanica, in 1315, in brick and stalagmite with beautiful frescos) were destroyed. On June 24 about 3,200 Serbs left Orahovac in organized fashion under the protection of KFOR. In addition to the 2,000 Serbs remaining in Orahovac, the population of the Serbian village of Velika Hoča (about 1,000 souls) also stayed. German KFOR organized protection for these people, which made some semblance of survival possible for this last remaining Serbian enclave in the south part of Metohija. However, viewed as a whole, KFOR invested too little effort to bringing a decisive end to the violence, which resulted in even greater mistrust among the Serbs and a feeling among the Albanians that they had the go ahead to seek revenge from the Serbs. Additional proof of this is that Russian KFOR troops were not permitted to enter Orahovac, even though this had been agreed.

In Kosovska Mitrovica the Serbs organized themselves to prevent the entry of the Albanians into the northern part of the city, which stopped the Albanian influx toward northern, purely Serbian parts of Kosovo and Metohija. In Priština the situation was becoming more and more alarming. In the first days the Clinical-Hospital Center was *cleansed* of Serbs; after the kidnapping of eminent Professor Dr. Andrija Tomanović, all the other Serb physicians left the hospital. The same thing happened at the University. After the murder of three Serbs at the Electrotechnical Faculty at the end of June, almost all the professors and their families left Priština. Finally the KLA took over the Grand Hotel and all Serbian owned businesses in the city. The Serbian villages around Priština remained more or less stable and offered first shelter to numerous expelled persons, generally on their way to central Serbia. The situation in Kosovo Polje, Obilić and Lipljan was and remains very difficult but the Serbs have somehow survived there. Unfortunately, the gradual departure of Serbs from these locations would continue, especially from Kosovo Polje, where Albanians increasingly took over Serbian property, at first by seizure, and later by purchases made under duress.

In the Gnjilane area, after a series of attacks by armed Albanians, the Serbian population abandoned the villages of Žegra and Žitinje in June and July 1999. All the Serbian houses were then systematically looted and set on fire, including the two churches in Žegra. In other parts of Kosovsko Pomoravlje, the Serbs stayed in their villages while the number of Serbs in the town of Gnjilane itself (over 12,000 before the conflict) decreased with each passing day. A church-people's council was established at the church in Gnjilane, which regularly recorded the numerous attacks and abuses against Serbs and attempted to mediate an end to the violence through U.S. KFOR. An improvised primary health center, an information center and a humanitarian shelter for all who sought help were set up in the churchyard. The persistence, flexibility and courage of these people, gathered around their priest, deserve the great respect.[51] But neither endurance nor persistence has saved the Gnjilane Serbs from terror and all of them were expelled with the exception of some 200 remaining families (about 700 souls). The Serbian population did not leave from the Brezovica area in the traditionally Serb Sirinićka Župa but even increased due to the fact that several hundred Serbs from the Prizren area and Sredska Župa under Šara (also traditionally Serbian). This region (Štrpce i Brezovica) is, in addition to the north of the Province between Mitro-

garding the discovery and exhumation of Serbian bodies because, as one representative of the international community recently stated, all kidnapped Serbs, none of whom has been found yet, have certainly been killed.

[51] Their written weekly and monthly *Reports* to the Diocese of Raška and Prizren have been preserved and only a small part has been included in the anthology *Nova Srpska Golgota (The New Serbian Golgotha)*.

vica and Leposavić, has also remained the most peaceful region in Kosovo and Metohija. In Sredska Župa out of a previous population of 300 very few Serbs remain under very difficult humanitarian conditions. At the beginning of 2003 a small number of Serbs returned there but under almost impossible living conditions.

In the monastery of Gračanica, where Bishop of Raška-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija has relocated with his associates, active work began immediately with the goal of better organizing the people, especially in the parish centers. An information center was established to collect all data regarding the persecution of the Serbian people and visits were organized every day to various parts of the Province under KFOR escort. Bishop Artemije also immediately established contact with the officials of the UN mission and KFOR and very frequently sent verbal and written appeals for international forces to stop the Albanian terror throughout the Province against the Serbs and other non-Albanian population, and especially to protect our Holy Shrines and cultural monuments.

Consequently, on July 2, 1999 a meeting of Serbian representatives headed by Bishop Artemije and political representatives of the Albanians was organized in Priština. On that occasion a joint *Communiqué* was issued appealing for peace and tolerance. Unfortunately, only two hours after the end of the meeting, the Albanian leaders organized a huge celebration in Priština involving the destruction of Serbian metal monuments to Vuk Karadžić and Njegoš, which were then dragged through the streets with tractors. After this the terror against the remaining Serbs in Priština continued. Time will show that the Albanian leaders continued to leading a two-fold hypocritical policy, continuing to play the role of democrats in front of international representatives while, on the other hand, not only failing to tolerate but actively instigating their compatriots to terror against Serbs, Roma, Goranci and other ethnic communities in Kosovo and Metohija. Even though representatives of the international community attempted to portray these crimes as spontaneous revenge by the Albanians, it became increasingly apparent that they were in fact organized acts of violence perpetrated by members of the KLA, who remain active as a group of criminal gangs under the influence of powerful families and *fishes*. The situation has not improved at all with the so-called demilitarization of the KLA and its transformation into the so-called Kosovo Protection Corps. This is especially obvious in the process of the destruction of Serbian Orthodox churches, the majority of which have been very professionally dynamited and blown up. The international mission not only failed to effectively prevent these acts of violence but in most cases did not even conduct investigations, thus creating the growing impression that the Albanians have been left to vent their anger and fury against the Serbs with acts of violence, and reduce their number to *quantité negligeable*. An important reason for this lack of activity on the part of KFOR and UNMIK was not only their lack of preparation for such a situation in the field but first and foremost their firm resolution to avoid an armed confrontation with the Albanians themselves at any cost. KFOR never established full control over the borders with Albania and (FRY) Macedonia, which enabled the flourishing of smuggling, prostitution, drugs and weapons trading.

In the entire newly created situation, the Serbian people seemed completely leaderless because state officials of the Milošević regime were among the first to abandon their compatriots. The only institution that was actually functioning, albeit under difficult conditions, was the Church, which brought the people together through its parishes and monasteries and encouraged them to prevail under these difficult conditions. Not until autumn of 1999 was there some formal engagement by the so-called state Committee for Kosovo and Metohija in Belgrade, which until Milošević's departure from power played a very negative role in the Province in general, deceiving the people with false promises and renewing the influence of old political structures. Finally the role of the Committee was reduced primarily to the sale of certificates of citizenship and Yugoslav passports to the Kosovo Albanians. Only after the change in government in Serbia (October 5, 2001) was the Coordinating Center for Kosovo and Metohija established under Nebojša Čović, who would launch an entire series of activities with the goal of some degree of normalization of life in the Serbian enclaves in Kosovo and Metohija.

During the course of the summer of 1999 repression against the remaining Serbian population intensified, especially in the region of Kosovsko Pomoravlje. Murders, kidnappings, break-ins and threats became everyday occurrences in Gnjilane and Vitina where the remaining Serbs continued to live together with the Albanians. After an entire series of attacks a significant number of Serbs left Vitina on July 19, 1999. That day Albanian extremists threw a bomb at a group of Serbs near the Orthodox church in Vitina wounding two people. On the same day (July 19) in another region in Metohija, Hieromonk Stefan Purić, the priest at the estate of the Peć Patriarchate in Budisavci, was abducted with one other Serb by extremist Albanian Roman Catholics. Nothing reliable is known about their fate to this day even though Monk David Perović, who was visiting the Peć Patriarchate during this period, learned from some Albanians that after his abduction Hieromonk Stefan was allegedly taken to the Istok area or to Istok itself where, after being tortured and mistreated by the Albanians, he was slaughtered and thrown into a well in Istok along with some other murdered Serbs. Despite all attempts to trace Hieromonk Stefan and the other Serbs kidnapped by Albanian extremists in this region, neither the Diocese of Raška and Prizren nor the Patriarchate to this day has managed to learn anything of his fate.

News about kidnapped Serbs and Roma arrived every day and consequently the Diocese in Gračanica began from

the very beginning to maintain lists of the missing, which were forwarded to representatives of UNMIK and KFOR in a timely manner along with constant appeals to do something to find and free them. News came from various sources that the kidnapped that were not immediately murdered were taken to prison camps maintained by representatives of the officially disbanded but never adjourned KLA. These claims have never been publicly confirmed but neither were they convincingly denied. When specific locations where prison camps existed were pointed out, KFOR would reply in advance only with *denials*.

As in other parts of the Province, the chief organizers of abductions and torture chambers for Serbs were the local leaders of the KLA, although the leaders of this terrorist organization publicly denied connection with crimes. It is true that there were also some cases in which some people were released after arrest by the KLA, especially if some eminent Albanian interceded on their behalf. Despite the general persecution of the Serbs there were some very noble examples of individual Albanian neighbors helping Serbs, if in no other way than by assisting them to flee from Kosovo. However, viewed as a whole, the majority of Albanians, if not directly then tacitly, condoned the repression. It became increasingly clear that what was occurring was collective blood revenge according to which the Serbs, regardless of sex and age, must pay for committed crimes which were grossly exaggerated in the media despite the fact that objective forensic investigations and exhumations have not positively confirmed even half of the officially published number of 10,000 Albanian victims. (So far [year of 2001] a *total of 4,500 bodies* have been found in Kosovo and Metohija, including both Albanians and Serbs). Taking into account that the number of killed Albanians in some Western media during the course of the war was inflated to close to 100,000, we can see the extent of the general manipulation which opened the door to the post-war liquidation of hundreds of Serbs, Roma, Muslims and other non-Albanian residents who did not meet with the approval of the new rulers from the KLA.

Despite all the efforts allegedly exerted by KFOR, none of the kidnapped Serbs was found nor could anybody prove with certainly what had happened to the missing persons. The number of kidnapped Serbs quickly reached the number of 1,200 by the end of 1999, including several hundred missing since the time of the war. At the same time, the number of Serbs who were found murdered exceeded 1,000 during the year 2000.[52] At the end of the same year it would become known that during the course of all these post-war months, KFOR and the UN police have been coming across unidentified bodies which the Albanians did not consider their own and which were obviously the bodies of missing Serbs, Roma and Muslims. Some of those bodies were buried in a tract in Dragodan (a suburb of Priština) while others were collected in the mortuary in Orahovac. Only in autumn of 2000 would UNMIK organize several presentations of discovered clothing (in the village of Merdare on the northeastern line of Kosovo) on the basis of which the bodies of dozens of missing Serbs were identified. Representatives of UNMIK buried the remaining unidentified bodies in a cemetery plot near Suva Reka. During 2001 and 2002 a large number of exhumations were carried out in various locations throughout the Province where unidentified bodies found were buried. Among these exhumations over 100 Serbs who were listed as missing were soon found. This process continues but gradually because UNMIK appears to be hiding Serbian victims.

In the western part of the province, in Metohija, where almost all the Serbs have departed, especially from the Peć, Djakovica and Prizren areas, only three enclaves remain: the already mentioned quarter of Orahovac and Velika Hoča near Prizren, the village of Goraždevac near Peć and the villages of Suvo Grlo, Banja and Crkolez east of Istok. It should be said that individual Serbs from these enclaves have also been murdered or disappeared. The monasteries of Dečani, the Peć Patriarchate, Gorioč and Budisavci have been under the constant protection of KFOR forces, and one could only leave them or visit them with a KFOR escort. In other areas of this part of Metohija the almost systematic destruction of all Serbian property began even though at first Albanians settled some of the Serbian houses. In this period almost all Serbian Orthodox Churches and cemetery chapels in this region were desecrated or completely destroyed. An especially concerning practice was the eradication of Orthodox cemeteries and their use as dumping sites for garbage and debris from the cities, as was the case in Belo Polje near Peć, Seča, Brestovik, Šakovica and elsewhere. This barbaric conduct continues to the present day and consequently many Serbian cemeteries in Metohija have become public repositories for garbage. The situation in the cemeteries is especially alarming in the areas of the Peć region, where during 2002 numerous open graves and tombs were found from which human remains were removed and in some cases the bodies of the deceased disappeared completely (as in the case of the murdered soldier Velimir Šćepanović). Among the Serbian people as well as among some international circles in Kosovo and Metohija, the conviction is spreading that the bodies of dead

[52] It should be mentioned that the statistics of UNMIK and KFOR operate with significantly lower numbers, the reason being that they recorded only those cases that were properly reported and where they could establish identity with certainty. On the other hand, the Diocese and the Kosovo and Metohija Association of Missing and Kidnapped Persons from Belgrade collected numerous reports and testimony by family members, many of whom did not report cases of murder or kidnapping to international organs because they quickly left the Province in the first days and weeks following the official end of the war. As well, to this day it remains a secret how many soldiers of the Yugoslav Army disappeared or were killed in clashes on the border with Albania.

Serbs are being transferred to Albanian cemeteries in order to increase the number of allegedly killed Albanians.

In the northern part of the Province, where approximately 60,000 Serbs lived in Zubin Potok, Mitrovica (north), Zvečan and Leposavić, including a few smaller enclaves south of the Ibar, there has been increasing consolidation of the clear division between the Albanian and Serbian zones. Thanks primarily to the correct behavior of French KFOR, the infiltration of the Albanians across the Ibar into Northern Mitrovica and Zvečan, where the Serbs are increasingly consolidated and better politically organized, was prevented. Even though the influence of the Belgrade regime was never weak in these areas, the Serbian National Council for Northern Kosovo has become a leading political force.

In the middle of the month of July a new, more intense wave of violence began. The night of July 23 the still uncompleted cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Djakovica, which had already been desecrated numerous times by fires and the dumping of garbage, was completely leveled with dynamite. According to testimony by eyewitnesses, the Albanians spent the entire night celebrating around the ruins of this most beautiful of newly built (on old foundations) of Orthodox churches in Kosovo and Metohija. The town itself was already emptied of Serbs with the exception of the elderly ladies whom we have already mentioned in the old church. In Gnjilane on July 24 the monument to Holy Prince Lazar was destroyed and six unidentified bodies of Serbs were found in the dumpsters of Gnjilane Hospital. Serbian monuments next to the Cathedral in Prizren were destroyed on June 15, 1999 and soon thereafter all Serbian monuments throughout the Province. This Albanian infernal hatred for the Serbian Church, culture, history in Kosovo and Metohija is inexplicable. Only undemocratic upstarts, usurpers and occupiers demonstrate such behavior.

However, the greatest tragedy of those first weeks of general terror and violence against Serbs was the massacre of 14 Serbian peasants in the village of Staro Gracko, Lipljan municipality, in the afternoon of July 23, 1999. Albanians, most probably from the neighboring village of Stari Alaš, killed these people in the early evening hours as they harvested their crops in their fields not far from the village. This crime was never solved by KFOR and this only served to prove once again that the international community, by its indecisive stance toward the Albanian extremists, unwittingly became their passive accomplice in the *ethnic cleansing* of Serbs, Roma and other non-Albanian inhabitants from the Province.

(During this period a consciousness matured among Serbs close to the Church regarding the necessity of some degree of political organization with the goal of better protection of the population, since the Milošević regime through its surviving structures was doing practically nothing for the people. The extent of the Serbian tragedy in Kosovo and Metohija was even blatantly concealed in the public media. In September 1999 the Serbian National Council of Kosovo and Metohija was formed as a non-party organization for the purpose of coordinating the work of the Serbs in the Province together with the Church, as the only institution active in all Serbian areas which, thanks to its work before the war and contacts with the international community, enjoyed great moral reputation and influence. At that time the Serbian National Council of Northern Kosovo and the church-people's council in Gnjilane were already active; thus, the first task of the Serbian National Council of Kosovo and Metohija was to form local boards as quickly as possible in other parts of the Province which, together with the parish centers, would enable better coordination, the systematic collection of information regarding persecution and a unified position before UNMIK and KFOR. Representatives of the Serbian National Council of Kosovo and Metohija participated from the very beginning in the work of the so-called Kosovo Transitional Council only to withdraw from this body after the decision to transform the KLA into the Kosovo Protection Corps, as a sign of protest against the legalization and institutionalization of a fundamentally terrorist organization which bears primary responsibility for war-time and post-war violence against the non-Albanian population. The Serbian National Council of Kosovo and Metohija, founded in the meanwhile, would return to work with the Interim Administrative Council of Kosovo only in spring of 2000 after the international administration in the Province would finally show greater and more sincere interest in Serbian problems and take some concrete steps toward the goal of improving the life of the Serbs (the adoption of the so-called Program for Co-existence which foresees, among other things, the forming of Serbian local community offices as the inception of Serbian administration in Serbian areas and the drafting of plans for refugee returns). During the entire period of its work, the SNC experienced great obstruction and pressure from Serbs loyal to the Belgrade regime. Bishop of Raška and Prizren, who assumed the role of president of the SNC, made maximum efforts that this organization should never act at the party level but instead that it should connect its people with the Church and patriotic democratic forces in Serbia in order to enable the survival and continuity of our people in these centuries-old Serbian lands under newly created conditions).

During the course of the autumn and winter of 1999, as well as in the first months of 2000, the situation in the field showed no signs of improvement. Even though the intensity and number of attacks on Serbs significantly decreased, this was not the result of an improvement in the situation but of the simple fact that almost all the remaining Serbian population in the Province lived in enclaves under the military protection of KFOR or had already left. There was no freedom of movement and the Serbs were completely isolated in their enclaves. Under these conditions it was not easy for the Albanians to attack Serbs, even though incidents continued most frequently in cases of decreased caution and attention and when individual Serbs decided to travel without military escort. What is observable during

Metropolis of Gračanica, wood engraving
from Octoechos (Oktoih), printed in 1539, in the Gračanica printing house

this period is the beginning of armed attacks even on organized civilian convoys escorted by KFOR. Attacks on Serbian convoys near Mitrovica and Peć, as well as missile attacks on the UNHCR bus between Mitrovica and the village of Banja near Rudnik, following which the reaction of KFOR was very lukewarm and indecisive, confirmed that it was permissible to also attack without punishment civilian vehicles under escort and that KFOR was not quite ready to respond to these attacks with full force. The reactions of Western peacekeepers for the most part were limited to evacuation of the attacked while the attackers in all instances left the scene of the attack unpunished. The use of Albanian children to stone civilian Serbian convoys as well as attacks on Serbian vehicles lagging behind in convoys, would become almost everyday occurrences as early as the beginning of the year 2000, to a great degree hindering the travel of Serbian civilians from the enclaves to central Serbia.

At the beginning of the year 2000 the international community apparently started to realize that attacks by the Albanians were not just a result of angry revenge for the violence committed during the war but the clear intention to expel all non-Albanians from Kosovo and Metohija. That is why a whole series of positive measures were undertaken by UNMIK and KFOR that, despite the fact that they have not significantly improved the position of the Serbs, nevertheless demonstrated that changes were occurring in the thinking of the international community. The major obstacle to positive changes in the public opinion of the West remained the still active and surviving regime of Slobodan Milošević in whose shadow all other problems (especially Albanian crimes against the Serbs) were barely discernible. These attacks have not stopped to this very day. Thus, recently, in June 2003, a van traveling to Prizren came under gunfire near Suva Reka.

During the course of the winter and the early spring there were renewed efforts on the part of the Albanians to force their way into the Serbian part of Mitrovica which were prevented by French KFOR. On the other hand, pressures on Serbs in other areas continued with a new emphasis on the business of selling Serbian property for which Albanian buyers offered purchase prices far below market value. Nevertheless, the choice between a house sold for next to nothing and a torched and destroyed house forced many Serbs to decide to sell their houses. Sales were especially intense in mixed areas where the Albanian population had become the overwhelming majority since the war, especially in cities such as Priština, Kosovo Polje, Lipljan, Uroševac, Gnjilane, Prizren, etc. It should be mentioned that UNMIK discontinued at the very beginning the FRY decree banning the sale of Serbian property to the Albanians, giving added incentive to a profitable business which, during a short period of time, transferred a large part of Serbian land and property into the hands of the Kosovo Albanians, but not infrequently also of rich buyers from Albania and Macedonia. Protests by the SNC and Church to Governor Kouchner did not result in the prevention of this practical usurpation of Serbian land. Illegal appropriation and use of Serbian private and national and church property has not been stopped to this day.

With the return of the Kosovo refugees in the first months after the war, a large number of Albanians (between 50,000–150,000) who had never previously lived in Kosovo entered the Province from Albania and Macedonia. In the meanwhile UNMIK began to use practically coercive measures to return *Kosovo* refugees from the West, i.e. Albanians among whom there were a substantial number of people from Albania proper, who had received the status of refugees in Western countries by declaring themselves as Kosovo Albanians who "fled from Serbian terror." Thus the number of the Albanian population significantly increased in comparison to before the war though even according to the testimony of international representatives that number never reached the alleged total of two million Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija so carelessly used during the pre-war period.

As far as the number of Serbs is concerned, it is not easy to establish reliable figures. It is certain that about 200,000 Serbs left Kosovo and Metohija since the beginning of the bombing in 1999 to the beginning of the year 2000, while according to UNMIK and KFOR statistics there are about 100,000 Serbs remaining in the province, half of whom or slightly more than half live north of Mitrovica while the rest was distributed throughout the central enclaves, Pomoravlje, Brezovica and small Metohija enclaves. Following the specific request of Bishop Artemije and the SNC KFOR finally admitted that about 130,000–135,000 Serbs remained in Kosovo and Metohija. This approximate number of Serbs remained more or less stable until the beginning of 2001 because even though the gradual process of departures continued in 2000, there were also a certain number of spontaneous returns to the enclaves where life had become more or less normal in comparison with the first days. In addition to Serbs, a significant number of Roma, Bosniacs, Goranci and Kosovo Croatians also left Kosovo and Metohija; thus, the total number of non-Albanian refugees leaving the Province has certainly already exceeded 300,000 people. Regardless of the exact figures, which will soon be established and confirmed, it is an indisputable fact that the number of non-Albanian refugees during the period of international peace, taking into account the ethnic composition of the population, has proportionally far exceeded the number of Albanian refugees during the period of war. Most tragic perhaps is the fate of the Serbs in the village of Cernica near Gnjilane, where 85 Serb households live among 400 Albanian ones. In frequent attacks by the Albanians five Serbian families have been killed and their houses blown up and then the church on the hill was largely devastated. Later this church was repaired with the help of Canadian donations.

The same thing is true of the number of destroyed houses and especially churches and monasteries for during the year 2000 the destruction of individual churches and demolition of cemeteries continued, although with significantly reduced intensity, and thus the number of destroyed Holy Shrines now significantly exceeds 100 while the final number of destroyed churches remains to be established through detailed investigation and documentation. As of today we know that there are 112 destroyed and desecrated Holy Shrines.[53] For it should be kept in mind that the Serbian Orthodox Church even today does not have access to many locations and churches where there is an Albanian majority because KFOR avoids providing an escort for the necessary expert visit and inspection of all churches and church sites.[54] Very frequently repeated are the words of a bishop, who said that even those churches that survived 500 years of Ottoman enslavement could not survive a year and a half of international peace! Even though KFOR introduced active protection of numerous churches as early as August 1999, the Albanians took advantage of every moment of inattention or omission to destroy Serbian shrines, sending Serbs the clear message that there is no and can be no life with them for Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija. Thus the churches in Pomazatin, Banjska near Vučitrn and elsewhere were destroyed in the presence of KFOR, i.e. despite their protection.

The destruction of Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries, the eradication of cemeteries and cultural monuments is part of a wider Albanian strategy whose goal is to change not only the demographic but also the cultural and historical identity of the Province. At the same time new Albanian history and education are imposing false identities upon some of our greatest Holy Shrines such as Dečani and the Patriarchate. In this process a very dishonorable role is also being played by some Roman Catholic circles, primarily among the Albanians themselves, who claim that the Serbs have "occupied" supposed Albanian *Catholic* churches built by Illyrian and Albanian kings(!?) This claim has been made repeated on several occasions by Roman Catholic priest Shan Zefi before international representatives and this pseudo-history is being taught to Albanian students in schools in the Province. The Roman Catholic bishop in Prizren, Marko Sopi, in his interview for a publication on Kosovo published in 2001 by *Caritas-Vincenza* directly justified the destruction of more recently built Serbian Orthodox churches after the war as so-called "political" churches. In the same interview bishop Sopi falsely said that the seat of the Serbian Church was transferred to Kosovo and Metohija only in the 19th century after the Congress of Berlin obviously with the intent of deceiving the public. Despite requests by the Diocese of Raška and Prizren and representatives of the U.S. organization *Conference of World Religions for Peace* from New York, which mediates interfaith dialogue, bishop Sopi has never denied his claims. In this dishonorable act of historical and cultural theft, the Albanian Muslims and Roman Catholics are united, and a young generation of Kosovo Albanians is already growing up firmly convinced that the Patriarchate, Dečani, Gračanica and other Serbian Orthodox Holy Shrines were built by some Gashi, Prend, Agron and other obscure and fictional figures of new "*Kosovar* history." To this we add that Albanian terrorists have on several occasions targeted the monastery of Dečani and the Peć Patriarchate with mortars, Dečani twice and the Patriarchate once.

The tragedy of the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs has been apparent in every step but it is especially apparent in Priština where out of 40,000 pre-war Serbian residents only 200–300 souls remained by the middle of 2000, most of them living in a single housing complex (*YU Program building*) surrounded by barbed wire and strong KFOR patrols. It deserves to be mentioned that the old parish church of St. Nicholas in Priština has remained active this entire time with an on-duty priest, Protopresbyter Miroslav Popadić who, frequently risking his life, visits the faithful in Priština and surroundings. However, as we will see further on, this church and its priest are the targets of increasingly frequent attacks by rabid Albanians. The number of urban residents in Gnjilane and Orahovac during the course of the year 2000 was greatly reduced and by the beginning of 2001, it had reached about 400 souls in Gnjilane (out of a pre-war 12,000) and about 450 residents of Orahovac. Thus after the war the small village of Goraždevac, which is also now home to a number of refugee returnees, became practically the most numerous demographic center in Metohija, with a population of about 1,000 residents. In Peć there are no more Serbs while the number of Serbs in Prizren was reduced to less than 200 souls only to further fall to about 68 primarily elderly people during the course of 2002. In Djakovica six Serbian elderly ladies are still vegetating.

From the beginning the Serbian Church has been engaged with representatives of UNMIK and KFOR on enabling the *return of expelled Serbs* and other non-Albanians to their homes. These efforts met with a slightly greater degree of response from UNMIK and KFOR representatives only in the spring of 2000, when the *Joint Com-*

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[53] The Diocese of Raška-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija has published three editions to date, each one updated, of a full-color album in several languages (the Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral also in Albanian) of all photographs, partially destroyed and desecrated Kosovo and Metohija Holy Shrines under the title of *Raspeto Kosovo—Crucified Kosovo*. The first edition, with 50 destroyed Holy Shrines, was personally handed to then U.S. president Clinton during his visit to Kosovo as well as to other leaders of Western countries. However, nothing changed; there was no real intervention or prevention of further destruction, and not one Holy Shrine has yet been renewed.

[54] Almost all churches and monasteries in Kosovo and Metohija, with the exception of a few that were not accessible during the Albanian Communist rule in Kosovo and Metohija, were recorded prior to Milošević's assumption of power in the monograph *Zadužbine Kosova (Endowments of Kosovo)*, Prizren-Belgrade, 1986.

mittee for Returns was formed. Even though there have been examples in the meanwhile of organized Serbian returns, e.g., to Slivovo near Novo Brdo and the village of Grace near Vučitrn, this Committee has not made any great progress primarily due to the inability of international factors to improve the security situation in the field. On the Serbian side the return of refugees has been and remains a priority that is strongly emphasized at every meeting. As well, the Church and the SNC have insisted on improvement of economic life in the enclaves. In other parts of the Province there have been smaller investments for the Serbs, too. However, we cannot fail to observe that international engagement on behalf of the Serbs remains inadequate and in essence does not create permanent prospects for life in the enclaves. Far more is being invested in the building of Albanian houses and buildings (in three years over 40,000 Albanian and one 100 Serbian houses have been renewed!).

Kosovo after the democratic changes in Serbia (October 5, 2000)

The change in the political situation in Serbia on October 5, 2000 by the general will and anger of the Serbian people and the departure of Milošević from power at first gave great hopes to the Serbian people in the Province but soon everyone confronted the reality that the state, after ten years of destruction, was not able to change the situation overnight. The Albanians became impatient and thus violence intensified at the end of 2000 and the beginning of 2001, with parallel rebellions in the southern part of Serbia near Bujanovac and Preševo and lately in northern Macedonia as well (from Kumanovo to Tetovo where most of the Serbian population lives). These rebellions were actively supported, if not actually initiated, from Kosovo.

In February 2001 a series of attacks on civilian convoys occurred whose purpose was to introduce fear and insecurity into the Serbian enclaves. The most serious and greatest criminal attack occurred on February 14, 2001 in the village of Livadice between Merdare and Podujevo, when Albanian terrorists blew up an entire bus with 56 Serbs on it that was being escorted by Swedish KFOR. In this tragedy 11 Serbs lost their lives instantly, including two children. Eventually the death toll climbed to 14 and an additional almost 40 people sustained some degree of injury. Unfortunately, KFOR and UNMIK immediately covered up the real number of victims and spoke only of seven or eight dead.[55]

Since this attack, and especially since the intensification of conflicts in Preševo and Macedonia, a quick change in positions in the world has been observable. The Albanians have less support because it is becoming obvious to the world that instead of creating a democratic and tolerant society in Kosovo and Metohija, in essence it is ruled by the blackest of terrors, perhaps the worst in the entire history of this part of our country. The March 2001 report of the UNMIK police, published in fragments in some international media, reveals that Kosovo is ruled by 15 powerful clans-gangs controlled by powerful families and *fishes* engaged in drugs and weapons trading. From this information it follows that the entire Albanian political structure, which is trying to simulate democratically elected bodies, is in fact only a reflection of the interests of the most powerful bosses of this crime-generating and deeply immoral society, in which honorable Albanians themselves can see less and less hope for a better future. In August 2001 the first successful return of Serbs to the village of Osojane, Istok municipality, took place. This project continued in the following year with the return of several dozen Serbian families to the nearby villages of Biča, Grabac and Tučep near Klina. These settlements, however, are condemned to life in complete isolation and live under the constant protection of Spanish and Italian KFOR troops.

In the summer of 2002 the Church in Kosovo and Metohija launched a campaign called *Let Us Renew Our Holy Shrines through Prayer*. As part of this campaign religious services were held in the destroyed monastery of the Holy Unmercenary Healers in Zočište on July 19, 2002 and in the village of Osojane on July 21. After services in the monastery of Zočište, local Albanians first gathered to taunt the Serbian priests and monks during Divine Liturgy on the ruins, and then set fire to the remaining damaged monastery buildings. On this occasion the German KFOR commander made it clear that German troops would not ensure conditions for the renewal of this monastery. On July 26, 2002 a great celebration was held on the feast of the Holy Archangel Gabriel in the monastery of Holy Archangels near Prizren in the presence of over one thousand Serbs who arrived in the monastery with a KFOR escort from various parts of the Province and central Serbia. During Divine Liturgy a detonation rang out on the hillside above the monastery; it was later discovered that nine kilograms of powerful explosives were found there which the Albanians planned to detonate to bring the cliff down on the gathered Serbs and destroy the monastery. Because of the rain but mostly by the mercy of God and the Holy Archangels, only a few hundred grams of the explosive detonated. Otherwise, the entire hillside with its great cliffs would have collapsed on the monastery courtyard where there were at the time about 1,000 faithful in addition to the Bishop and

[55] There is a detailed report regarding this unprecedented tragedy by Atanasije, former Bishop of Zahumlje and Herzegovina, in the Diocese archive in Gračanica which uncovers the attempt of High Representative Haekkerup in Priština to cover up the number of Serbs killed in this Albanian terrorist attack, even though it was immediately known that 11 people died on the scene. UNMIK claimed that only seven were killed because less than 10 dead is considered a crime, whereas more than 10 is considered an act of terrorism. The U.S. administration also had a problem with recognizing the KLA as a terrorist organization because it collaborated with it.

clergy. The perpetrators of this attack have never been found and the entire incident, like so many others, was hushed up. At the end of the same month the Albanians blew up several empty Serbian houses on the outskirts of the village of Klokot, municipality of Vitina. On that occasion a Serbian shepherd was killed and three or four U.S. soldiers wounded. Unfortunately, after the incident KFOR saw fit to search only the remaining Serbs in Klokot and not one Albanian was arrested. (Sadly, this practice of searching Serbs who have been attacked instead of pursuing and capturing their attackers is a frequent occurrence in Kosovo and Metohija).

During fall and winter 2002 and throughout 2003 there were numerous armed attacks as Albanian extremists sought to frighten the Serbian population and expel it from its centuries old home. The areas surrounding Vitina and Obilić were especially targeted. At the same time, the municipal authorities in Dečani in September 2002 initiated in court against all UNMIK regulations a case in which they attempt to take away a part of the property owned by the monastery of Dečani, which was returned to the monastery by the Serbian Government before the beginning of the conflict, and which has been a part of the monastery estate since time immemorial but was illegally confiscated in 1946 by the Communists. A group of some 50 Serb pensioners from the village of Osojane transported by UNMIK to Peć on October 11, 2002 to pick up their pensions at the bank was attacked by over 600 Albanians in the streets of Peć. Their bus was completely demolished by stones and Molotov cocktails and some 15 Serbs were injured by stones and were subsequently evacuated along with the others by Spanish KFOR to a nearby building and then back to their village. Not long after this attack, whose perpetrators were not punished, on November 20 Albanian extremists blew up the church of St. Basil of Ostrog (built in 1939) in the village of Ljubovo near Istok, and seriously damaged the new and still incomplete church of All Serbian Saints in Djurakovac.

In the first months of 2003 frequent attacks and provocations of Serbs throughout the Province continued. The remaining Serbs in the municipality of Obilić came under attack after first being attacked in October and November 2002 (a total of six attacks just in October) with grenades and stones; luckily, there were no casualties. On January 20, 2003 the Albanians threw two grenades at the house of Slaviša Vukadinović in the village of Janjine Vode near Obilić. No one was harmed in the attack but there was great material damage. Just a few days later, on February 6, 2003, the Albanians threw a grenade at the house of Slobodan Todorović in Obilić, and on April 10 the house of Serb Pavle Milić was set on fire.

On April 12, 2003 Albanian terrorists planted 40 kg of powerful explosive under the railroad bridge near the village of Ložište near Banjska (municipality of Zvečan). However, due to an error made during placement and activation, the explosive only damaged the bridge but killed both Albanians, members of Cheku's "Kosovo Protection Corps" and the so-called Albanian National Army. An UNMIK police investigation established that the purpose of the attack was to blow up the bridge when a train carrying Serbs from the central Kosovo enclaves to Leposavić and in the direction of Belgrade was passing over it. After this attack UNMIK chief Michael Steiner proclaimed the so-called Albanian National Army a *terrorist* organization, thus directly acknowledging the existence of Albanian terrorism in the Province.

On Great Friday, April 25, 2003 Albanian aggressors brutally beat up a Serb woman, Smiljka Andjelković (age 66), in her home in Lipljan. Smiljka's husband Ljubinko found his wife, who was alone in the house at the time of the attack, lying in the kitchen in a pool of blood with serious head injuries. The chair used to repeatedly hit her in the head was also covered with blood. The investigation determined that the most probable cause for the attack was the intent to force the Andjelković to sell their home to Albanians, which they persistently reject as they wish to continue living where they have spent their whole lives.

On the same day, shocking news came from Gnjilane that the Albanians had thrown approximately 1,000 books written in the Serbian language from the City Library into the garbage. Among the books found in garbage dumpsters were works by Serbian Nobel Prize winner Ivo Andrić, Njegoš and poetess Desanka Maksimović. Unfortunately, this barbaric act, which brings to mind the burning of the books during the period of Nazism in Germany, is not the only incident of its kind in Kosovo and Metohija. Immediately after the end of the war in 1999 and the arrival of KFOR and UNMIK international missions, thousands of Serbian books were destroyed after being thrown out of libraries. The same thing happened with books in private libraries that the Serbian owners did not have time to evacuate.

Only a few days after the Resurrection, on May 3, 2003, a series of incidents occurred in the village of Suvi Do in the municipality of Istok. Serbs Milan and Milorad Jeftić, residents of Suvi Do, were injured when they were intentionally run over by an Albanian bus. Just three days later, on May 6, a *Kosmetprevoz* bus transporting Serbian students on the route Kosovska Mitrovica—Suvi Do was stoned by Albanians. When local Serbs protested against these attacks, KFOR threw tear gas at them to disperse the demonstrators and seriously injured a Serb woman, Gordana Jeftić. On the same day the Albanians attacked taxi driver Dejan Jeftić from Suvi Do who sustained serious injuries.

On May 11 the Diocese of Raška and Prizren condemned the stoning of the church of St. Nicholas in Priština and warned that the removal of security checkpoints near churches located in high risk zones is "a dangerous experiment that can lead to serious and unwanted consequences." On the same day, Serbian refugees from Peć on an escorted visit to the graves of their loved ones in the city for

the first time in four years found the graves destroyed and dug up and the cemetery chapel destroyed. On May 15 UNMIK advised that despite three days of searching it had failed to locate Vučko Kostić (age 52), a Serbian man from Zubin Potok, who disappeared on Monday, May 13. The night of May 17 KFOR found the body of Zoran Mirković (age 41), a professor of Serbian language, in the river basin in the village of Vrbovac near Kosovska Vitina. Mirković had set out by bicycle the afternoon of the previous day to visit his property just outside the village. Multiple gunshots had been fired in his chest. Serbian sources said that a note with the inscription ANA (Albanian National Army) was also found near the body, while international police denied finding any evidence that the murder was ethnically motivated. On May 21 Slavko Stamenković, a 90 year-old Serbian man, was severely beaten in his house in Kosovska Vitina by Kosovo Albanians after the attackers first gagged his wife Jelka and locked her in another room. The following day three Albanians beat up Milan Pavić, a 17 year-old Serb from the village of Klokot near Kosovska Vitina. Serbs from Kosovska Vitina and the surrounding area addressed an open letter to the international community, emphasizing that assaults on them in the Pomoravlje region were becoming more and more violent. On May 28 unknown assailants opened fire on Spanish KFOR troops guarding the monastery of Gorioč near Istok. The soldiers returned fire and the attackers fled into forest.

The night of June 3 in Obilić Albanian extremists murdered three members of the same family: Slobodan and Radmila Stolić, both over 80 years old, and their son Ljubinko by brutally bludgeoning them to death. The attackers then unsuccessfully attempted to burn down the Stolic house to cover up the murder. Despite calls by the Serbs for justice and condemnation by the international community of what UNMIK chief Michael Steiner described as "a heinous crime" the perpetrators were never caught. The Diocese of Raška and Prizren and Serbian National Council of Kosovo concluded that UNMIK and KFOR have no desire or intention to stop the terror against Serbs because the departure of the remaining Serbs from the Province is accepted as the cheapest solution.

These most recent crimes in Kosovo and Metohija clearly confirmed that the situation in the Province had not improved in the least and that the Serbs and their Holy Shrines were still exposed to an open pogrom and terror in the international presence. At the time of writing of this review of the situation in Kosovo and Metohija (June 2003), the prospects for the survival of the Serbs were fairly bleak unless there were serious changes in the stance of the Albanians and their leaders in Kosovo and Metohija and changes in the stance of the so-called international community, i.e. those who have authority in it. According to information from the Coordinating Center for Kosovo and Metohija "in four years of UNMIK administration in the Province, from June 10, 1999 to June 10, 2003, there have been 6,392 attacks on Serbs. Of these, 1,197 Serbs were killed, 1,305 Serbs were wounded and 1,138 Serbs were kidnapped. Out of the total number of abducted Serbs, we know today that 155 were killed, 13 escaped and 95 were released, while the fate of the remaining 863 Serbs remains unknown."

The Attacks of Albanian extremists on Serbs in the period between June 2003 and March 17, 2004

Early in the morning on June 19 about 10 medical staff of the Serb-run Kosovo Polje Health Center were injured during an attempt by UN and Kosovo police to evict the Serbs and 25 patients from the building of the former Russian field hospital in the village of Bresje. On June 22 Serb Staniša Jeremić (age 53) was arrested by UNMIK and Kosovo police while traveling by train through Vučitrn solely on the basis of an Albanian man's claim that Jeremić knew the identity of another man who had allegedly physically accosted him. On the same day three young Albanians attacked a Serb woman, Živka Delić, in the village of Rabovce near Lipljan as she was going to a nearby store. They began to beat her and she sustained injuries before local Serbs ran to her aid. The incident was reported to Kosovo police, who refused to press charges on grounds that the perpetrators were minors. On June 30 the Diocese of Raška and Prizen advised that unknown perpetrators had again desecrated the Serbian Orthodox cemetery in Kosovska Vitina and damaged 15 new grave markers. On the same day, a hand grenade was thrown at a Serbian-owned commercial truck near Uroševac, destroying the truck's trailer; the driver, luckily, was unharmed.

On July 5 the Diocese of Raška and Prizren reported that the church of St. Nicholas and its parish home had once again been stoned. The Diocese also sharply protested against the proposal of Kosovo premier Bajram Rexhepi that KFOR turn over protection of endangered Serbian churches and monasteries to the Kosovo Protection Corps. On July 7 the house of Serb Nebojša Stamenković was set on fire in the village of Devet Jugovića for the second time in two weeks after an Albanian family illegally living in the Stamenković home was evicted. On July 16 a Serb truck driver ran over a landmine on the road from Dren to Suvo Grlo and on the morning of July 17 Mihajlo Tomašević, a Serb from Suvo Grlo, was attacked by two Albanians. On July 20 the Coordinating Center for Kosovo and Metohija advised that two Serbian houses in the Potkaljaja quarter near the church of St. Kyriake in Prizren were torched. The owner of one of these houses returned days ago intending to resume residence in her home. The night of July 30 the parish home of the church of St. Nicholas in Priština was stoned yet again.

On the night of August 3 assailants opened machine gun fire on the family of Zoran Milić in Obilić before tossing a grenade at it shortly thereafter. Milić, his wife and

their three children were in the house at the time of the attack. On August 11 local Albanians seriously wounded Serb Dragan Tonić (age 44) close to the village of Skulanovo near Lipljan. Tonic was shot in the mouth while he was fishing in the Sitnica river and died shortly thereafter (August 18).

On Wednesday, August 13, two Serbian teenagers from the village of Goraždevac near Peć were killed and six others wounded as they were swimming in the Bistrica River. A group of Serbian children was fired upon with machine guns by unknown assailants. According to eyewitnesses, the shots came from the direction of the ethnic Albanian village of Zahac. Pantelija Dakić (age 11) and Ivan Jovović (19) died on the scene, while Djordje Ugrenović (20), Bogdan Bukumirić (14), Marko Bogićević (12) and Dragana Srbljak (13) were seriously wounded. A related incident occurred when an Albanian mob attacked Serb Milivoje Pavlović as he was driving some of the Serbian children wounded in the attack to the hospital. Families of the wounded Serb teenagers who were initially hospitalized in the Albanian run hospital in Peć complained that the children were not offered proper medical treatment. After examination in the Serb hospital in North Mitrovica Serb medical experts ascertained that the children were intentionally given wrong treatment. Serbian Medical Society issued a strong protest due to this serious abuse of the medical profession. Despite universal horror and opprobrium the perpetrators of this horrendous crime in Goraždevac were never found and brought to justice.

The night of August 14 Serb returnees to village of Grabac near Klina also came under intense gunfire. The morning of August 15 Albanians set fire to the Serbian cemetery in the village of Bresje near Kosovo Polje. On August 17 Albanian extremists again opened fire on five children in the center of Goraždevac; luckily, this time there were no casualties. The shots were said to come from the direction of the Albanian village of Grabovac. On August 18 a car owned by Serb Stanko Filipović was riddled with bullets from a Kalashnikov in the village of Mozgovo near Gnjilane. The next day Gnjilane police advised they were searching for persons believed to be members of an Albanian terrorist organization who had raped and beaten up an elderly Serb woman, Vukosava Ivković of Gnjilane.

On August 26 three unknown men attempted to kidnap a 10 year-old Serbian girl, Marina Damjanović from the village of Dobrosin near Lipljan. According to her testimony and eyewitnesses, three Albanian men in a white Mercedes with foreign license plates stopped briefly next to her and attempted to pull her into the vehicle. The child managed to escape and fled to a neighboring house, calling for help, while the car drove away at high speed. The same night Zoran Dončić (age 38), a Serb returnee to the village of Biča near Klina, was shot in the stomach by a sniper when he and two friends went to search for a lost cow outside the village. On August 27 a group of Albanian youths stoned a Niš Express bus transporting some 40 Serb passengers on the route from Štrpce to Belgrade near Kosovska Vitina. The night of August 27 unknown persons damaged the church of St. Demetrius in the village of Sušica near Gračanica.

The night of August 31 one Serb man was killed and four others wounded in Cernica near Gnjilane when a hand grenade was tossed at a Serb-owned store. Miomir Savić (age 35) died of his wounds after a grenade was tossed from an abandoned Serb house where eyewitnesses said KFOR police subsequently found a detonator and a large quantity of explosives. On September 26 two young ethnic Albanians beat up a 71 year-old Serb man, Janko Janković of Prizren.

On November 5 Sofijanka Jovanović-Perić, a 72 year-old Serbian woman, passed away at Belgrade's Military Medical Academy a month after she was wounded in Gnjilane. She was shot on October 4 by Ramush Halimi from the Gnjilane village of Livoč, who did not want to vacate her house, which he and his family had illegally appropriated several years ago. On November 7 UNMIK police spokesman Derek Chappell confirmed that the indictment against Ramush Halimi, arrested for attempted murder, has been amended to suspicion of murder after her death two days ago. On November 9 Aleksandar Stojković, a 75 year-old Kosovo Serb from the Gnjilane region, sustained serious injuries after being beaten up by a group of five or six Albanians while grazing his livestock. Stojković sustained a broken jaw, broken ribs and serious head injuries after being pistol-whipped by his attackers. They wrapped him in nylon and pushed him into a stream. On November 13 an explosive device was planted in a destroyed home belonging to displaced Serbs from the village of Mušutište near Suva Reka on the eve of the arrival of seven Serb families who wanted to visit their properties and learn more about conditions for return. KFOR troops found the bomb in one of the houses and removed it before it exploded. On November 16 Danijel Milošević, an 18 year-old Serb from the village of Mogila near Gnjilane, was killed while tilling his field. Milošević was shot in the head with a handgun. Local residents of Mogila said that several Albanians shot the young Serb on his tractor. On November 21 a 63 year-old Serb man, Trajko Jovanović, was seriously beaten up in the village of Robovac near Kosovska Kamenica. On November 23 two young Serbs, whose names were not released for security reasons, were beaten up by a group of about 20 Albanians in Kosovska Mitrovica. The incident occurred shortly after midnight when a group of Albanians ambushed the two young Serbs in the ethnically mixed Microsettlement settlement in North Mitrovica. On November 28 a hand grenade was thrown into the yard of Serb Srboljub Jovanović in Cernica near Gnjilane. Providentially, no one was injured in the blast, although there were three children and three adults in the house at the time.

On December 10 an attempt to return to Klina by 26 Serbs ended in an incident and the Serb returnees were evacuated with the assistance of KFOR and returned to the nearby Serbian village of Biča, where they have been waiting for permission to return to their homes for more than three weeks. The night of December 13 a Serb woman, Zlata Djurović (age 52), was attacked in the ethnically mixed Microsettlement settlement in North Mitrovica and subsequently hospitalized with serious head injuries. On December 23 the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church concluded that the state of security, human rights and freedom of movement is cause for concern despite the presence of the international community, as well as that Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija are expecting not only declarative "standards" but their actual implementation. On December 28 the Bishop of Raška-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija addressed an open letter to the Serbian and global communities regarding a recent attempt by the Albanians to usurp church property and the Church of Christ the Savior in Priština.

On January 8, 2004 the Diocese of Raška and Prizren demanded a public apology from UNMIK police commissioner Stefan Feller for blatantly falsifying and concealing the truth about the attack on Russian humanitarians following their visit to Visoki Dečani Monastery on Orthodox Christmas Day. Local Albanians in Kosovo stoned a bus transporting a delegation from the Russian Foundation of St. Andrew the First-Called, which was visiting the Province on a humanitarian mission. On January 22 a group of about 30 young Albanians in Djakovica attacked two KFOR minibuses and a German transporter carrying monks of the Serbian Orthodox monastery of Holy Archangels and a crew of German state television ARD, targeting them foul language and curses, snow balls and chunks of ice. The ARD TV crew was filming the ruins of the Serbian Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity in the center of Djakovica when they were confronted by the group of enraged young ethnic Albanians. On January 27 a bus transporting Serbian pupils from Kosovska Mitrovica to Gojbulja was stoned by a group of about 30 Albanians in Novo Selo in northern Kosovo. On January 28 UNMIK police freed Marko Božović, an 18 year-old Serbian man arrested two days before on suspicion of involvement in the murder of UN policeman Satish Menon.

On February 3 German KFOR discontinued armed escorts for the monks of Holy Archangels Monastery near Prizren, refused to allow monks to share their electrical generator and denied food to the Orthodox priest on duty in the Bishop's residence in Prizren. Štrpce mayor Sladjan Ilić said that German KFOR new stance is further proof that the international community lacks courage to face the reality in Kosovo and Metohija, the reality that the Albanian majority population "does not want Serbs next to it," said Ilić. On February 11 Joseph Grieboski, the president of the Institute for Religion and Public Policy, testified before the U.S. Congress that since the end of the war "thousands of Serbs have been murdered, and those Orthodox who remain live in ghettos segregated from the mainstream of society." Five years after the NATO intervention against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Orthodox Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija "have become second-citizens in their own country, deprived of their basic human rights," Grieboski said. On February 15 Serbs from the village of Miroč near Vučitrn left their homes after the removal of a KFOR security checkpoint in the village.

On February 19 UNMIK police found the bodies of two dead Serbs, Zlatomir Kostić (age 36) of Kosovo Polje and Milijana Marković (24) of Staro Gracko, near the fire station in Lipljan after multiple bursts of machine gun fire were heard. On February 20 some 500 Serbs protested in the courtyard of the church of the Entrance of the Most Holy Mother of God into the Temple in Lipljan, following the double murder the previous day. A letter on behalf of the residents of Staro Gracko and Lipljan was sent to UNMIK chief Harri Holkeri where the Serbs wrote that since the arrival of the UN mission in June 1999, 22 Serbs from the village of Staro Gracko have been killed.On February 21 representatives of the village of Gojbulja, a Serbian enclave near Vučitrn, advised that unless Serbs are able to return to the neighboring village of Miroc and KFOR returns its security checkpoints, more than 270 Serbs, including 69 children, would be forced to collectively leave. On February 22 Serbs from Lipljan requested that UNMIK police provide them with an update on the investigation of the murder of 14 Serb harvesters in July 1999 in the village of Staro Gracko. Serbian protests continued and spread throughout Kosovo and Metohija.

On March 8 the house of Serb Moša Bojković in the center of Obilić was set on fire and burned to the ground. The house had been vacated on the same day by an Albanian family on the basis of an eviction order. On March 13 residents of North Mitrovica held peaceful demonstrations urging UNMIK police to undertake necessary measures to protect Serbs and their property in this part of the city from frequent Albanian provocations. The protest was organized after an incident the previous night where a group of Albanians used rocks to smash the windows on a vehicle owned by Serb Nebojša Milić and then fled to South Mitrovica. On March 15 the Serbian ministry of internal affairs issued a report stating that during 2003, Albanian terrorists carried out a total of 199 attacks, infiltrations and provocations on the territory of south central Serbia and in the Ground Safety Zone toward Kosovo and Metohija. On March 16 UNMIK police sealed off a part of North Mitrovica after an explosive device was found in a residential area. On the same day, the coordinator for returns in the Kosovo provisional government, Milorad Todorović, testified regarding the human rights situation in Kosovo before the Committee for Legal Issues and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Todo-

rović presented facts regarding ethnically motivated crimes against Serbs and other non-Albanians in Kosovo, the inefficiency of the UNMIK police, insecurity of private property, lack of freedom of movement, inaccessibility of medical institutions, limited possibilities for education in the Serbs' mother tongue, dramatic unemployment among the Serbian community of about 90 percent, as well as the constant threat to Serbian cultural and religious monuments in the province.

On March 16 mass protests by Serbs began in downtown Gračanica following the serious wounding of a Serb medical secondary school student, Jovica Ivić (age 18) from nearby Čaglavica the previous night. Several Serbian secondary school students were injured in clashes with international and Kosovo police in the demonstrations.

On March 17 the Albanians began their own violent protests, which quickly spread like wildfire throughout the province. The immediate cause of the Albanian protests was the drowning of three Albanian children. Kosovo Albanian television quoted a fourth, surviving child as saying he and his friends had been chased by Serbs with a dog into the raging river. However, this was denied by the UNMIK police spokesman Derek Chapel the next day. The subsequent investigation proved that Serbs were not involved in this incident at all. Nevertheless, the tragedy was used as a trigger for massive riots all over the Province between March 17 and 19. In only two days 19 people were killed, nearly 900 wounded and 30 Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries were set on fire or seriously damaged (See more in the attached report on the March pogrom).

In the period between the March pogrom and the conclusion of the updated version of the Memorandum sporadic attacks and provocations against Serbs continued throughout the province. Among the incidents the most serious was murder of a Serb teenager Dimitrije Popović in Gračanica. A 17 year-old Serb, Dimitrije Popović, was shot dead the night of Friday, June 4, in a fast food restaurant in downtown Gračanica. He was shot in the back of the head with automatic gunfire and died on the scene. According to the testimony of his friends, who were with him at the time of the attack, the murderer arrived in a white Audi and sped off in the direction of Priština immediately after firing the shots. Soon after the murderer and his companion were arrested near Priština bus station.

Conclusion

Once again we remind the reader: If the story of Albanian historians and their Western mentors and supporters is true about how Kosovo and Metohija "is not the center of the Serbian state and church" and this is instead a product of "Serbia megalomania" and "mythology" and so on, how is it then that Kosovo and Metohija have such a large number of Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries, and have had them continuously from the 12th to the 21st century? And why are they targeted by the Albanians with infernal hatred for devastation and destruction, along with the Serbian cemeteries next to them, and the Serbian oaks and pines around them!? Truly, why are the Albanians so furiously destroying these Serbian holy shrines (112 to date that we were able to personally visit and see with our own eyes, even though there are sure to be more desecrated and destroyed that we Serbs cannot access without an armed KFOR escort) and why are they eradicating with such hellish hatred the inerasable vestiges of Serbian spirituality and statehood, Serbian faith and customs and culture, the Serbian Orthodox character of this region? The fury which emerges in this process is only a witness of the very opposite of what they and their tutors from the West claim. This hellish fury shows that they are well aware of whose Land this is and who has lived and created in it

March Pogrom 2004, burned Serbian churches and houses in Prizren

for centuries. Not only because of Milošević's tyranny, under which the Serbian people suffered no less than the Albanians, but for more than the past two centuries the Albanians have sought to use violence and anarchy to exterminate the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija. Will the advocates of international law and human rights now sanction and legally confirm what has been unjustly and illegally conquered over the last two centuries!?

Why should Serbs today live in enclaves and ghettoes when they can live in free cantons and thus really participate in the government of Kosovo without being blackmailed to vote and thus having Serbian representatives only serve as a cover for Albanian outvoting, i.e. a rationalization for the play-acting of democracy. The saddest thing of all is that the international community is also participating in this game through its biased or blackmailed, in any case insincere toward the Serbs, representatives. The recent example of German Steiner is the best proof of this. Why did High Representative Steiner act as he did in Kosovo and Metohija, doing everything to benefit the Albanians, intentionally ignoring the Serbs, the Serbian Church and the real *Serbian problem* in Kosovo. Upon departing Steiner spoke of the "new reality" in Kosovo! What does this mean? Is this "new reality" this inhuman, unjust, undemocratic state, only this time for the Serbs, Roma and others, i.e. lack of freedom and rights for all other habitants of Kosovo who are not Albanian? Will his bias and hypocrisy remain the measure of relations between the rest of the international community toward the Serbs and other non-Albanian habitants of Kosovo and Metohija, too? Not that the previous High Representatives were much better but Steiner's behavior the whole time created problems and added more chilliness and fear for the future of Kosovo, true freedom for all in it, equal democracy for all in it, multi-ethnicity, multi-culturalism, multi-confessionalism.

The Serbs, expelled from the urban centers, denied participation in the basic institutions of society and limited to scattered rural enclaves, have not only been stripped of all political and economic power but also of basic human rights of freedom of movement and work. Realistically, the only possible way of enabling the long-term survival of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija is the decentralization of the Province according to a plan of modified cantonization, i.e. the creation of two entities. According to this plan, areas inhabited by Serbs would have a kind of local self-administration, stronger economic, political and cultural ties with central Serbia, as well as stronger economic support by the Western countries. The great Serbian Monasteries would have a special status and be exempt from municipal jurisdiction; they would maintain ties with the cantons and the homeland.

The Kosovo and Metohija Serbs together with their Church still remain strongly opposed to the idea of an independent Kosovo which, it is their general conviction, would lead to the complete disappearance of the Serbian people from its historic, spiritual and cultural heartland. In addition to its spiritual work, it is the special task of the Serbian Orthodox Church to constantly maintain in a state of alertness the conscience of the entire Serbian people and the global community regarding the importance of Kosovo and Metohija as the cradle of spirituality, culture and history of a European people which on every occasion has been on the same side as the Western democratic countries.

Therefore, the Serbian Church and the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs, those who are there now and those who have been expelled but desire and await to return to their homes and next to their Holy Shrines, even though both may presently be in ruins, ask the international community for basic human and national rights and freedoms:

1. Survival and protection of the Serbs who stayed in Kosovo and Metohija; their full freedom of movement and work, as well as other rights, such as the right to personal and real property, full and not merely formal participation in the Kosovo and Metohija government, Serbian schools, hospitals, cultural centers, as well as international and domestic state moral and material assistance.

2. Return of all expelled Serbs and other non-Albanian population to their centuries-old homes, without delays and various excuses, and their full protection, freedom of movement and work, and international and domestic state assistance. This return can begin immediately with the already promised and prepared return of Serbs to the villages of Ljevoša, Siga, Brestovik and Belo Polje near Peć.

3. That all surviving kidnapped persons *are found and freed; and that all persons killed during these tragic years are found, exhumed and their remains buried in humane and dignified fashion.*

4. Preservation and protection of living monasteries and churches, which are of great national, humanitarian and religious cultural value, as well as real moral and material assistance and support for the renewal, for now, of important Holy Shrines that have been destroyed or desecrated.

For us Serbs, Kosovo is not some imaginary, mythical past but the reality of a historical, Christian fate that is ongoing, continuing to the present day, not ending even with the most recent tragedy of today. *"This is our holy, martyred Kosovo and Metohija, our Holy Jerusalem, the soul of our souls, our honor, the root of our being, our fate. Without it, we would cease to be what we are because it is in Kosovo and Metohija that we became a mature and historical people and, in the words of the Holy Great Martyr Lazar of Kosovo, chose once and for all time, the Kingdom of Heaven."*[56]

The position of His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle and the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which has been clearly expressed so many

[56] Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Littoral on the feast of the Annunciation, April 7 (March 25 according to the Julian calendar) in the year of Our Lord 1999.

times, shows the true Christian face and clear conscience, as well as the suffering heart and soul of the Orthodox Christian Serbian people—for all those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. The letter of the Bishop of Raška--Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija, sent on Great Friday 1999 to officials of the United States and Western European countries expressed, during the difficult days of NATO's mad bombing of the innocent Serbian people and Serbian Kosovo, the position of all Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija and other Serbian lands. However, the almighty rulers of the West did not wish to hear their voice any more than did the tyrant Slobodan Milošević with whom the West spoke all the time, and only with him among all Serbs and in the name of all Serbs everywhere, and negotiated and reached an agreement regarding the fate of all Serbs, including Orthodox Serbs already crucified between the Communists and the Albanians in Serbian Kosovo and Metohija. However, despite this both he and they now mutually and unconscionably accuse each other as the exclusive culprit, while the victims of both "victors" are the innocent poor folk of Kosovo and Metohija, among whom Christ the Crucified spreads his arms among burned down and destroyed churches, awaiting a flock that is not yet there, whose numbers are depleted.

Nonetheless, we believe in God's justice but in human justice, too; and in the good will of those just people in the international community who wish peace and good to all people and nations, especially in the windy and tempestuous Balkans, which has been and remains a part of free, democratic and cultured, Christian Europe. We place our hope in the God of Justice, Truth and Freedom, in the Triune God of evangelical love and stauropaschal resurrection and salvation, that He will help us in our Golgotha-like crucifixion. For God can help us and He wants to help everyone. That is why we, as a Church and a Christian and Orthodox people neither seek nor call for revenge through intolerance and hate, but cry together with the righteous Job: *"If we have received good things of the hand of the Lord, shall we not endure evil things?"*

But, as we have said, we believe that we will also receive the help of the people who rule the fate of small and weak nations, and turn finally toward justice and democracy, truth and freedom for all in Kosovo and Metohija. That it is why we again ask them, in sincere human and Christian fashion, after this bitter five year long experience in Kosovo: Why has the innocent Serbian people been bombed? If it was because of a tyrant, then the Serbian people has already been doubly punished. For bombing did not destroy the tyrant, it only increased the tyranny and today placed into other hands. For the present situation of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija is double revenge: by Milošević and unfortunately by the Albanians—in the presence of NATO and the international community embodied in UNMIK. Howe the Serbian people experienced the bombing was best expressed by its greatest living poet: "We are just targets on their screens, our fate is a part of their video game" (Matija Bećković, March 27, 1999). The consequences of the bombing are still tragically present in Serbia, especially Kosovo, where the most poisonous bombs were dropped. There are increasing numbers of seriously ill people, children, livestock and plants. Is this a "collateral error" on the part of the powerful of this world and the "New World Order"? And an even more concrete consequence of the bombing there is that the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija and their Holy Shrines remain today only a target of infernal hatred by those who have a tradition of vendetta among themselves, let alone toward Orthodox Serbs.

In the end, we must ask: Why should Kosovo, as the Holy Land of the Balkans, not be common land and district (*oblast*—a Slavic word meaning both district and rule) of Serbs and Albanians, Christians and Muslims, two peoples, two languages, two confessions, two cultures, just like—*mutatis mutantis*—the Holy Land for the Israelis and the Palestinians? This common life and coexistence is something the U.S. is advocating in the Holy Land. Why does it not advocate the same in this Holy Land, too, for the sake of God, for the sake of its people and nations, for the sake of its Holy Shrines, for the sake of justice and freedom?

POGROM IN KOSOVO AND METOHIJA March 2004[57]

Almost five years after the arrival of the UN Mission and KFOR in Kosovo and Metohija and ongoing process of ethnic discrimination and attacks on the Serbian Orthodox population and its holy shrines, on March 17–18, 2004 Albanian extremists organized and carried out the biggest attack so far on Serbian enclaves and holy shrines of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The immediate cause for organizing the allegedly spontaneous Albanian demonstrations was a tragic incident in the village of Čabra near Kosovska Mitrovica where three Albanian children drowned on March 16. Prior to any investigation or verification the Albanians accused the Serbs of being responsible for the tragedy and on the same evening (March 16) Albanian language media issued a fervent call for mass demonstrations which by March 17 would escalate into a mass lynching of the Serbian population. A subsequent investigation established that the Serbs were not at all to blame for the tragedy in Čabra and that Albanian extremist groups simply took advantage of this incident to launch an already prepared plan for the expulsion and ethnic cleansing of the remaining Serbs.

57 This section is written by Hieromonk Sava Janjić, Dečani, on May 31, 2004.

The results of the two day long rampage are highly discouraging. A total of 19 people were killed, including nine Serbs, while the rest were Albanians killed by international police and soldiers while defending themselves and the besieged Serbian enclaves. Almost 900 people were injured, among them 65 international members of KFOR and UNMIK police. A total of 4,100 people were chased from their homes, most of them Serbs; about 800 Serb and Roma houses and apartments were looted and torched; and 30 Serbian Orthodox holy shrines were either completely destroyed or heavily damaged. Two months after the March pogrom, the main organizers of the pogrom have not been identified or arrested; moreover, not one Albanian or international official has been dismissed or publicly called to task despite the fact that during those two fateful days and nights all Kosovo institutions, the UN Mission and KFOR command experienced complete collapse.

During those days the Serbs were practically left undefended before an onslaught of more than 60,000 Albanians, many of them armed. Only days after the pogrom, leading international officials, including NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and Admiral Gregory C. Johnson, assessed that the campaign of violence and ethnic cleansing was well orchestrated. If this assessment is correct, as the entire investigation thus far and numerous analyses show, it is discouraging that two months after the eruption of violence the persons who directly organized the pogrom have not been arrested. There are presently some 270 primarily indirect violators under investigation who were filmed destroying Serb property; however, the question looms large how many of them will ultimately be sentenced, taking into account that none of the Albanians are ready to testify for fear of reprisals.

The riots first began the morning of March 17, 2004, in Kosovska Mitrovica with the attempt of 800 Albanian demonstrators to force their way into the northern, Serbian part of the city. Although there was no organized resistance by UNMIK police at first, very quickly and with the help of armored vehicles and tear gas, UNMIK police pushed back the crowd into the southern part of the city and blocked the bridge across the Ibar River. French and Danish KFOR only showed up at the end and did not even take part in preventing the Albanian breakthrough. After failing to force their way into Northern Mitrovica, a group of about 200 predominantly young Albanians, among whom several young men with characteristic Wahabi beards were observed, headed in the direction of the church of St. Sava in the southern part of Mitrovica, which was protected by members of a KFOR unit from Morocco. Without encountering any resistance from KFOR troops, the attackers broke into the churchyard and the church itself, destroying everything in front of them, and set a fire that demolished the entire interior of the church. In the meanwhile, members of KFOR evacuated the Serbian priest and his family so that the attackers, again without any resistance at all from KFOR, could also set fire to the parish home. According to existing video footage and photographs, the Moroccan soldiers stood and calmly watched the rampaging Albanians without demonstrating any sign of willingness to stop them in their campaign of destruction. Clashes in the Mitrovica area continued throughout the day and night with new attempts by the Albanians to force their way into the northern part of the city. During these attacks the Albanians used snipers and firearms. According to UNMIK data, during these riots four Serbs were killed and 50 wounded. Also wounded were 35 members of police and some 160 Albanians. A dozen UNMIK vehicles were destroyed. The Albanians then attacked the Serb village of Svinjare, located between Mitrovica and Vučitrn; the entire Serb population of Svinjare was evacuated and the Albanians then torched just about every Serbian house in the village.

By the afternoon of March 17 the violence had spread to the Priština area. Several thousand Albanians headed from the direction of Priština across Veternik toward Čaglavica, where Serbs had blocked the road on March 15 after a young Serb, Jovica Ivić (18), was wounded by unknown attackers from an Albanian vehicle, which fled from the scene. In the meanwhile the students of Priština University coming from rural and undeveloped parts of Kosovo known for their radical views and behavior began a rampage within the city of Priština itself. The students were invited to take part in the attack by the distribution of already prepared flyers calling on them to take part in demonstrations. The Independent Union of Students, which organized this mobilization, played a key role in attacks on Serb property throughout the greater Priština area on March 17–18. The clash near the Serbian village of Čaglavica looked like a medieval pitched battle, as one KFOR soldier described it. Strong police repelled the first Albanian attack and Swedish KFOR forces used water cannon, tear gas, stun grenades and even hand-to-hand combat. International forces blocked the road with a double cordon. Local Serbs also organized themselves to resist. However, despite the relatively strong international forces, the Albanians managed to set fire to several Serbian houses on the outskirts of the village. After 6 o'clock in the evening, approximately 5,000 students arrived from Priština and with the rest of the Albanian throng pushed the international forces in the direction of Gračanica. A direct clash between several thousand Albanians and Serbs ready to defend the approach to Gračanica was imminent. Only later that evening was the escalation of violence stopped by the arrival of the U.S. Marines, who dispersed the Albanian throng by throwing teargas from a helicopter. In the meanwhile, several hundred Albanians attacked the YU Program building in Priština, which housed the remaining 200 or so Serbs in Priština, including about 20 children. After stoning the building and tossing Molotov cocktails at it, the Albanians managed to break in despite the presence of Kosovo police. The Serbs were evacuated at the last moment by the Irish

KFOR contingent while the Albanians systematically looted and destroyed Serbian apartments. Several Serbs were beaten up. The Albanians were even throwing stones and Molotov cocktails and using snipers to shoot at international police who were trying to evacuate the Serbs.

As the violence spread in the areas of Mitrovica and Priština, the riots infected almost every urban center in Kosovo and Metohija during the course of that day, March 17.

By the afternoon of March 17 large groups of Albanians had arrived in organized fashion in the Kosovo Polje area, where they began to attack Serbian houses and property. In the attacks the Serbian hospital in Bresje, St. Sava School, the only post office where Serbs could receive mail and dozens of Serbian houses were burned down. Serbs were literally pulled from the flames by international policemen who were helpless to prevent the destruction of their homes. One has the distinct impression that the goal of the Albanian mob was to expel the Serbs; members of the Kosovo Police Service who pulled the Serbs from their homes headed the mass of Albanians, many among them armed with Kalashnikovs and hand grenades. The situation was similar in Lipljan, where 28 Serb houses were burned down along with utility buildings. It was only thanks to KFOR intervention at the last moment that the destruction of all Serb property in this once largely Serbian town was avoided. Orthodox priest Randjel Denić was wounded by a hand grenade tossed by the Albanians, who attacked two Serbian churches in Lipljan; when he withdrew into his parish home to wash the blood from his face as a result of wounds caused by grenade shrapnel, he was then arrested by Albanian policemen for supposedly trying to set fire to his own church. Many Serbs in Lipljan and Kosovo Polje were wounded, two were killed and hundreds were evacuated from their burning homes (*See attached "Report on Lipljan"*).

Demonstrations in Uroševac began on the afternoon of March 17. At first they were peaceful but soon the Albanian crowd was using hand grenades and Molotov cocktails to attack the Greek troops guarding the church of the Holy Emperor Uroš. Approximately 15 Greek soldiers were wounded defending the church, which luckily only sustained damage to the façade. At the last moment U.S. troops arrived who prevented the mass from breaking into the church, evacuated the wounded Greeks and about a dozen Serbs under a hail of stones and Molotov cocktails. The violence continued in Gnjilane, Vitina and Kamenica as well. In Gnjilane almost all the remaining Serbian houses were burned down but ultimately the church was saved. The Serbian churches in Vitina and Kamenica were attacked but did not sustain significant damage. All the Serbs from Gnjilane were evacuated; in Vitina only a few stayed near the church, which was placed under U.S. protection. In Kamenica many Serbian houses were damaged and several Serbs were beaten up.

The biggest destruction of Serb property and holy shrines occurred in Prizren, until then considered to be one of the most peaceful urban centers on the territory in the Province largely due to the fact that there were hardly any Serbs left there. By about 3:00 p.m. the organizers of the violence in Prizren ordered the closing of all shops. In the meanwhile, an enormous crowd of Albanians gathered, many of them arriving in organized fashion by bus from outlaying parts of the city and surrounding villages. After an attack on the UNMIK building and an unsuccessful attempt by Argentine policemen to stop the masses, the crowd began the systematic destruction of Serbian Orthodox holy shrines and houses in Potkaljaja (the old quarter of Prizren once inhabited primarily by Serbs, few of whom now remain). First Sts. Cyril and Methodius Seminary was burned down; a Serb male refugee burned to death inside and later the burned remains of a woman were found in the basement. The crowd then attacked the Bishop's residence with stones and Molotov cocktails, and German soldiers evacuated Fr. Miron Kosač from the site. After the Bishop's residence was set on fire, the crowd also broke into St. George Cathedral and the smaller church of St. George (Runović's church) located in the courtyard of the main church and set them on fire. Other groups set fires in the churches of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, Christ the Savior and the church of St. Kyriake in Potkaljaja. German KFOR forces not only failed to react but even completely withdrew from their positions in the city. No one from the main KFOR base rushed to assist the members of the international police trying to stop the masses. At approximately 9:00 p.m. a crowd arrived in front of Holy Archangels Monastery located five kilometers south of Prizren as German soldiers evacuated the brotherhood at the last moment. The Albanians then broke into the courtyard and set fire to the monastery, which burned to the ground despite the presence of the German troops who stood and watched the rampaging of the terrorists. Obviously the Albanians' goal was not to clash with KFOR but simply to expel the Serbs and destroy their property and holy shrines. During the course of that night and the next day, March 18, 2004, the Albanians systematically looted and set fire to Serb homes in Potkaljaja where the smaller churches of the Unmercenary Healers (Sts. Cosmas and Damian) and St. Panteleimon were also set on fire. The entire historic Serbian quarter of Prizren was reduced to ashes. According to the testimony of some 30 Serbs evacuated by international forces before the frenzied crowd to the German military base where they remain today, heading the crowd were members of the Kosovo Police Service who forcibly expelled the Serbs from their homes, not even allowing them to take the most basic necessities. Some of the elderly Serbs were brutally beaten by KPS members and subsequently received emergency treatment at Prizren Hospital *(See attached "Report from Peć, Belo Polje, Dečani, Djakovica, Prizren, Holy Archangels and Štrpce")*.

In Djakovica several hundred Albanians began to gather on the afternoon of March 17. At about 5:00 p.m. they

attacked members of UNMIK police, torching and destroying police vehicles. In the evening the Albanian masses attacked the Serbian Orthodox church of the Most Holy Mother of God, where five elderly Serbian women lived in the parish home under the protection of Italian soldiers. The soldiers opened fire on the attackers and wounded nine Albanians. However, since no reinforcements came, the soldiers were forced to evacuate the Serbian grandmothers at the last moment under a hail of stones and Molotov cocktails to the nearby Italian military base and then to Visoki Dečani Monastery, where they are presently located. After the departure of the soldiers and elderly women, members of the Kosovo Police Service were the first to enter the churchyard in Djakovica and open the doors for the crowd. During the course of the night, the church and parish home were not only burned down but also completely leveled with the ground. Later the same night and the next day several thousand Albanians systematically removed the stones of the destroyed church as well as the stones of the church of the Holy Trinity which had been blown up in 1999. In the meanwhile, Albanian extremists dynamited the church of St. Lazarus in Piškote near Djakovica and the church of St. Elijah on the hill near the village of Bistražin south of Djakovica. Not only was the church in Piškote completely obliterated but the Orthodox cemetery in the village was also destroyed.

In the town of Dečani the gathering of the Albanian masses began on March 17 and set fire to several UNMIK vehicles. Prior to this, at about 10:00 a.m. six mortar grenades landed in immediate proximity to Visoki Dečani Monastery. In the nearby city of Peć, after rampaging in front of the UNMIK building, several thousand Albanians then attacked the neighboring Serbian returnee village of Belo Polje, setting fire to all the recently restored Serb houses there, as well as the restored parish home where the Serb returnees were staying. Approximately 20 Serbs were evacuated at the last moment by Italian KFOR, which arrived too late to prevent the destruction of the recently restored village. Several Serbs sustained injuries as they ran from the burning parish home to the Italian transporters. The church, which had also been demolished and torched earlier, was again demolished and torched on the inside but the roof construction remained whole.

On the second day, March 18, 2004, the violence of the Albanian terrorists continued albeit with somewhat reduced fury. Most of the damage done was in the area of central Kosovo. In the evening on March 17 the old church of St. Nicholas in Priština was attacked and burned to the ground together with the parish home and an adjoining building used for baptism. The remaining dozen or so Priština Serbs, including Orthodox priest Miroslav Popadić, were evacuated from the flames of the parish home at the last moment while the crowd rejoiced over the spectacle of the church in flames. In Obilić, too, an organized campaign of destruction of Serb houses and apartments began during the course of March 18. Serbian houses were largely set aflame by Albanian children, who were led out of their classrooms in organized fashion and armed with Molotov cocktails. By the end of the day, 90 Serbian houses, 40 apartments and some 30 other buildings had been reduced to rubble. The Albanians also burned down the unfinished Serbian Orthodox church in downtown Obilić by filling it with automobile tires and setting them on fire.

The torching of Serb houses continued on March 18 in the area of Kosovo Polje, too, where over 100 Serb homes were destroyed in two days. There were also new attacks in Lipljan but without tragic consequences. In Podujevo that afternoon a mob of about 500 Albanians attacked the Serbian church of St. Andrew the First-Called above the town, which was under the protection of Czech KFOR troopsAfter the soldiers received orders to retreat, the crowd attacked the church, setting fire to it and using dynamite to blow up the altar (sanctuary) of the church. The Albanian masses then began a horrific celebration at the nearby Serbian cemetery where, according to the eyewitness testimony of Czech soldiers, they tore open the Serbian tombs and scattered the bones in them, destroying crosses and grave markers with infernal hatred and demonic fury. In addition to the church, the bell tower was also blown up and a 1,200-kilogram bell, a gift to the church from King Aleksandar Karadjordjević, was stolen. Soon thereafter Czech soldiers found the bell in an Albanian house and learned that the Albanians planned to sell it for 32,000 euros. On the second day, March 18, the Serbian cemetery in Uroševac was also systematically desecrated and destroyed. Three more Orthodox churches were also destroyed in the same area. Not far from Orahovac, the Albanians torched the church of St. Kyriake in Brnjača near Bela Crkva. At the same time the parish home was set on fire as confirmed by a KFOR report.

In the town of Dečani in the afternoon of March 18 a group of several hundred Albanians headed in the direction of Dečani Monastery with the intent of attacking the monastery. The mayor of Dečani and members of international police who deterred them from the attack stopped the crowd at the last moment. At the same time, as already mentioned, a mass of Albanians also headed in the direction of the Serb village of Svinjare located between Mitrovica and Vučitrn, some 600 meters from a French military base. Although KFOR and international police at first tried to prevent the Albanians from entering the village, they received orders to evacuate all the Serbs from the village instead. The Albanian mass then entered the village unobstructed, completely looted it and set fire to 150 Serbian houses. The bodies of two Serbs were later found in the rubble of the burning houses. In their fury the Albanians even killed domestic animals, especially pigs.

In the town of Vučitrn itself the Albanian crowd attacked the church of St. Elijah and set fire to the church and the parish hall, ending its pyre of destruction by dese-

crating the Orthodox cemetery. The church, already destroyed earlier, was completely unprotected by either members of KFOR or police. At the same time, another group of Albanians forced its way into a settlement of Roma and Ashkalia and began to torch and destroy their homes. More than 200 Ashkalis were evacuated.

On the afternoon on March 18 several thousand Albanians headed in the direction of Devič Monastery near Srbica with the intent of destroying the monastery. The French soldiers who have been protecting this holy shrine for five years panicked and ordered the sisters to evacuate, i.e. they literally grabbed them by the arm and fled with them by helicopter in the direction of Mitrovica. The monastery was left completely unprotected and full of the equipment of French KFOR. The Albanians first completely looted the monastery, removing everything that could be taken, including some parts of the wooden roof construction on the church; they then set fire to the church and all buildings in the monastery complex. The attackers used pickaxes to break the marble cover on the tomb of St. Ioannichius of Devič and tore apart the tomb's contents, finally setting fires around and inside the tomb. The Devič church was completely destroyed by flames with all sacred objects inside; the Holy Table was shattered. The walls still bear the acronyms of the UČK (Kosovo Liberation Army), the KZK (Kosovo Protection Corps), the ANA (Albanian National Army) and other Albanian terrorist organizations and groups. The looting of the monastery continued for days and everything surviving the initial attack was taken. In the meanwhile, the Bishop of Raška-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija managed through a last minute intervention with the French KFOR command to prevent international troops from leaving Sokolica Monastery after the nuns had already been forcibly evacuated. After Bishop Artemije together with Bishop Atanasije of Zahumlje and Herzegovina (retired) pleaded and received assurances from KFOR that Sokolica Monastery would be protected, the sisterhood was returned and the evacuated nuns from Devič Monastery were also brought there. Unfortunately, French KFOR and its chaplains gave false assurances that Devič Monastery had not been torched. It was not until the evening of Sunday, March 20, that members of the Church escorted by international police were able to visit the burned ruins of Devič Monastery, and see and photograph the results of the terrible Albanian pogrom against this holy shrine.

The following day, March 19, the Serbian church in the village of Živinjane near Prizren was also dynamited.

Therefore, the violence carried out against the Serbian population, its holy shrines and homes on March 17–19, 2004, was an organized, pre-planned element of the general Albanian strategy of completely ethnically cleansing Kosovo and Metohija. The Albanian extremists and their political mentors showed in practice that the idea of an independent Kosovo hides a monstrous plan for the creation of an ethnically pure territory where no Orthodox Christian holy shrine will be spared and no trace of centuries-old Serbian culture and spirituality tolerated. After five years of silent observation of ethnic cleansing during which 112 Orthodox churches were permitted to be destroyed, KFOR and UNMIK experienced complete collapse and ruin during these two days. All laws, institutions, military and civilian organizations ceased to exist. Armed gangs torching and burning, attacking the unprotected Serb population ruled Kosovo and Metohija. The international mission found itself not just in the role of the silent observer but accomplice to ethnic cleansing because many incidents showed that its goal was not the protection of the Serb population, its property and holy shrines.

Two months after the March 2004 pogrom little in Kosovo and Metohija has changed for the better. The Serbs who were expelled still have not returned to their homes nor has the restoration of their houses even begun. Churches and monasteries still lie in ruins although the determined monks from Holy Archangels Monastery and nuns from Devič Monastery returned a month after the destruction of their respective monasteries to their burned remains to continue life in portable containers and tents. The main organizers and inciters of this terrorist and chauvenist pogrom have neither been found nor arrested. At the time of this writing, police managed to detain approximately 260 perpetrators directly involved in acts of vandalism. However, no Albanian leader, municipal administrator, minister of representative of the Kosovo provisional government has yet resigned. No one has been held accountable, even though it is common knowledge that Kosovo Albanian leaders, major media and the majority of mayors not only contributed to the atmosphere of a mass lynching by their war-mongering, nationalistic declarations but in many cases directly participated in the organization of the attacks.

In this March pogrom the Serbian community experienced yet another painful blow from which it will be difficult to recover. Most Serbs lack all confidence in the willingness of KFOR and UNMIK to protect the remaining Serbs. Many Serbs who were expelled directly accused the Kosovo police of taking part in the crimes but not one official from this organization has been held accountable. After March 17, 2004, the gradual departure of Serbs continued. It is very difficult to expect Serbs to return to their destroyed homes in Obilić, Prizren, Svinjare and Lipljan unless there is a change in the policy of the international community in Kosovo and Metohija. Taking into account that to date the reaction of the international community has been limited to rhetoric and that the number of KFOR troops has not been significantly increased, there is reason to seriously doubt the sincerity of preventing further ethnic cleansing and the destruction of the Serbs and their cultural heritage. Belgrade's reaction has also been chiefly limited to verbal condemnation and providing humanitarian assistance, which arrives in Kosovo and Metohija with difficulty.

The Serbian government finally presented a plan for local Serbian autonomy in Kosovo and Metohija which is an important attempt to advance the position and rights of the Serb population; however, under existing security conditions such a plan is difficult if not impossible to implement as KFOR does not effectively control the entire territory of the Province. Albanian terrorism is so well developed that two months after the March pogrom UNMIK practically no longer exists. In the meanwhile, attacks on (Serbs and Serbian property continue, several more homes in Lipljan have been torched and there has been an increase in theft of Serbian property and livestock).

The general assessment is that a new escalation of violence against Serbs is not only possible but also inescapable, and that without a radical change in the policy of the international community toward Kosovo and Metohija the survival of Serbs in this region is questionable. It is completely absurd that a territory where the international community has invested enormous sums of money and deployed strong NATO forces for the purpose of protecting multiethnicity and democracy will become the ethnically purest and most lawless part of the European continent. The policy of concession in the face of Albanian extremism and terrorism will boomerang on the international community, especially the European states because erroneous policy has created the foundation for the building of a terrorist state which will become a base for the destabilization of the entire Balkan peninsula and European continent.

* * *

LIST OF CHURCHES AND MONASTERIES DESTROYED OR DAMAGED DURING THE MARCH 2004 POGROM

Prizren

All Prizren churches and other buildings owned by the Serbian Orthodox Church were destroyed on March 17–18. Further attacks, looting and destruction occurred in the days that followed.

1. *Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša* (14th century) burned interior, frescos from the 12th-14th centuries heavily damaged, altar section desecrated, Holy Table broken, parts of the architecture, especially decorations around windows and openings, heavily damaged.

2. *Church of Christ the Savior* (14th century) burned, frescos damaged.

3. *Cathedral of the Holy Great-Martyr George* (1856) burned and dynamited.

4. *Church of St. Nicholas* (Tutić's church, 14th century) burned interior, desecrated.

5. *Church of St. George* (Runović's church, 16th century) burned interior, frescos from 14th century seriously damaged.

6. *Church of St. Kyriake* (14th century, later rebuilt) burned, Potkaljaja.

7. *Church of St. Panteleimon* (14th century, later rebuilt) burned, Potkaljaja.

8. *Church of Sts. Cosmas and Damian* (14th century, later rebuilt) burned, Potkaljaja.

9. *Church of St. Kyriake*, Živinjane near Prizren, dynamited. (KFOR/UNMIK report of March 19th: An explosion completely destroyed the Orthodox church in the village of Živinjane).

10. *Holy Archangels Monastery* (14th century), looted and burned in the presence of German soldiers who failed to protect it.

\- *Seminary of Sts. Cyril and Methodius* (UNMIK/KFOR Report March 17—Orthodox Seminary in town center & 3 Orthodox churches set on fire.)

\- *Bishop's residence in Prizren* (UNMIK/KFOR Report—March 18: Archbishop seat, Archangel Monastery, an Orthodox Church and Orthodox Seminary set on fire & destroyed). In addition to the Bishop's residence, another church building was destroyed which was inhabited by the sexton.

Orahovac

11. *Church of St. Kyriake* (1852), Brnjača near Orahovac 1852 (UNMIK/KFOR Report: March 18—Orthodox Church set on fire & destroyed in village of Brnjača). After the most recent visit by a Council of Europe delegation, it was established that the church was not burned but only forcibly entered. The parish home was burned to the ground.

Djakovica

12. *Church of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God* (16th-19th centuries), burned together with the old and the new parish homes on March 17, subsequently leveled with the ground.

13. *Holy Trinity Cathedral* (Two bell towers that survived the dynamiting of the church in summer 1999 were leveled with the ground on March 17. In subsequent days the Albanians systematically removed the remnants of the church and built a park in its location. UNMIK /KFOR Report March 18—Rioters remove debris of destroyed Orthodox Church with trucks & trailers approx 5,000 K-Albanians participate).

14. *Church of St. Lazarus*, Piškote near Djakovica, damaged in 1999 and 2001, now completely destroyed together with the nearby cemetery. Parish home also damaged.

15. *Church of St. Elijah* near Bistražin, damaged in 1999, completely destroyed on March 17–18 by the planting of powerful explosives.

Srbica

16. *Devič Monastery* (15th century) burned to the ground, tomb of St. Ioannichius of Devič opened and desecrated. The Albanians also set fires around and inside the tomb.

(UNMIK/KFOR Report March 18: 2,000 protestors gather and move toward Devič Monastery, Five K-Serbian nuns evacuated from area, Violent protestors set Monastery on fire). In the monastery complex about 20 different monastery utility buildings were destroyed (residential quarters, warehouses, barns, etc.).

Peć

17. *Church of St. John the Forerunner* (the so-called Metropolitanate with the parish home and priests' apartments), set on fire according to international sources on the scene. According to the latest available photographs, the church walls are intact even though the interior is completed destroyed. Signs of fire are visible.

18. *Church of the Most Holy Mother of God*, Belo Polje near Peć, set on fire in summer 1999. Restored at the end of 2003 together with about 20 returnee homes. Now again damaged by arson even though the church walls and roof have not sustained further damage. In addition to the church, the parish home was also set on fire.

Uroševac

19. *Cathedral of St. Uroš*, Uroševac, (UNMIK/KFOR Report: March 17—3 hand grenades thrown at Serbian Orthodox church—church set on fire, first time), at least 19 KFOR soldiers and policemen wounded defending the church, destroyed city cemetery (UNMIK/KFOR Report March 18 1,500 K-Albanians rampage—burn Orthodox Church & up to 5 K-Serb houses in town K-Albanian crowd attempts to set Orthodox Church on fire in K-Serb village of Talinovce Church was set to fire (1749 hrs)—5 K-Albanian males arrested). According to the latest information, the church walls are still standing although most of the interior is damaged by fire. The church is currently closed behind massive metal doors and under KFOR protection.

20. *Church of St. Elijah*, village of Varoš, destroyed together with local cemetery KFOR soldiers abandoned it (local international sources).

21. *Church of Sts. Peter and Paul* in Talinovci set on fire, Orthodox cemetery destroyed.

22. *Church of the Most Holy Mother of God* in the village of Sovtović, destroyed together with Orthodox cemetery (local international sources).

(On March 20, Athens media confirmed that three churches near Uroševac protected by Greek soldiers were left unprotected before an enormous mob of armed Albanians and that some Greek soldiers had been wounded in clashes with armed Albanians).

Kosovska Kamenica

23. Church in Donja Šišašnica near Kosovska Kamenica (local sources from Kamenica). Church sustained minimal damage.

The Church of the Most Holy Mother of God,
located in Mušutište, built in 1315; Albanian extremists destroyed it in 1999 (see the photo below).

The Orthodox church in Kamenica was stoned and the glass on several windows was broken. Several nearby Serb houses were destroyed.

Štimlje

24. *Church of the Holy Archangel Michael* in Štimlje, built in 1920 (on the hill above the town) (UNMIK/KFOR Report: March 18: K-Serbian house & Orthodox Church set on fire) According to the latest information, the walls of the church are undamaged although the interior was further damaged and the icons destroyed. The bell tower was set on fire back in January 2004.

Priština

25. *Church of St. Nicholas* (16th century, restored beginning of 19th century) in Priština (UNMIK/KFOR Report: March

18—Rioters attack Old Orthodox Church in Taslixhe—automatic gunfire in area Orthodox priest & 5 K-Serbian families evacuated by KFOR from Old Orthodox Church SPU officer shot & injured during attempt to secure Old Orthodox Church Orthodox Church, UN Habitat office & 3 UNMIK Police vehicles set on fire). The church was set on fire together with the parish home; destroyed with it was a valuable engraved iconostasis, dozens of icons and the entire church archive (confirmed by Priština parish priest Fr. Miroslav Popadić). Near the church two old tombs were desecrated and broken and human bones in them can be seen.

Destroyed Orthodox cemetery in Vučitrn in 2004

Kosovo Polje

26. *Church of St. Nicholas* in Kosovo Polje, interior burned and desecrated. The church was built in 1940. The building is still standing although according to local Serb sources and eyewitness accounts the church interior is quite damaged.

27. *Church of St. Catherine* in Bresje near Kosovo Polje, broken into and desecrated. The church was recently also looted.

Vučitrn

28. *Church of St. Elijah* (19th century), looted and interior partially destroyed in June 1999, now completely burned. (UNMIK/KFOR Report March 17: Orthodox Church set on fire in Vučitrn town). The Orthodox cemetery next to the church was also destroyed together with the parish home and church utility buildings.

Obilić

29. *Church of St. Michael* in Obilić, newly built. Albanians set automobile tires on fire inside the church. (KFOR/UNMIK report of March 18: Obilić, Orthodox church, numerous Serb houses and apartments set on fire). The church walls remain intact but fire and high temperatures have damaged the interior.

Kosovska Mitrovica

30. *Church of St. Sava Church in southern Mitrovica* was set on fire twice in a row. (UNMIK/KFOR Report—March 18: Molotov cocktails thrown into perimeter of KFOR-guarded Orthodox Church in South, Church & several neighboring houses set on fire Local Fire Brigade fight house fires but not Church, which is severely damaged). In addition to the church, the attackers also set fire to the priest's home located in the churchyard.

Podujevo

31. *Church of St. Andrew the First-called* in Podujevo, built in 1929, destroyed on March 18. Czech media confirmed that Czech soldiers were forced to leave the church, which was destroyed together with the cemetery. A Czech officer confirmed in *The Prague Post* that he was deeply shocked by the fact that the Albanians dug up the human remains of the Serbs from their graves and scattered the bones (KFOR/UNMIK report of March 18: Orthodox church set on fire in Podujevo). According to photographs, the east wing of St. Andrew was dynamited and the bell tower was completely destroyed by explosives along with the wall enclosing the church.

Church of Saint Elijah, Vučitrn, 19th century.
Church interior after destruction in 2004.

Church of saint Elijah, Vučitrn, 19th century.
Church exterior after the fire in 2004.

Condition of the frescos on the west wall of the narthex before the fire, photo from 2002

Condition of the frescos on the west wall, and upper structure of the narthex after the fire in 2004

Heavily damaged fresco of Saint Sava, Saint Simeon Nemanja and King Stefan the First-Crowned on the west wall of the narthex of the Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša (1308–1314). On March 17–18, 2004, the Church was burned inside by ethnic Albanians, frescos from the 12th–14th centuries were heavily damaged, altar section desecrated, Holy Table broken, parts of the architecture, especially decorations around windows and openings, heavily damaged. With its sublime architecture and fresco art it remains a living witness of the centuries old Serb Christian Orthodox presence in the city of Prizren. The Church of Virgin of Ljeviša is listed on the UNESCO World Culture Heritage as the extremely endangered Serbian Medieval monument of exceptional importance in Kosovo and Metohija.

The Mother of God with Christ the *Nourisher* after the fire in 2004

Images of the suffering of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, 2004.

The church of the Holy Mother of God—Bogorodica Ljeviška in Prizren,
an old Byzantine temple, the seat of the Bishops of Prizren, renewed by Holy King Milutin

V

SERBIAN CHRISTIAN CITIES AND HOLY SHRINES OF KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

Panesova
Donau
Salæa Superior
SARALIENSIS
Varesia
Provincia
Salæa Inferior
SANGIACATUS
COMIT. BELGRADENSIS
SANGIA
CATUS
Campus
Merlinius
et
Cassovius
Pristina
Podrima
Provincia
Narenta
Golfo di Narenta
Salioncello
Canal di Stagno
Trebigna
Ragusa
VENETIA
ALBANIA
Antivari
Alessio
SCOPIA
USCHUP
Prisrendi
Golfo di la Drino
C. Rodoni
Pietro Bianca
Milliaria Germanica Communia
Milliaria Italica sive Geometrica

European Maps of Kosovo and Metohija in Old Serbia from the 16th to 20th Century

Mirčeta Vemić

Introduction

Old Serbia, with its core areas of Kosovo and Metohija, is the historical-geographical, cultural and political term describing the territory of Serbia before the Ottoman invasion of the Balkans and its fall to the Ottoman power (1459). The term is linked to the reign of the Serbian Emperor Stefan Dušan (king 1331–1346, emperor 1346–1355), when Serbia was the strongest state in the Balkans, and for the period prior to the rule of Stefan Dušan, for the Kingdom of Serbia under King Milutin (1282–1321) and Stefan Dečanski (1321–1331).[1] After the partial liberation of northern areas of Serbia with Belgrade as its capital, and the establishment of a vassal Principality of Serbia within Ottoman Empire (1830), the term of Old Serbia (Old Servia, Vieille Serbie, Altserbien) was increasingly used, describing those areas of Serbia which remained under direct Ottoman rule, outside the borders of new Serbian principality. The non-liberated areas during the 19th century, or "Old Serbia was taken as a country of the ethnic core and center of the medieval Serbian state of the Nemanjić period," and consisted of "regions: Stara Raška [Rascia], Kosovo proper,[2] Metohija,[3] the confluence of the Binačka Morava and the northern Vardar valley with Skoplje" (Stojančević, 1997). The term of Old Serbia, which was already established in the local geographic, historiographical, travels, military, political and other literature, during the first half of the 19th century, was also introduced by European authors into their works, especially travel writers, reporters, missionaries, diplomats and scholars, who very objectively presented and vividly evoked the ethnic, religious, social and political conditions in these areas, still under the Ottoman domination.[4]

Kosovo and Metohija have immense importance in Serbian history and tradition. The Battle of Kosovo waged against the Ottomans in 1389 decisively marked the spiritual legacy and the historical memory of the Serbian people. After the Battle of Kosovo, in the Serb epic tradition was introduced another counting of years "before Kosovo" and "after Kosovo" whilst a great cycle of epic songs gradually emerged through the popular culture, known as, the "Kosovo cycle." Kosovo and Metohija area was considered as the most cherished part of Serbia, not only due

[1] Kosovo and Metohija (10,887 km^2) are the two neighboring regional entities that are very different in structural, anthropo-geographical and functional regards, but they are politically and administratively united since 1945 as an autonomous region of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, and by the Constitution in 1963 as the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija. In 1968 name Metohija was formally erased from the name of the Province; it was again reintroduced by the Serbian Constitution of 1990.

[2] Name of Kosovo is in etymological sense a Serbian term for the blackbird (Turdus merula). According to Atanasije Urošević the name "appeared after the battle between the Serbian and Ottoman armies in 1389. For medieval Serbia, until the said battle, this area with a suspicious exception, was not even once mentioned under the name of Kosovo" (Urošević 1965). Foreign writers and cartographers have the word translated as Campus merule, Champ de merles or Amselfeld, while older titles that preceded the name of Kosovo, were in fact the names of certain parts of Kosovo, such as Lipljan, Sitnica, Lab, Obica, Nerodimlje and others.

[3] The name Metohija derives from the Greek word *metochion*—monastic property or at first monastic agricultural cooperatives, and "given the extraordinary density and concentration of the monastery and church appendages (Metohija) referred to in the royal charters (official documents with gold seals) from Stefan Nemanja to the last Nemanjić, as well as the charters of princes, despots and great landlords of Hrebeljanović, Lazarević, Branković and others, the whole area of the Metohija-Prizren valley got the name Metohija" (Radovanović, 2004).

[4] Among the major ones are Ami Boué and Victor Bérard (France), Joseph Müller, Johan Georg von Hahn, Petar Kukolj (Austria), Aleksandar Hilferding, Ivan Jastrebov (Russia), A. P. Irby and Miss Muir Mackenzie, William Forsythe (England) and others.

to the growing legend woven around the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, but as the center of Serbian political, religious and cultural life. Priština, Prizren and Vučitrn were the capitals of King Milutin, Emperors Dušan and Uroš, as well as a great landowner Vuk Branković, while Konstantin Bodin, the King of Zeta, was probably crowned in Prizren.

Around the Patriarchate of Peć as a seat of the Serbian Archbishops and Patriarchs, in this province near 1,300 Christian, Orthodox churches were built, among which were royal endowments with important spiritual significance, artistic beauty and original architecture: the monasteries of Gračanica, Visoki Dečani, The Mother of God of Ljeviša, Banjska, Holy Archangels and others. There were many churches and monasteries destroyed during the Ottoman rule, but more recently, in particular after June 1999 they have still been systematically, massively, destroyed by Albanian separatists, despite the presence of UN peace forces in the Province of Kosovo and Metohija. Ethnic Albanians in the province, however, were quite systematic in effort to completely erase the signs of existence of the Serbs and their cultural monuments and spiritual strongholds on their sacred land.

Medieval Serbian Princedom, Kingdom and Empire, centered in Kosovo and Metohija, was presented throughout history in all major European maps, including the period of Ottoman rule (1459-1912). Western and Central European geographers and cartographers (Dutch, Venetian, French, Austrian, German, British) and local authors wrote in their maps the name of Serbia (Servia, Zevia, Servien, Serbie, Serbien), by which along with other cartographic content: rivers, mountains, settlements, borders, coats of arms, etc. they marked the existence of the medieval Serbia.

Materials

The analysis of forty old (historical) and historiographical maps, was previously published in 2007 in the form of the atlas entitled *An Atlas of Old Serbia—European Maps of Kosovo and Metohija*. These maps were made by leading European cartographers with high state official titles, such as "the Cosmographer of the Republic," "the Royal Geographer," "the Imperial Geographer," then military architects, General Staff officers, Princes, consuls, Professors, scientists, etc., which assumes a high degree of their knowledge and seriousness in the authorization of the maps. In the same line there have been a number of maps that were done by the local geographers and cartographers, for example, Jovan Cvijić, Spiridon Gopčević et al. The mutual territorial ethnic, demographic and religious relations between the Serbs and Albanians can clearly be perceived from these maps as a reliable historical source.

Maps in the atlas are placed in chronological order. They are mostly in smaller scales, meaning that they show the more expanding spatial width than the territory of Serbia, with the Serbian, Slovenian and other neighboring countries in the Balkans and the Pannonian Plain. In addition to their general purpose of detecting and displaying the different geographical content of framed area, older time layers were presented on many maps, which in general increases the content and highlights their historical legacy, from which it can be seen in total real intentions, interests, aspirations and objectives for which they were made. The purpose and method of their preparation is often mentioned in the title of the maps or in specially decorated cartouches, in various titles, emblems and inscriptions, or from information about the publisher, printer and the time of edition of the map. Certain maps were dedicated to individuals, for example "to true aristocrat by birth, education and clarity of mind," while most were made for general purposes, for example (intended to) "soldier, mathematician and friend of cosmographic association," for a detailed military geographical description or quite specifically "for the purposes of the present war."

Atlas consists of maps from seven European countries: the Netherlands (3), Venice (2), France (2), Austria (8), Germany (9), Great Britain (3) and Serbia (13), their main cartographic, state and publishing centers. All maps, although published in different places, are very similar and consistent by content, because they were relied on each other as cartographic sources, which is evident by the similarity seen in the data recorded on most of them. This generally agreed cartographic spatial continuity evolved relatively uniformly over the time period from the 16th to the 20th century. By collecting and adding new data and geographic knowledge of the Balkan countries and their introduction to the maps, with the correction of old errors, there has been significant progress in raising their geographical authenticity. Also, their geometric accuracy increased by introducing the mathematical map projections, which greatly improved the general quality of maps. These maps, systematized by source of origin, stating the chronological ordinal numeral in the atlas are:

Dutch maps

– Abraham Ortelij: *Map of Pannonia and old Illyricum*, [1:2,000,000]. Atverpen, 1590. – *Pannoniae, et Illyrici veteris Tabvla* / Ex conatibus geographicis Abrahami Ortelij Antverpiani, [1:2.000.000]. Antverpiani, 1590. (1).

– Gerard Mercator – William Blau: *Wallachia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Byzantium*, [1:2,150,000]. Amsterdam, [1648]. – *Walachia, Servia, Bvlgaria, Romania* / Per Gerardum Mercatorem. Guljelmus Blaeu excudebat, [1:2.150.000]. [Amstelaedami], [1648]. (3).

– Johan Blaeu: *Today's Illyricum* ... [1:915.000]. Amsterdam, [1662–1665]. – *Illyricvm Hodiernvm, Quod Scriptores communiter Sclavoniam, Itali Schiavoniam nuncupare solent, in Dalmatiam, Croatiam, Bosniam, et Slavoniam distinguitur. Sed cum ejus majorem partem Turcæ optineant in Præfecturas eorum more Sanzacatus dictas divisum est, reliquum aut*em *Veneti, Vngari, et Ragusini*

tenent. Sanzacatus sunt Bosna, Residentia Baßæ; Poxega; Cernik; Bihak; Lika et Carbava; Clissa; Herzegowina. / Ioannes Blaeu, [1:915.000]. [Amstelaedami], [1662–1665]. (4).

Venetian maps

– Maria Vincenzo Coronelli: *The course of the rivers Drim and Bojana in Dalmatia*, [1:315,000]. Venice, 1688. – *Corso delli fiumi Drino, e Boiana nella Dalmatia* / descrito Dal Padre M[a]r[ia] Coronelli Cosmografo della Seren[issima] Republica di Venetia, [1:315.000]. 1688. (5).

– Giacomo Cantelli from Vignola: *The Kingdom of Serbia, otherwise known as Rascia*, [1:470,000]. Rome, 1689. – *Il Regno della Servia detta altrimenti Rascia* [1:470.000], descritto Su l'Esemplare delle Carte piu esatte e, con la diretione delle pui recenti notizie da Giacomo Cantelli da Vignola. Suddito; e Geografo del Sereniss: Sig: Duca di Modena e dato in Luce da Gio; Giacomo de Rossi dale. Sue Stampe in Roma alla Pace con priu. Del. Som. Pont, 1689. (6).

French maps

– Nicholas Sanson: *The course of the Danube from its source to its mouth*, [1:1.950.000]. Paris, 1693. – *Le cours du Danube Depuis sa Source jusq'à ses Embouchures.* Dreseé sur les mémoires les plus Nouveaux du P. Coroneli et autres, Par le Sr. Sanson Géographe du Roy, [1:1.950.000]. Paris: chez H. Iaillot, 1693. (7).

– [*Serbia*] [1:2.250.000]. Paris, [the end of the 19th century]. – [*Serbie*], [1:2.250.000]. Imprimerie générale de C. Lahure Paris. (28).

Austrian maps

– Carl Schütz: *New map of the Kingdom of Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia and Slavonia together with the border provinces…* , [1:1,1000,000]. Vienna: 1788 – *Neuste karte der Koenigreiche Bosnien Servien Croatien und Slavonien Samt den angrænzenden Provinzen Temeswar, Dalmatien, Herzegowina, Ragusa, Steyermark, Kærnthen, Krain, Friaul, Gradiska, und Istrien, einem grosen Theil von Ungarn, Siebenbűrgen, Walachei, Bulgarien, Albanien, Macedonien, und einem Stűsk des Kirchenstaats und Kreichs Neapel* / Nach den besten Originalzeichnungen Charten, und Beschreibungen entworfen von Hern Carl von Schütz, [1:1.1000.000]. Vienna: Artaria, 1788. (15).

– Franz Johann Joseph von Reilly: *The Kingdom of Serbia*, [1:1,440,000]. [Vienna] [1791]. – *Das Koenigreich Serwien*, Nro. 5. / Franz Johann Joseph von Reilly. In: Schauplaty der fünf theile der welt, [1:1.440.000]. [Wien], [I. Albrecht sculpsit], [1791]. (16).

– Franz Johann Joseph von Reilly: *The northern part of the Kingdom of Albania with the District of Montenegro*, [1:400,000]. [Vienna]: [1791]. – *Der Noerdliche Theil des Koenigreichs Albanien mit dem Distrikte Montenegro*, Nro. 21./ Franz Johann Joseph von Reilly, [1:400.000]. [Wien]: 1791. (17).

– Meyer Herman Julius: *The European Turkey*, 1: 3,000,000. Leipzig–Vienna: 1864. – *Die Europaeische Turkey* / Meyer Herman Julius Meyer, 1:3.000.000. In: Meyer's hand atlas, Leipzig–Wien: 1864. (21).

– Carl Sax: *Ethnographic map of European Turkey and its Provinces, at the beginning of 1877*. Vienna: 1878. – *Ethnographische karte der Europäischen Türkei und ihrer Dependenzen zu Anfang des Jhres 1877.* / von Carl Sax k. u. k. österreichisch-ungarischer Consul in Adrianopel. Wien: 1878. (23).

– *Political division, nationalities and religions. Appendix № 3 for a detailed description of Sandžak, Pljevlje and Kosovo vilayet*, 1:750.000. Vienna, 1899. – *Polit. Eintheilung, Nationalitäten und Religionen 1:750,000. Beilage № 3. zur Detailbeschreibung des Sandžaks Plevlje und des Vilajets Kosovo* (Mit 8 Beilagen und 10 Tafeln.) Als Manuscript gedruckt. Wien:1899. (27).

– Karl Peucker: *Macedonia, Old Serbia and Albania*, 1:864,000. Vienna: 1912. – *Makedonien, Altserbien und Albanien* / Barbeitet von Dr. Karl Peucker, 1:864.000. Wien: 1912. (33).

– *Ethnic and linguistic map of Central Europe, with Italy and the Balkan Peninsula*, 1:3,000,000. Vienna, [1917]. – *Völker – und Sprachenkarte von Mittel-Europa nebst Italien und der Balkanhalbinsel.* Nach den neuesten statistischen Veröffenflichungen bearbeitet. / G. Freytags. 1:3.000.000. Wien: Druck und Verlag der Kartogr. Austalt G. Freytag Berndt, Ges. m. b. H. [1917]. (38).

German maps

– Martin Waldeseemüller: *Modern map of Bosnia, Serbia, Greece and Slavonia*. Strasbourg: 1513. – *Tabula moderna Bossinae, Serviae, Graeciae et Sclavoniae* / Martin Waldeseemüller: 1513. (2).

– Johann Baptist Homann: *The Danube Rivers (shown here as it flows from the city of Belgrade, through the Black Sea to Constantinople) the lower course, where Transylvania, Wallachia, Moldavia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania and Bessarabia are shown with neighbouring areas*, [1:2,000,000]. Nuremberg, [1710]. – *Anubii Fluminis (hic ab urbe Belgrado per Mare Nigrum usque Constantinopolim defluentis exhibiti) pars infima in qua Transylvania, Walachia, Moldavia, Bulgaria, Servia, Romania et Bessarabia cum vicinis Regionibus ostenduntur* / à Ioh. Bapt. Homanno, [1:2.000.000]. Norimbergæ: [1710]. (8).

– Johann Matthias Hase: *Map of Hungary in the broad sense and the old or methodical complex of kingdoms: Hungary in a narrower sense, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Kumanija; principality: Transylvania; despotism: Wallachia, Moldavia…*, [1:2,500,000]. [Nuremberg], 1744. – *Hvngarie ampliori significatu et veteris vel Methodicae complexae Regna: Hungariae propriae, Cro-*

atiae Dalmatiae, Bosniae, Serviae, Bulgariae, Cvmaniae, Principatum: Transsylvaniae, Despotatus: Walachiae Moldaviae [exclusis ab eadem alienatis Galitia et Lvdomiriria] in suas Provincias ac partes divisae et quoad Imperantes ex Avstiacis, Tvrcis et Venetis distinctae ... Tabvla exrecentissimis pariter et antiquissimis relationibus et monumentis concinnata ac secundum leges Projections Stereographicae legitimae descripta a I. M. Hasio M. PP. Curantibus Homannianis, 1:2.500.000, [Norimbergæ], 1744. (9).

– Peter Conrad Monath: *Dalmatia and the surrounding regions, Croatia, Bosnia, Slavonia, Serbia, Albania accurately described,* [1:1,200,000]. Nuremberg, [1750]. – *Dalmatia et regiones adjacentes, Croatia, Bosnia, Slavonia, Servia, Albania accurate descriptae,* [1:1.200.000]. Normembergæ Petr Conr[ad] Monath excudit: [1750]. (10).

– Johann Baptist Homann: *Turkish Empire in Europe, Asia and Africa* [1:12,000,000]. Nuremberg, [1750]. – *Imperium Turcicum in Europa, Asia et Africa, Regiones Proprias, Tributaries, Clientelares sicut et omnes ejusdem Beglirbegatus seu Præfecturas Generales exhibens.* / Sumtibus Io. Baptista Homanni, [1:12.000.000]. [Norimbergæ]: [1750]. (11).

– August Gottlieb Boehm – Homann's heirs: *The latest map of the Danube with the surrounding kingdoms, as well as whole Greece and the archipelago*, [1:44,000,000]. Nuremberg: 1766. – *Totius Danubii cum Adjacentibus Regnis nec non Totius Græciæ et Archipelagi.* Novissima Tabula ex recentissimis supsidüs concinnata et ad Leges Projectionis Stereographicæ legitime / reducta ab Augusto Gottlob Boehmio electoris Saxoniæ Cohortis Architecton..., [1:44.000.000]. Norimbergae..., 1766. (12).

– Tobiæ Conrad Lotter: *New Greece and the Aegean Sea with Archipelago ...* [1:1,650,000]. [Augsburg], [1770]. – *Graecia Nova et Mare Ægeum s. Archipelagus in qua Mappa Macedonia, Albania, Epirus, Thessalia et Morea cum circumjacentibus Insulis Corcyra, Cephalonia, Zacynthnos, Stalimene, Metelino, Chios* / distinctæ exhibentur, opera et sumtibus Tobiæ Conradi Lotteri, Geographi Augustae Vindel. [Augsburg], [1770]. (13).

– Homann's heirs: *Map of current Northern Greece* [1:1,300,000]. Nuremberg, 1770. – *Mappa Geographica Græciæ Septentrionalis hodiernæ sive Provinciarum Macedoniæ Thessaliæ et Albaniæ, in qua ultima Provincia Habitationes sitæ Gentis Montenegrinæ in Comitatu Zentanensi expressæ sunt,* unacum finitimis Regionibus atqu Insulis, ex recentissimis novissimisque Subsidiis secundum normam legitimæ Projectionis in usum belli præsentis delineata, [1: 1.300.000]. Norimbergæ Cura Homannianorum Heredum, C.P.S.C.M. 1770. D. A. Hauer sc. Norimb. (14).

– Heinrich Kiepert: *General map of European Turkey* [1:1,000,000]. Berlin: 1853. – *General-karte von der Europäischen Türkei* / Nach allen vorhandenen originalkarten und itinerarischen hülfsmitteln bearbeitet und gezeichnet von Heinrich Kiepert, [1:1.000.000]. Berlin: 1853. (20).

British maps

– Alfred Stead: *Etnographical Map of Servia* / Alfred Stead. 1:2,750,000. In: Servia by the Servians. London; William Heinemann, 1909. (32).

– Arthur Evans: *Diagramatic Map of Slav Territories east of the Adriatic* / by Sir Arthur Evans. 1:2,000,000. London: Published by permission of the Royal Geographical Society. From the Geographical Journal, April 1916. (36).

– Robert Williams Seton-Watson: *The Race of the Balkan Peninsula*. London: 1917. – *The Race of the Balkan Peninsula* / by R. W. Seton-Watson D.Litt. London: Constable and Company limited 1917. (37).

Serbian maps

– Dimitrije Davidović: *Countries in which Serbs reside*. Vienna: Novine Srpske: 1821. – *Zemlje u kojima prebivaju Srbi*. Beč: Novine Srpske, 1821. (18).

– Nikola Vasojević: *Map of Kosovo Polje*, 1:200,000. [Novi Sad], [1847]. (19).

– Miloš S. Milojević: *Historical-ethnographic geographical map of the Serbs and the Serbian (Yugoslav) countries in Turkey and Austria*, 1:2,000,000. Belgrade: Issued by Kosta Atanaskov – Šumenković, 1873. (22).

– Dragaš Žegligović: *Ethnographical Map of the Balkan Peninsula*, [1: 3.000.000]. Belgrade: 1885. (24).

– Vladimir Karić: *Map of Distribution of the Serbs*. In: Serbia. Belgrade: Serbian-Royal state printing, 1887. – (25).

– Spiro Gopčević: *Ethnographical Map of Macedonia and Old Serbia*, 1:750,000. [Belgrade]: 1889. – (26, a, b).

– Jovan Mišković: *Map of Kosovo Polje*, 1:150,000. Belgrade: The General Staff Photo-Lithography Workshop [1900]. (29).

– The Serbian Velika Škola [Grande Ecole] Youth: *Ethnographical Map of the Serbian countries with the south border of Old Serbia and the Serbian border of Emperor Dušan*, 1:2,000,000. Belgrade: 1905. (30).

– Jovan Cvijić: *Political-ethnographical Sketch of Macedonia and Old Serbia*, 1:4,000,000. In: Fundamentals of Geography and Geology of Macedonia and Old Serbia with observations in southern Bulgaria, Thrace, the neighbouring parts of Asia Minor, Thessaly, Epirus and northern Albania. Belgrade: Serbian Royal Academy, 1906. (31).

– Jovan Cvijić: *Ethnographical Map of the Balkan Peninsula*, 1:1,000,000. Gotha: 1913. – *Ethnographische Karte der Balkanhalbinsel* / nach allen vorhandenen Quellen und eigenen Beobachtungen von Prof. Dr. J. Cvijić. Leitung: Prof. Paul Langhans... 1:1.000.000. Gotha: Justus Perthes, 1913. (34).

– Stevan P. Bošković: *New Map of the Serbian kingdoms and neighbouring areas*, 1:1.000.000. Belgrade: Cartographic Workshop of the Geography Department Gl. Dj.-staff, 1914.(35).

– Jovan Cvijić: *Ethnographical Map of the Balkan Peninsula*, 1:3,000,000. Paris: 1918. (39).

– Ljubiša Gvojić: *Serbian spiritual heritage in Kosovo and Metohija*, 1:300,000. Belgrade: Information Service of the Serbian Orthodox Church, 2003. (40).

Methods

Maps in the atlas are analyzed from several aspects in order to determine the boundaries and territorial affiliation of Old Serbia with its primary core of Kosovo and Metohija in the historical, ethnic, cultural, geopolitical and national respect from the time of the Ottoman invasion of the Balkans, as well as its withdrawal. In this sense, the analysis carried out includes:

– Competences of authors and publishers (cartographic centers, institutions),

– Motives of making and purpose of maps, as well as the time and place of publication of maps,

– Territorial grip of maps with the geographical position of Kosovo and Metohija on them,

– The theme of mapping, whether it is general geographic or different thematic maps: ethnic, linguistic, religious, confessional, political, military, etc.

– Classification of content by elements, thematic layers and internal hierarchy,

– Dimension of maps with inset maps, sketches, etc.

– Composition of maps with more layers: a natural conception (hydrography and relief), settlements, ethnic, linguistic, religious, confessional, state and administrative boundaries, toponyms, additional contents (panoramic drawings, emblems, flags, cartouches) and the like.

In addition to multilateral analysis of maps, their comparison was also performed in spatial and temporal terms, through which the following can be determined:

– Similarities and differences in approach, motives and goals of mapping,

– Perspectives on territorial units shown on the maps from different angles: the continental (Central European and Southern European), coastal (Mediterranean, Adriatic, Aegean, Black Sea), from the flow of major rivers (the Danube, the Sava, the Vardar, the Drim, the Bojana), the regional linking of countries, state status, provincial or local position, etc.

– Repetition of the contents of maps for the same territories over time with successive addition of new, retaining the previous cartographic layers,

– Correspondence of statistical numerical data with sign, graphic, cartographic representation,

– Stability of natural, ethnic, linguistic, religious, confessional, state and administrative borders,

– Preservation of macro-, meso-, and micro-toponyms in the territorial range of maps for the studied time period, etc.

– Constancy (or slow variability) of ethnic, linguistic, religious, confessional, cultural, political, military and other relations between peoples and countries for the observed period.

All maps in the atlas are analyzed in detail, which is in the form of short text put with every single map on a separate atlas page, together with the original and translated title. Comparison of maps and the final synthesis of the established historical-geographical data, facts and conclusions are presented in the wider text that is at the beginning of the atlas.

Results

The analysis and comparison of 40 atlas maps of the territory of Serbia and its Balkan and the Pannonian environment, from the period 1513–1918, have shown that most of them have several historical layers: ancient, medieval, as well as a layer from the time of publication of the map. In ancient layer, the ancient Greek or provinces of the Roman Empire are shown, in the medieval all old kingdoms, principalities, despotisms, duchies as well as their immediate areas that existed at that time in the Balkans, and in the modern layer it is mainly shown the current state of the presence of the Ottoman Empire through division of the territories on dependent states, which paid to it a tribute, as well as their prefectures. On almost all maps, the most instructive is the middle-medieval layer.

On all the maps the territory is shown and the name of the old kingdom of Serbia inscribed (Zevia, Servia, Serviæ Regn., Servien, Das Konigreich Serwien, Serbie, Serbien) and Raška (Rascia, Rassa, Rasia, Rassia, Raxia, Rascien) and the Serbian Empire, either in the wider or narrower territorial range. In the same line with the presentation of Serbia, other Serbian, Slovenian and other neighbouring countries are shown such as Bosnia (Bossina, Bosnia, Bosnien, Bosnie, Bosna) with Herzegovina of St. Sava (Herzegovina S. Saba, Herzegowina) or Duchy (Dukat) of St. Sava (Dvc. S. Saba), Zeta (Zenta), Montenegro (Montenegro, Zrna Gora), S(k)lavonija (Sclavonia, Schiavonia, Slavonien), Bulgaria (Bulgaria), Wallachia (Walachia, Walachei), Hungary (Hvngaria, Hungaria), Byzantium (Romania), Greece (Greacia) and the like. In addition to these countries on these maps, the territories of certain countries are shown with the same significance which retained the ancient names, for example, Macedonia (Macedonia, Macedonien) or Dalmatia (Dalmatia, Dalmatien). On the maps, which cover a narrower territory, besides the name of Serbia, its particular areas are also inscribed, such as: Kosovo Polje (Campus merulae, Merlinius Campus et Cassovius, Champ Merlin, Champ de merles, Amselfeld) or Kosovo (Cassova provincia), Metohija (Metoja, la Métochie, Metochia) or Podrima (Podrima, Podrima Provincia), then Toplica (Topliza), Sitnica (Sitimza), etc. Name of Albania does not appear on all maps in the atlas, and if it occurs not in the same rank with other countries, but more as an area within the existing countries, notably Greece and Macedonia.

Geographic position and natural boundaries. Geographical location of the old kingdom (empire) of Serbia,

on older maps of either wider or narrower geographic range, is bounded by natural geographic boundaries, primarily relief and hydrography, although there are detailed maps on which borders are drawn. This is particularly expressively shown in respect to the position of Serbia and Albania. Thus on the map of Waldeseemüller from 1513, which is part of the revived and modernized Ptolemy's map, the Balkan Peninsula is shown with natural-geographic territorial division between countries.

"The mountain ranges of the central ridge, known as Catena mundi, separate Serbia (Zevia) and Bosnia (Bossina) from Slovenia (Solavonia), Dalmatia (Dalmatia) and Greece (Graecia) on the map. The territory of Greece is divided into several areas: Thessaly (abbreviated Thessalo.), Achaia (Achaia), Athens (Ducat Athenie) and Morea (Morea). Among the Greek regions, the area of northern Epirus, south of the Crni Drim River with the source from the Ohrid Lake, the toponym Albania is placed" (Vemić & Strugar, 2007). Strabon (62 BC–23 AD), a long time ago, at the turn of the old to the new era, found that the natural division or natural boundary was the best among the countries and peoples. In this sense logically follows that the earliest maps show orographic separation of Serbia and Albania, as it has long been known that in that area two major mountain ranges are expending and facing: Prokletije (2,694 m) and Šar Mountain (2,748 m) which are mutually connected by a series of small mountains: Bogićevica (2,366 m), Djeravica (2,656), Junik Mountain (2,305 m), Paštrik (1,986 m) and Koritnik (2,393 m). The orographic boundary is continuously shown on the maps as follows: 1) in the ancient layer, between the Roman provinces of Upper Moesia (with Dardania) and Macedonia, north and south in relation to the aforementioned mountain range, 2) in the medieval layer, between Serbia (Rascia, Raška) and Zeta or Greece and 3) at the present time, between Serbia and Albania.

The cartographers who tied their representations with the river basins, for example, M. V. Coronelli, 'the cosmographer of the republic' of Venice, or N. Sanson, a French 'royal geographer', in addition to orographic also wrote over the borders on rivers, confirming completely the mentioned truth of Strabon. Thus on the map of Coronelli, The Course of the Rivers Drim and Bojana in Dalmatia (*Corso delli fiumi Drino, e Boiana nella Dalmatia*) [1:315.000], (1688) boundaries are drawn in dashed lines between all the territories that had some kind of self-government in pre-Ottoman time (kingdoms, duchies, parishes, cities, republic) depicting the noble coats of arms on them. On this "map Albania is not mentioned anywhere, although the names of some Albanian tribes are mentioned" (Vemić & Strugar, 2007), which are located on the left bank of the Drim River. In this part of the territory boundary is drawn between the parts of the territory of the Kingdom of Serbia and Zeta and it is on the rivers Valbona (Crnica), the Drim and the Crni Drim.

The boundary on three rivers is also repeated later on maps of G. Cantelli, N. Sanson, P.C. Monath, J.B. Homann, T. C. Lotter, etc., and appears as an ethnographic boundary between Serbian and Albanian settlements, as well as the language spoken line, on the theme, ethnic and linguistic maps from the end of the 19th and early 20th century.

Toponyms. In addition to natural, orographic structure and hydrographical lines that on the macro-plan define the affiliation of territories, a number of settlements with the toponyms is presented on the analyzed maps which confirm and complete the affiliation of a territory, at the middle plan. On the map of Waldeseemüller from 1513, on the territory of Serbia, small but significant number of toponyms is written, of which three in Kosovo and Metohija: the medieval mining town of Novo Brdo (Nouomont), then Lake Svrčin, that is, Sazlija and Robovo spa, where Svrčin was (Suercegino), the castle of the Serbian line of Nemanjić and the third, the area of Sitnica (Sitimza), shown as a settlement. These Serbian toponyms are usually repeated on maps from the early period, and are becoming more numerous, especially on larger scales. Thus on the map of Coronelli (1688), in addition to Novo Brdo (Novo Monte), all today's larger cities in Kosovo and Metohija are shown: Mitrovica (Mctrouiza), Vučitrn (Wciterna), Priština (Priština), Suva Reka (Suha Riesca), Peć (Pechia), Dečani (Deciani), Djakovica (Iacoua, Iacouizza) and Prizren (Prisrendi, Prisren), as well as other settlements: Gušterica (Gusteriza), Janjevo (Iagneuo), Vragolija (Vragolia), Ribare (Ribare), Krajmirovce (Kraimirouc), Graždanik (Grasdanico), etc. On the map of Cantelli (1689) Trepča (Treppcia) appears with Mitrovica, Hoča (Hocia) with Suva Reka, and with Prizren Ljubižda (Iubossida), Graždanik (Grasdanico) Gorožup (Gorosupi) etc. It is characteristic that all the major towns of Metohija, Peć, Dečani, Djakovica and Prizren are shown on all maps in Serbia, and never in Albania, which indicates that the European cartographers knew that fact for the last five centuries.

Ethnic, linguistic and other maps. A more detailed analysis of the territory and border belonging of Old Serbia, near Kosovo and Metohija, in the studied period, can be made on the basis of thematic maps in the atlas with ethnic, religious-confessional and linguistic contents, such as maps: C. Sax (1878), D. Žegligović (1885), V. Karić (1887), S. Gopčević (1889), J. Cvijić (1906, 1913, 1918), A. Stead (1909), A. Evans (1916), R. W. Seton-Watson (1917), followed by Ethnic and Linguistic Map of Central Europe with Italy and the Balkan Peninsula (1917) published by cartographic house Freytag from Vienna and the like. These maps were created as a result of detailed research and data collection (knowledge) of European travellers and explorers in the territory of the Balkan countries (H. Pouqville., A. Boué, J. Müller, J. G. von Hahn, A. Grisebach, H. Kiepert et al.), and had a great impact on Euro-

pean scientific and political opinion in the 19th century. Special attention was focused on the presentation of ethnic relations. One of the indicators is usually represented on them, but there are maps with more complex representations. Thus, for example, C. Sax, the Austrian consul in Constantinople, identified and presented the ethnic groups using a "combination of features": language, confession and national consciousness. From the legend of the map it can be seen that he showed 8 major ethnic groups, 11 subgroups and three mixed categories, which are classified into three major confessions—Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim (Mohammedan) —so that the map has a total of 21 thematic units. Similarly, S. Gopčević (1889) found 13 distinct ethnic groups, while Cvijić (1913) numbered 12 of them with 23 entities, of which seven were multi-confessional ones.

Since this is about thematic maps, which in its origin represent an achievement of modern cartography from the end of the 19th and early 20th century, and cannot be found for the past centuries, for a detailed and thorough analysis, the historical maps of M. Pešikan, M. Macura and A. Urošević are also placed in the atlas, which are made on the basis of the Ottoman censuses from the early 16th century. The territory of Kosovo and Metohija with the surroundings is covered with several such censuses (defters, defterleri), from 1452, 1455, 1485, 1489, 1571, 1566–1574. The settlements are classified in them according to nahis, but the basic data relate to individual men, women, widows (as the heads of the families), and then the monks and unmarried adult males, i.e. to all tax payers. Defterleri are transcribed from the old Turkish to Serbian language and are very accurate and reliable historical source for the reconstruction of the ethno-demographic circumstances at the beginning of the Ottoman rule in Serbia.

Analyzing a unique record of personal names by settlements, according to linguistic affiliation, Pešikan has compiled a variety of maps showing the territorial distribution of population of old Serbian and old Albanian type who lived in a broader regional framework of today's

Map of Bosnia, Serbia, Greece and Slavonia (Tabula moderna Bossinae, Serviae, Graeciae et Sclavoniae) (Waldeseemüller, 1513)

The map of the Balkans, mid–15th century, National Library of France, Paris

south-western Serbia, south-eastern Montenegro and northern Albania, where general ambivalence of these two people can be seen, with very few mixed areas. Although the map was simplified drawn with hatches, it clearly shows the full extent of the old Serbian type of names in Old Serbia, that is, in Kosovo and Metohija, except for slight mixed population near Djakovica within Serbia, but also across the border in old Altin area within present-day Albania. A similar situation existed on the territory of today's Montenegro, except for a small mixing of names around Lake Scutari.

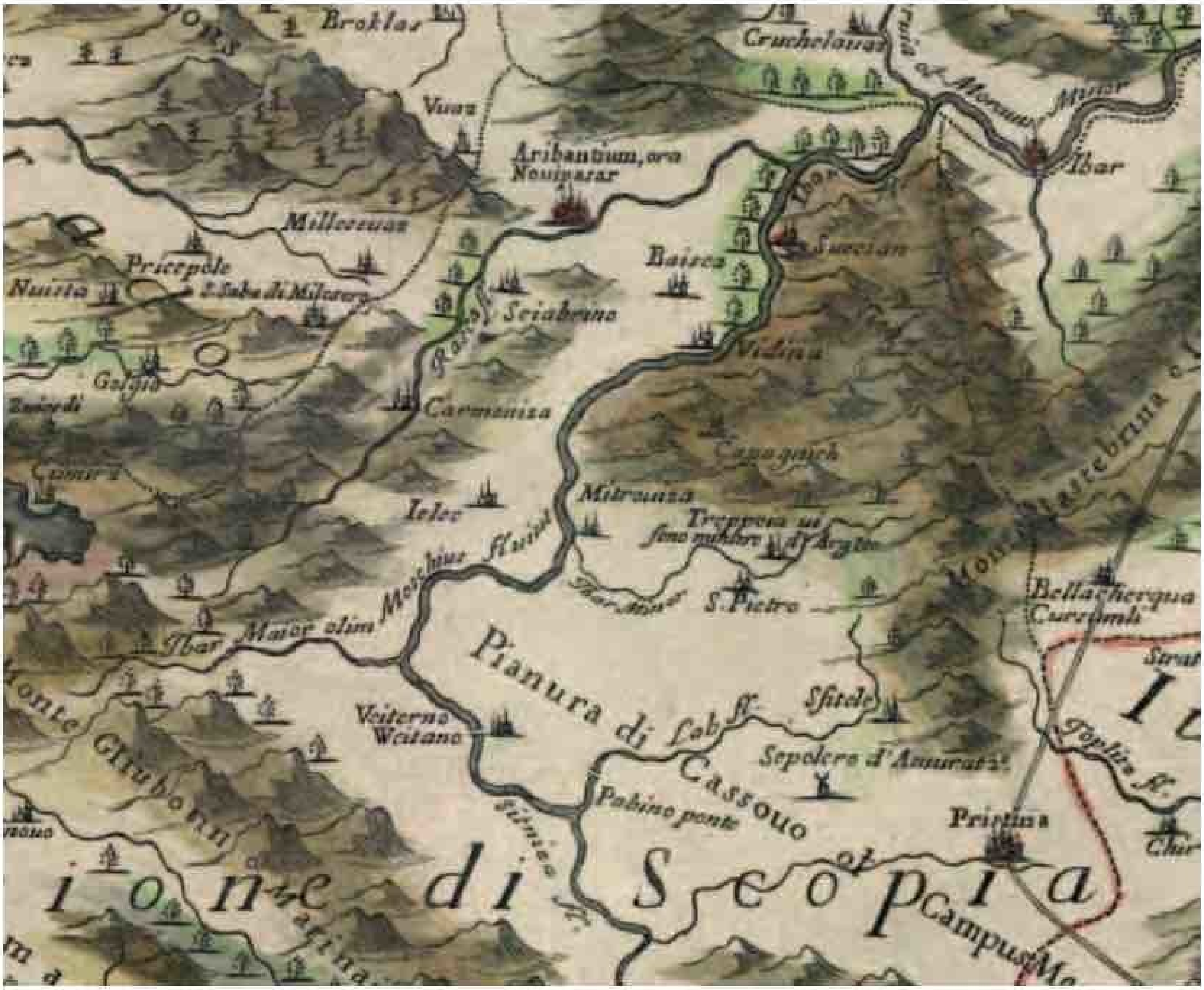
Synthesizing the data for seven consecutive Ottoman defterleri dating for a hundred and twenty years, from 1452 to 1574, Pešikan gave a very comprehensive and complex map "The Kosovo personal names of the 15th–16th century," which presents all the settlements of that time in Kosovo and Metohija. The settlements are divided into two categories: settlements with the Serbian type of names and the Albanian type of names. On this much more concrete map of Pešikan, in terms of ethnic affiliation of settlements, the majority of the Serbian settlements is visible with partial mix with the Albanian ones only near Djakovica, in a slightly higher percentage than on the previous map, which shows some settling of Albanians from Albania and their gradual penetration in Metohija, which will be in the following centuries gradually increased. Namely, by the Ottoman conquest of Kosovo and Metohija, the permanent settlements were damaged most, which was established by the 1455 census analysis of M. Macura, who found that there were 32 destroyed villages probably during the Battle of Kosovo, then 42 deserted villages, from which the people were exterminated or fled, that is, of a total of 599 villages recorded, 74 or 12% were unfit for human habitation. In addition to the above noted even 142 dwarf (up to 5 houses) and small villages (6–10 houses) were recorded, indicating that the whole structure of the villages was damaged by the Ottoman occupation (Macura, 2001).

In this ethno-demographic situation, where they lived mixed—majority Serbian Christian population to minor-

ity Albanian—Islamic and small number Catholic confession, there is a frequent descent of the Albanian cattle breeding population of various clans (Malissori, Mirdite, Fanda) from the mountainous areas of northern and central Albania, who individually or collectively began to settle in masses into the plains of Metohija; they continued, in particular after converting to Islam, within the theocratic structure of the Ottoman Empire, to exert tremendous pressure on the native, mostly Serbian farming population. Thus the Muslim Albanians regularly abducted women and usurped farming estates of Christian Serbs; the continuous persecution against the Christian Serbs from Old Serbia significantly reduced the Serbs as previously majority population in the area: "The Ottoman authorities have tolerated many cases of violation of public order, in some of them they were participants or accomplices in the extortions and executions of especially Serbian leaders in the villages. Ransom called 'tally' and abductions of women were a special kind of persecution of non-Muslim subjects […]" (Stojančević, 1994).

Ethno-demographic situation of the early Ottoman rule in Kosovo and Metohija, which was successfully reconstructed by Pešikan, Macura and others, were continuously changing by permanent colonization of Muslim Albanians, and the long term, but has never been reversed in favour of the Albanians until the 20th century. This is confirmed by travelogue of Miloš S. Milojević entitled *Travels of part of Real (Old) Serbia*, which was published in three volumes in 1871, 1872 and 1877. Milojević, although not always fully accurate, was the first Serbian travel writer who visited Old Serbia and collected and published data on population and settlements in these areas. Based on original data of Milojević's travels, M. Vemić produced a map entitled *Ethnic Map of a Part of Old Serbia 1:300,000*. It shows that the Christian Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, with visible symbols of Albanian colonization, were still the majority population, while the Muslim Albanians remained to be the minority ethnic group.

Ethnic picture of the mutual relations between the Serbs and Albanians shortly before the Serbian-Turkish



wars of 1876, 1877/78 is shown in this map by the map-diagram method by settlements, by national and religious--confessional criteria. There are 895 settlements represented of a total of 1,140 recorded in travelogue by Milojević, with 123 non-reconnoitered and 122 repeated settlements, which are classified into seven categories according to the number of houses. Of the total number of represented settlements, 483 were Serbian, 92 Albanian and 230 mixed. All larger cities, Prizren, Priština, Peć, Djakovica and Kuršumlija, according to Milojević, were over 90% populated by the Serbs. Of the smaller ethnic groups, five Circassian villages are mapped, the ethnic Turks in a mixed village (Mamuša, 80 houses) and Prizren (120 houses), and Gypsies in 7 mixed settlements.

From these figures it can be concluded that at that time there were three times more settlements populated by the Christian Orthodox Serbs than Islamized Albanians (244:69), and nearly twice more settlements with the Islamized Serbs than with the Islamized Albanians (130:69), and compared with only 21 settlements of the Catholic Albanians (Catholics) it is then 11, i.e. 6 times more Serbs. However, the Muslim Albanians were more mixed with the Islamized Serbs due to confessional similarity (in 152 settlements) than with the Christian Serbs Orthodox (in 18 settlements), while the Albanian and Slav Roman Catholics were more mixed with the Christian Orthodox Serbs (in 15 settlements) than with the Islamized Serbs (in 4

Il regno della Servia detta altrimenti Rascia, Map by Giacomo Cantelli da Vignola, late 17th century

Part of the map The Race of the Balkan Peninsula (R.W. Seton-Watson, 1917), left;
part of the map Ethnic and Linguistic Map of Central Europe with Italy and the Balkan Peninsula
(Völker – und Sprachenkarte von Mittel-Europa nebst Italien und der Balkanhalbinsel), (G. Freytags, [1917]) to the right.

settlements). The Serbs of both confessions, Islamic and Christian, were mixed in 109 settlements.

The Albania was created in 1912, but her borders were not completely estanluished before the end of the World War I. Demarcation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was made in 1920. Negotiations in Paris Peace Conference were just led around the natural, historical, ethnic and linguistic boundaries in the river valleys of the Drim and Crni Drim (Black Drin), in the northern Albania. There were two proposals: of the British Prime Minister David Lloyd George (from 14 January 1920) and the delegation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (from 20 January1920), which were slightly different. However, instead to accept one of the presented suggestions or establish an intermediate solution, the boundary was shifted in favour of the Albanians far in the north, i.e. from the valleys of these rivers on the orographic borders of mountain ranges of the Prokletije and Šar Mountain.

The conclusion

Analyzed maps in the atlas were made by the best European cartographers who in addition to the indisputable cartographic competence had high government official and scientific titles and took high positions in their society. The maps were made over a long time period from 1513 to 1918. They were made for the general, educational, scientific, cultural, political, military (war) and for other purposes. In their time they had a great impact on scientific and political opinion, and also permanently, not only in their own countries but in Europe.

All analyzed maps have clearly shown that the area of Old Serbia, which included Kosovo and Metohija, have always been considered an integral part of Serbia. From the maps it can be immediately seen that the selected European and national authors, geographers, cosmographers and cartographers did not recognize the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans and by their representations on the maps preserved the consciousness on the belonging of these territories to Old Serbia. The maps have shown that these two geographic areas were within the natural historical and ethnic boundaries of Serbia, with traces of certain Albanian settlements in a long period from the Ottoman invasion of the Balkans, their withdrawal in 1912, to the present days. Kosovo and Metohija have not been particularly singled out from the wider context and environment of Old Serbia; thus, cartographic representations of these areas remained within the borders of Serbia.

Most of the maps confirm that the main division border, i.e. ethnographic boundary between Serbian and Albanian settlements, until the mid-19th century, was on the rivers Valbona (Crnica), Drim (Drin) and Crni Drim (Black Drin), which were regarded as both geographical border of Albania and (Old) Serbia, as well as a language line dividing the Albanians of northern Albania from the Metohija Serbs. In this sense, with the creation of Albania 1912, a historic compromise regarding the demarcation of the state borders between Serbia and Albania went from the mentioned rivers to the highest peaks of the mountain range.

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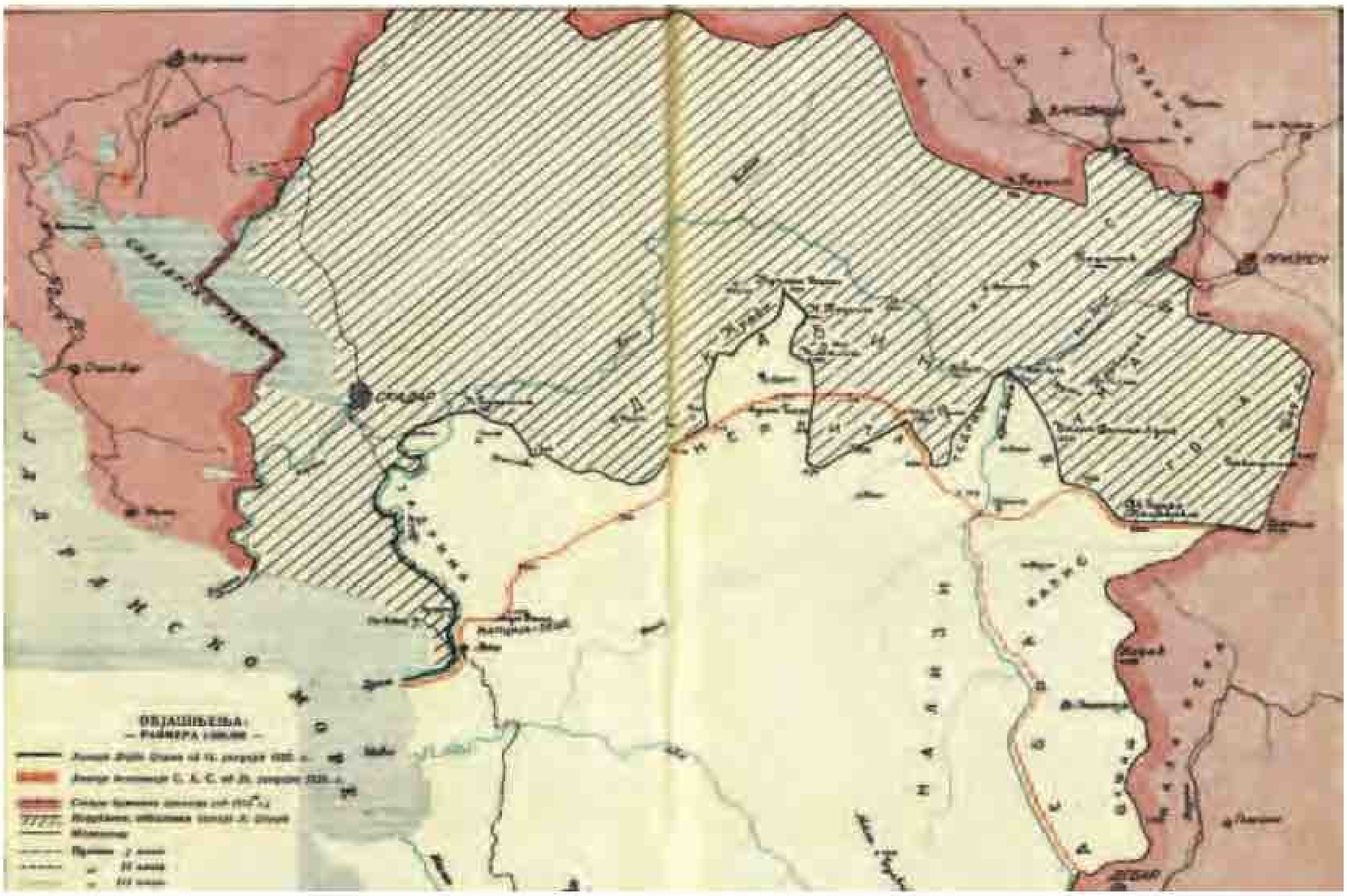

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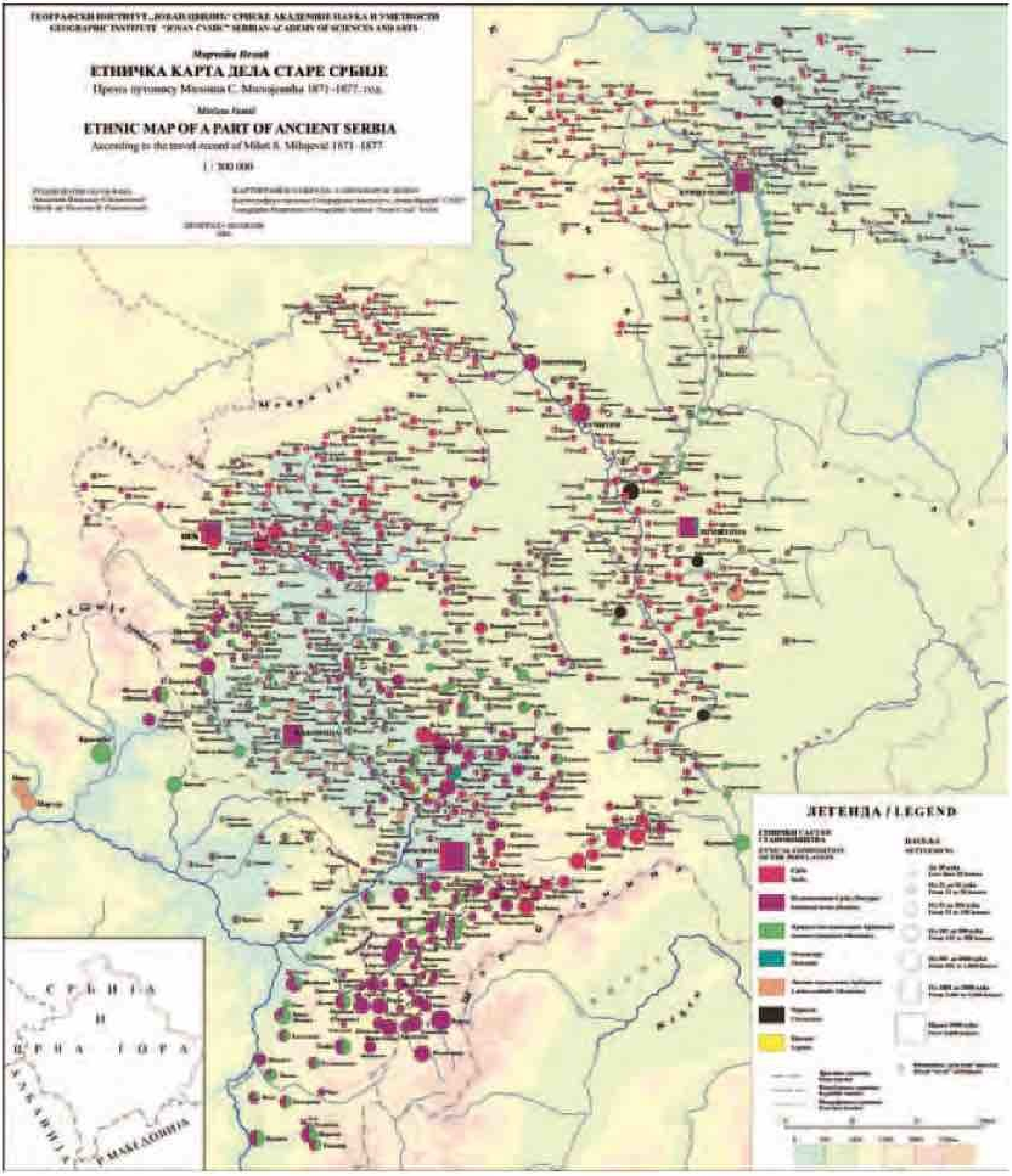

Ethnic map of a part of Old Serbia (Vemić, 2005)

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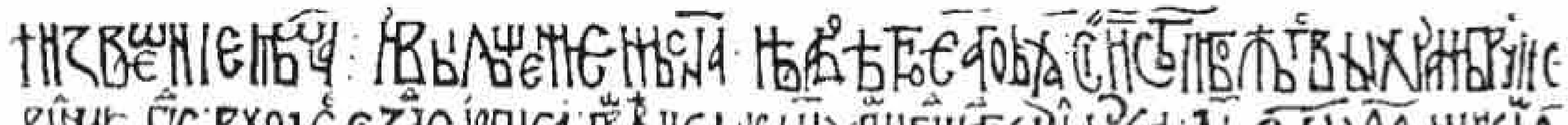


Through the benevolence of the Father, and the incarnation of the Son, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, this holy and divine temple of our most pure Sovereign Lady Theotokos, of her Presentation into the Temple, was built and wall-painted by the command and repurchase by the lord and young king Marko, in the year 6879 (=1370–1371), of Indictus 9.

Inscription on the Church of the Presentation of the Theotokos into the temple, in Prizren

Rodop's bell from 1432,
Church of Saint Nicholas, Banja Rudnička, (now in the Treasury of the Patriarchate of Peć)

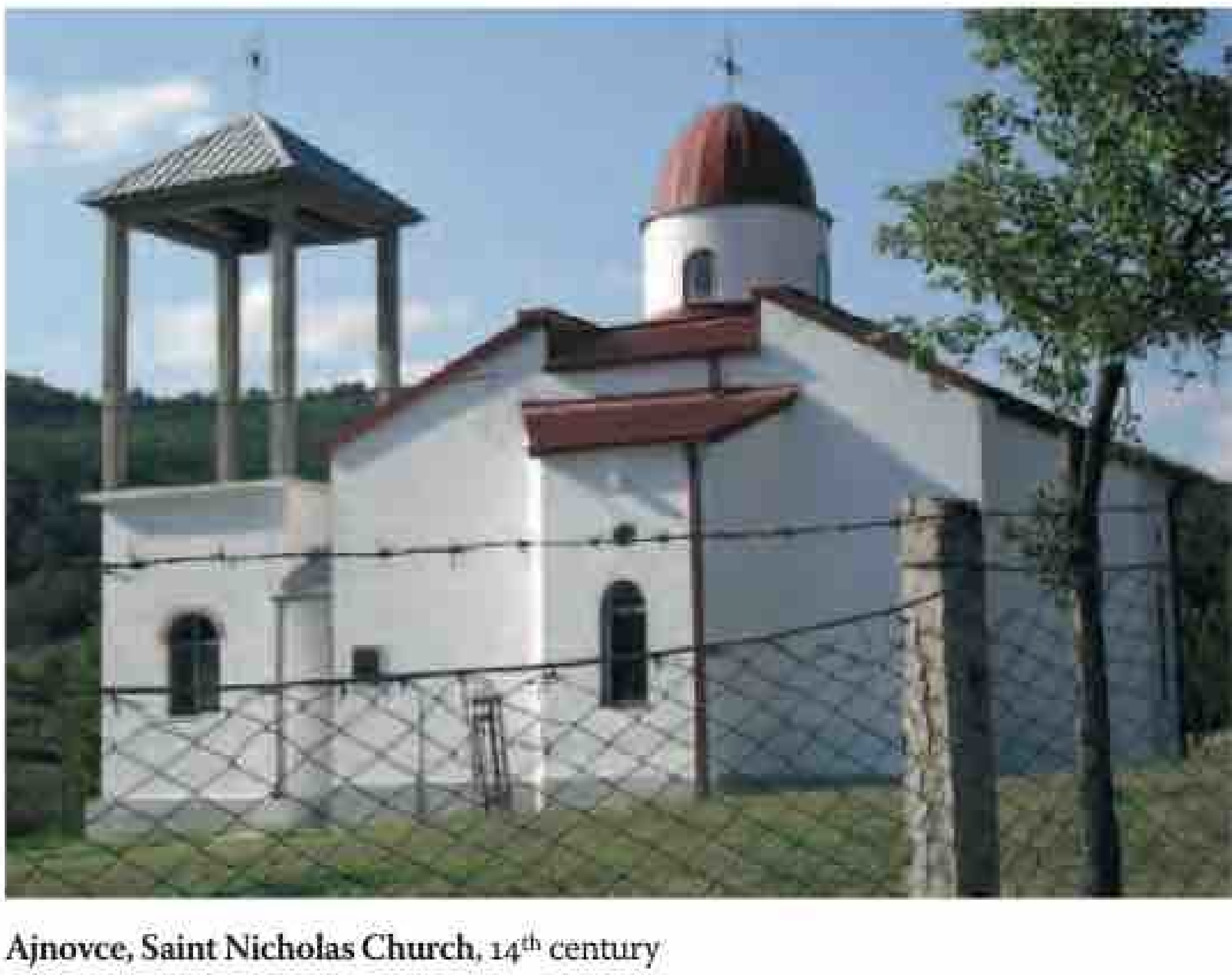
The Christian Shrines of Kosovo and Metohija from the 13th to the 20th century
A shortened list

Sites in alphabetic order

AJKOBILA (in the Middle Age Proždrikobila, Priština): demolished church in the vicinity of the present-day mosque.
AJNOVCE (in the Middle Ages Hainovci, K. Kamenica): 1. ruins of the Tamnica monastery with the church built and frescoed in the 14th c. on the foundations of an older Byzantine basilica; 2. remnants of a church in the old cemetery on the site called Ravan.
ALAGINA RIJEKA (Peć): 1. ruins of a Serbian church on Crkveno Brdo (Church Hill); 2. remnants of a church near the place called Izvorski Laz.
ARILJAČA (in the Middle Ages Arhidijača, Priština): ancient ruins of a church and an old Serbian graveyard.

BABALOĆ (in the Middle Ages Babe, Dečane): according to legend, a mosque was erected on the site of an old church.
BABLJAK (Uroševac): old church (restored in 1966, dedicated to the Holy Trinity); a Serbian priest mentioned in the census of 1455.
BAČKA (Dragaš): church of St. Barbara formerly occupied the site called Vakuf.
BADOVAC (Priština): 1. remnants of an old church on the site called Crkvine (i.e. ruins of a church); 2. ruins of a former church above the Belograb site; 3. ruins of the monastery of Vojsilovica (14th c.) at Androvački Breg—its stone remains were used for the building of the Catholic church of St. Nicholas in Janjevo, the Turkish mill on the Gračanka river and dwellings of the Albanians from nearby villages; 4. an old church, above the cemetery, on the site called Krstac.
BAJČINA (in the Middle Ages Bajčino Podujevo): a Serbian church existed (village priest mentioned in the census of 1455).
BAJGORA (formerly Bela Gora, K. Mitrovica): remnants of a church on the site called Bačka.
BAKS (Srbica): microtoponyms "Crkva" (Church) and "Crkveni Do" (Church Valley) indicate that a church once existed in the village.
BALABANE (Priština): ruins of an ancient church next to the old graveyard on the site called Crkvena Livada (Church Meadow).
BALANCE (Vitina): 1. remnants of the church of St. Helen in the village; 2. ruins of the monastery of St. Elijah, above the village.

Ajnovce, Tamnica Monastery, 14th century



Ajnovce, Saint Nicholas Church, 14th century

BANOV DO (in the Middle Ages Banje Polje, K. Mitrovica): on the foundations of an old Serbian church, a new church was erected in 1950; next to it is an ancient Serbian cemetery.
BANJE (K. Mitrovica): 1. church erected in recent times on the site of an old one, surrounded by the old and present-day village cemetery; 2. remnants of a monastery with a church and a bell-tower (13th or 14th c.), restored in 1492, in the Čpilje-Kuline hamlet; a large medieval graveyard situated on the plateau surrounding the church.
BANJE, BANJA RUDNIČKA (Srbica): 1. church of St. Nicholas erected by the Serbian feudatory Rodop some time before 1432; restored in the 20th c.; 2. old Serbian cemetery on the St. Paraskeve hill; 3. another old Serbian cemetery toward the village of Suho Grlo.
BANJICA (Glogovac): according to legend and some microtoponyms, the church of St. Sava and an old Serbian graveyard were situated in the village.
BANJICA (Lipljan): a church existed once (suggested by the reference to a village priest in the census of 1455 and the toponym "Crkvena Njiva"—Church Field).
BANJSKA (K. Mitrovica): 1. monastery of Banjska; 2. remnants of the church of St. Elijah (mentioned in 1313) in the hamlet of Jelići; 3. remnants of an old church in the hamlet of Stevovići; 4. traces of a structure, perhaps a church, in the hamlet of Kozareva Rijeka.

Asceterion of Belaje, above the Dečani Monastery,
Church of the Mother of God,
Archangel Gabriel from Annunciation, 14th century

Bell Tower, Banjska Monastery, 14th century

BANJSKA (Vučitrn): 1. old church of St. Nicholas; 2. ruins of the church of St. Stephen in the hamlet of Selište.
BARAINA (in the Middle Ages Barajino or Borajno, Podujevo): according to written sources, a Serbian church existed there in the 15th c.
BARANE (in the Middle Ages Barani, Peć): unascertained monastery of Barane (mentioned in 15th and 16th-century sources); 2. the site where an old graveyard was formerly situated.
BARDOSAN (Djakovica): 1. ruins of an old Serbian church and a graveyard (recorded in the 19th c.); 2. archaeological remains of early medieval Slavic culture.
BARE (Leposavić): old Serbian graveyard.
BARILJEVO (Priština): church of Samodreža (village priest mentioned as early as 1455); the Turks used its building material for the construction of the mill on the Lab river at the beginning of the 19th c.
BATAIRE (in the Middle Ages Batahire, K. Mitrovica): the toponym "Crkva" (Church) points to the former presence of a Serbian church in the village.
BATUŠA (Djakovica): a written source from 1330 refers to the church of St. Nicholas in the village (according to tradition, it occupied the site of the present-day mosque).
BEGOV LUKAVAC (in the Middle Ages Lukavac Istok): remnants of an old Serbian church and devastated graveyard on the hill of Vučar; a note from 1643 makes mention of the church of St. George in the village.
BEGUNCE (Vitina): old church formerly existed.
BELA CRKVA (Orahovac): 1. remnants of an early three-aisled Byzantine basilica and a necropolis; 2. church of St. Elijah, mentioned in a source from 1330 (unascertained); 3. church of St. Helena, formerly situated on the road to the Sopnić village; 4. church of the Holy Archangels, on the site called Listenol.
BELAJE (Dečane): rock-cut anachoretic dwellings of the Dečani monastery on Streočka Mt: 1. hermitage of King Stefan Dečanski; 2. hermitage of St. Helena (built up); 3. central hermitage (between the former two); 4. hermitage of St. Ephraim (14th c.); 5. Belajska hermitage (church of the Mother of God) chief monastic anachoretic dwelling with 14th-century frescos.

Asceterion of Belaje, above the Dečani Monastery, **Church of the Mother of God**, detail, 14th century

Belo Polje near Peć, Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God, 16th century, reconstructed in the 19th century

Belo Polje near Peć, Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God, 16th century (burned by Albanian extremists after June 1999)

Berivojce, Saint John Church, 16th century

Belica, Saint Lazarus Church, 16th century

BELASICA, VRHLAB (Podujevo): according to folk legend in the village and its surroundings there were seven sites with the ruins of former churches.
BELEG (Dečane): in the previous century, the ruins of a Serbian church and old graveyard still existed in the village.
BELICA (Istok): 1. Lazarica church, formerly venerating St. George (probably from the 14th c. repeatedly restored in the 16th, 17th and 18th c.); old and new graveyards are situated next to it; 2. remnants of a church.
BELINCE (Uroševac): remnants of a church on the site called Kisha (Crkva – Church).
BELO BRDO (Leposavić): uninvestigated ruins of a former church and remnants of a medieval mine.
BELOGRACE (in the Middle Ages Belogradice, Kačanik): ruins of a former church with a graveyard used to exist once.
BELO POLJE (Istok): remnants of a church, dedicated according to legend, to the Holy Savior, and of an old graveyard on the site called Crkvenjak (Verger).
BELO POLJE (Peć): the census of 1455 makes mention of two priests and a monk in the village. Today exist: 1. church of the Presentation of the Mother of God (19th c.) erected on the foundations of an ancient church, surrounded by an old graveyard; 2. remnants of a church on the hill called Krst (Cross); 3. the cave called Careva Stolica, or Razboj (the Emperor's Stool or the Loom) (according to legend, used to be a hermitage).
BELO POLJE (Podujevo): a church existed in the 15th c.
BELUĆE (Leposavić): ruins of an old church and an old graveyard.
BENČUK (in the Middle Ages Benčuj, Vučitrn): remnants of the church and dormitory called Dušan's church.
BEREVCE (Uroševac): 1. church of St. Paraskeve with a belltower (mentioned in a note from 1353); 2. ruins of the church of St. Demetrius on the site called Crkvica (Small Church).
BERIVOJCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): church of Globarica, dedicated to St. John with frescos from the 16th–17th c. (village priest mentioned in the census of 1455).
BERKOVAC or **BERKOVICA**: unascertained village (mentioned in the 15 c. in the Lapska nachye) somewhere in the environs of Podujevo, with the church of St. Vasil" (Basil).
BERKOVO (Klina): church of the Holy Archangels formerly situated on the site called Crkvište (i.e ruins of a church), demolished by the Turks; above Crkvište an old Serbian graveyard survives.

Binač, Buzovik: Holy Archangels Monastery, 14th–16th century

Bistražin, Church of Saint Elias, before the destruction in 2004

Bogoševci, Church of Saint Nicholas, 16th century

BESINJE (Priština): an old Serbian church stood once on the site called Crkveni Do (Church Valley); an old graveyard situated today on the site called Babino Groblje; the Pustinja Leskovac monastery (mentioned in 1455) formerly located in the vicinity of the village.

BINAČ (Vitina): 1. ruins of an old settlement above the village; 2. in the village and its environs there are the ruins of the churches of St. Paraskeve, St. Stephen and St. Nicholas (recently restored); 3. monastery of the Archangel Michael (Buzovik), south of the village, from the 14th–16th c. with the remnants of two layers of frescos (the younger dating from the 16th c.).

BISTRAŽIN (in the Middle Ages Bisažina, Djakovica): new church, erected on the foundations of an old one demolished in 1941; the old and new graveyard formerly situated next to it.

BISTRICA (Leposavić): remnants of a church and an old graveyard.

BISTRICA ŠALJSKA (Leposavić): remnants of an old church on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church).

Bogoševci, Saint Nicholas Church, 16th century

BITINJA see **GORNJA** and **DONJA BITINJA.**

BIVOLJAK (Vučitrn): old cemetery, known as the Wallachian cemetery.

BLAGAJE (Peć): old Serbian cemetery.

BLJAČ (Dragaš): in the village with several old Serbian toponyms, the remnants of a smaller church still existed in the mid-19th c.

BOB (Kačanik): archaeological finds of two churches, Byzantine and medieval Serbian, with a graveyard, on the site called Crkva (Church).

BOBOVAC, BOBOVCE, BOBOJEVCE (Klina): ruins of a church with an old graveyard existed until 1870.

BOGOŠEVCI (Prizren): 1. church of St. Nicholas in the graveyard (16th c.) frescoed in the 16th–17th c.; 2. church of the Dormition of the Mother of God in the hamlet of Peičići (18th c.).

BOJNOVIĆE, BOJINOVIĆE (in Kolašin upon the Ibar); 1. old cemetery, in the Bojnovačko field; 2. a church formerly situated on the site called Crkvine (i.e. ruins of a church), in the center of the village; 3. old graveyard church, on the outskirts of the village, restored in 1950.

BOLJETIN (K. Mitrovica): Sokolica monastery with the church of the Intercession the Mother of God (14th–15th c.) at the foot of the Sokolica hill; the church contains damaged frescos, especially valuable is the marble sculpture of the Mother of God with Christ Child transferred from Banjska, the demolished mausoleum of King Milutin (1312–1316); a Serbian graveyard situated above the monastery.

BOLJEVCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): 1. ruins of the old church of St. Panteleimon with the traces of the original fresco-painting.

BORČANE (in the Middle Ages Borčani, Leposavić): new church erected in the 19th c. on the foundations of the ruins of a former church, on the hill above the village.

BOSCE (Kriva Reka neat Novo Brdo): several Serbian microtoponyms and an old cemetery have survived.

BOSTANE (Priština): 1. remnants of the medieval Saxon (Latin) church venerating the Mother of God, scarce fragments of frescos with Cyrillic and Roman inscriptions; 2. church of the Mother of God in the graveyard, erected in the 19th c. with the material of the old church of the Mother of God in Novo Brdo beneath Mt. Javor.

BRABONIĆ (K. Mitrovica): old ruins of a former church.
BRADAŠ (Podujevo): three churches formerly existed (whose stone remains were carried off in the 19th and 20th c.); the remnants of one have survived.
BRAINA (Podujevo): according to historical sources the village had: 1. church of the Mother of God Amolyntos Brainassa—of Braina (14th c.); 2. church of St. Nicholas (14th c.); 3. church of St. Peter (14th c.). The remnants of two churches and two old graveyards ha ve been uncovered in the village area.
BRASALJCE (Gnjilane) 1. ruins of a former church in the hamlet of Barice; 2. ruins of a former church in the hamlet of Šašivar.
BRATILOVCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): 1. remnants of an old church on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church) in the location named Rupište; 2. demolished old church on the site called Prisoje in Rupište.
BRATOTIN (Orahovac): old church on the Glavica hill; old and present-day Serbian cemetery, north of the village.
BRECE (in the Middle Ages Brezovica, Podujevo): ruins of an old church in the Haimović (Halilović) mahala.
BRESJE (in the Middle Ages Brestije, Priština): church of St. Catherine, demolished in the 19th c. by Jašar-Paša Džanić, restored in the 20th c.
BRESNICA (K. Mitrovica): traces of the ruins of a church (village priest mentioned as early as the 15th c.), old graveyard on the hillock above the village; remnants of another old graveyard in the hamlet of Alin Do.
BRESTOVAC (Orahovac): microtoponym relating to the old graveyard.
BRESTOVIK (Peć): old graveyard on the site also occupied by the remnants of a church (village priest mentioned in the 15th c.).
BREZNA (Dragaš): according to legend, the church of St. John occupied the site of the present-day mosque (confirmed by the toponym Crkveni Do—Church Valley).
BRNJAČA (in the Middle Ages Brnjašča, Orahovac): ruins of the church of St. Kyriake (mentioned in a source from 1348) embellished with stone reliefs in the 16th c. and repeatedly restored.
BRNJAK: 1. foundations of several structures (probably belonging to Queen Helen of Anjou palace, known only from written sources) discovered near the confluence of the Oklach stream into the Brnjička river; 2. medieval cemetery in the hamlet of Bašče; 3. remnants of an old church near the graveyard in the hamlet of Dublje; 4. ruins of a church and an old graveyard on the site called Krnje; 5. remnants of an old church called Crkvas in the hamlet of Presjeke; 6. small dilapidated church in the hamlet of Staro Guvno; 7. traces of a graveyard in the hamlet of Usce on the site where, according to tradition, a church stood once.
BROĆNA (in the Middle Ages Brodna, Srbica): old Serbian graveyard and the site called Crkvište (i.e. ruins of a church) (village priest referred to in the 15th c.); according to legend, the village mosque was erected on the site formerly occupied by a church.
BROD (Dragaš): 1. church of St. Demetrius (unascertained); 2. church of St. Panteleimon and an old graveyard on the Pantelejci hill; 3. church of St. Nicholas (completely destroyed in the 20th c.); 4. old Christian cemetery (situated on the site of the present-day burrial ground for cattle).
BROD (Uroševac): remnants of the church of St. Peter, near the village, and of an old graveyard, in the village.
BRODOSAVCE (Dragaš): 1. remnants of a larger church stood above the village in the 19th c.; 2. remnants of the small medieval fortress of Zinovo in the area of the same name.
BRUS (Lipljan): a church existed in the hamlet of Velih Brus very old Jewish cemetery located near the village.
BRUSNIK (Vučitrn): remnants of an old church on the site called Marina Voda.
BRUT (Dragaš): old graveyard with a demolished church on the site called Vakuf.
BRVENIK (Podujevo): remnants of the medieval fortress of Brvenik with the foundations of buildings and outer walls (a church situated in the center).
BRZANCE (Leposavić): old cemetery.
BUBE (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): 1. remnants of an old church in the village graveyard; 2. remnants of two old probably ecclesiastical, buildings on the hill called Bupski Šiljak.
BUBLJE (Mališevo): Budisavci monastery with the church of the Transfiguration (14th c.), the church restored and frescoed in 1568, to the wish of the Patriarch Makarije Sokolović.

Brnjača, St. Kyriake (Sveta Nedelja) Church

Brnjača, St. Kyriake, St. George kills the dragon, relief (now in the National Museum, Belgrade)

Dević Monastery, 16th century

BURINCE (in the Middle Ages Bujince, Podujevo): a church existed (demolished so that Pashas mill would be constructed with its stone remnants)

BUSINJE (Priština) locality "Srpsko groblje" (Serbian Graveyard).

BUSOVATO, BUSOVATA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old cemetery (now called the Jewish cemetery).

BUŠAC: unascertained village (in the wide neighborhood of Priština), in which, according to a written source from 1581, the church of St. Nicholas was located.

BUŠNICE (in the Middle Ages Baosići, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old cemetery called Jewish, on the site called Bara.

BUZEC (Dragaš): remnants of an old church on the site called Crkvište (i.e. ruins of a church).

DABIŠEVCE (in the Middle Ages Dabiživovci, Priština): at the end of the 19th c., the abandoned church widh the founder's inscription above the entrance still existed.

DAJKOVCE (formerly Dojkovce, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old church existed on the site called Prekobanjik.

DAMJANE, DAMNJANE (Djakovica): 1. church and an old graveyard formerly situated in the Trava mahala; 2. remnants of a church near the site called Dva Bresta (Two Elms) (Catholic church in the village of Smać built with its stone remnants); 3. church in Seh-mahala (with its stone remnants, the Albanians constructed a bridge and a house in the village); 4. the fourth village church located on the site where in 1940 Mon Bajram erected his tower. Two microtoponyms and the name of the village also bear witness to the existence of Serbian churches.

DAVIDOVCE (Uroševac): traces of a Serbian graveyard in the part of the village called Staroselo where a church used to occupy the site called Crkva (Church).

DAŽDINCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo) pan of the village still called Srpsko Groblje (Serbian Cemetary).

DEČANE (Dečane): 1. Dečani monastery; 2. hermitages in Dečani, see Belaje, Hermitages.

DEDINJE (K. Mitrovica): microtoponym "Kod Crkve" (By the Church).

DELOVCE (Suva Reka): ruins of the church of St. Nicholas and an old graveyard.

DESIVOJCE (Kriva Reka on Novo Brdo): remnants of a church in the old graveyard have been archaeologically established.

DEVAJE (Vitina): ruins of a church on the site called Bresje (village priest mentioned in the 15th c.) and traces of an old settlement in Selište.

DEVIČ, monastery, see LAUŠA.

DIKANCE (Dragaš): remnants of an old settlement with the ruins of a church in the locality called Popove Rupe (Priest's Holes), near the village.

DIVLJAKA (in the Middle Ages Divjak, Lipljan): remnants of an old village church and an old graveyard, as well as the localities "Crkva" (Church) and "Crkvena Livada" (Church Meadow).

DOBLIBARE (Djakovica): 1. archaeological remnants of early medieval Slavic culture; 2. ruins of a church and a graveyard were present in the village in 1868; the 19th c. saw the construction of the turbeh called Djordje with the material from the church of St. George.

DOBRAVA (in the Middle Ages Dobrhava, Leposavić): old ruins of a former church and a graveyard.

DOBRČANE (Gnjilane): 1. ruins of the so-called Latin Church, on the site named Baba-Andjin Most; 2. ruins of the church of St. Basil above the village; 3. church of St. Paraskeve constructed after 1918; 4. ruins of the old fortress of Kaljaja, near the village.

DOBRA VODA, UNJEMIR (Klina): 1. church (monastery?) of St. Peter—Petrovica, with the remnants of frescos and stone decoration from the 14th and 16th c.; 2. the so-called Little Church, unresearched, on the sire called Crkveni Lug (Church Grove).

DOBRI DO (Peć): 1. written sources from 1330 make mention of the church of St. Kyriake (unascertained); 2. remnants of the medieval church of St. Demetrius; 3. ruins of a church (considered to be the remnants of the church of the Mother of God Amolyntos); 4. remnants of an old settlement and graveyard, near the ruins.

DOBRI DOL (Klina): remnants of the church of St. Demetrius (village priest mentioned in 1455) and an old graveyard used to exist.

DOBRI DOL (Podujevo): small village cemetery.

DOBRODOLJANE (Suva Reka): church of St. Stephen existed in the 16th c.; demolished by Mahmud-Pasha of Scutari in the first half of the 19th c., when the village was forcibly Turkized.

DOBROŠEVAC (Glogovac): a written source from the 14th c. mentiones the remnants of a church and "Dmitar's church" within the village bounds, two microtoponyms testify to the existence of churches in the village and its neighbourhood.

DOBROTIN (Lipljan): old church of St. Demetrius.

DOBROTIN (Podujevo): surviving graveyard; a church existed in the 15th c.

DOBRUŠA (Istok): remnants of an old church on the hill of Vučar and two old graveyards (the Albanians from the village of Prekale made use of stone remains for tbe construction of their houses).

Devič, frescos, 16th century

Dolac, Presentation of the Mother of God Church, 16th century

Devič, The Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God with the tomb of St. Joanikije of Devič

Dolac, fresco of the Mother of God, 16th century

DOBRUŠTA (Prizren): monastic church of St. Nicholas, restored around 1332 by King Dušan (there are several locations near the village on which it might have stood).
DOJNICE, DOJINICE (in the Middle Ages Doenci, Prizren): over the ruins of the church of the Mother of God of the Passion a new church was erected in 1940.
DOLAC (Klina): the Turkish census of 1,455 makes mention of two village priests and a monastery with three monks near the village, today exist: 1. church of the Presentation of the Mother of God, formerly in the monastic range (remnants of two expansive wars), with frescos dating from the 14th c. and from 1620; 2. traces of a church in one of three old graveyards.
DOLJ (Djakovica): a church existed on the site called Doljska Crkva (Doljska Church).
DOLJAK (Vučitrn): old graveyard; microtoponym "Crkvina" (ruins of a church) testisfies to the existence of a church.
DOMANEK (in the Middle Ages Domaneg, Mališevo): in the mid-19th c., the remnants of an old church, were noted; as early as the 14th c. the church of St. Elias existed in the village or its environs.
DOMOROVCE (Izmornik): ruins of a large monastery on the hill of Popovac and three very old graveyards in the village and near the Končuljska gorge.
DONJA BITINJA (Uroševac): 1. church of St. Theodore with 16th-century frescos; 2. church of St. Demetrius, the 16th c.
DONJA DUBNICA (Vučitrn): an old church formedy existed (village priest mentioned as early as 1455), probably somewhere around today's Crkveni Do (Church Valley).

Donja Bitinja, Church of Saint Theodore Tyro, 16th century

Donja Bitinja, Church of Saint Theodore Tyro, 16th century

DONJA DUBNICA (Podujevo): a church existed in the 15th c.
DONJA FUŠTICA (Glogovac): ruins of a medieval church (14th and 16th c.), near the site called Crkva (Church).
DONJA GADIMLJA (Lipljan): microtoponym "Crkva Jorgovanova" (Jorgovan's Church).
DONJA GUŠTERICA (Lipljan): church of the Holy Prince Lazar erected at the outset of the 20th c., on the site of the old church of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist.
DONJA KLINA (Srbica): as early as 1455, the village had a priest; today the microtoponym "Crkva" (Church) exists.
DONJA LAPAŠTICA (Podujevo): the village had a church in the 15th c. its site is probably indicated by the present-day microtoponym "Crkva" (Church).
DONJA RAKOVICA: an unascertained village in the sanjak of Vučitrn and the Lapska nachye (the Turkish census of 1455 makes mention of the church of St. Nicholas near the village).
DONJA SUDIMLJA (Vučitrn): old cemetery.
DONJE DOBREVO (in the Middle Ages Dobrijevo, Priština): at the time of the immigration of the Albanians in the 18th c., a Serbian church stood on the site called Crkva (Church).
DONJE GODANCE (Uroševac): village church constructed after World War I.
DONJE ISEVO (Leposavić): ruins of an old church and an old graveyard.
DONJE KORMINJANE (Izmornik): church with 19th-century frescos.
DONJE LJUPČE (Podujevo): a church existed in the 15th c. (the census of 1455 refers to two village priests), and a monastery was situated in the neighbourhood.
DONJE NERODIMLJE (Uroševac): according to the Turkish census of 1455, the village had two Serbian priests. At present, there are: 1. remnants of the church of St. Stephen; 2. restored church of the Mother of God on the Glavica hill; 3. church of St. Nicholas, erected on the foundations of sm old church.
DONJE ŽABARE (K. Mitrovica): locality called "Crkva" (Church).
DONJI JASENOVIK (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): remnants of churches on the hill of Janjevac and in the location called Staro Groblje (Old Graveyard).
DONJI LIVOČ (Gnjilane): ruins of a church at the top called Ilijina Glava.
DONJI MAKREŠ (Gnjilane): traces of an old settlement and the foundations of a Serbian church on the site called Selište; two old graveyards on the sites of Rudna Padina and Ljudje.
DONJI OBILIĆ (Srbica): microtoponyms "Crkva" (Church) and "Crkvena Glava" (Church Head).
DONJI SIBOVAC (Podujevo): a church existed once (the census of 1,455 mentions a village priest).
DONJI STRMAC (Srbica): remnants of an old church on the site called Crkvina (ruins of a church).
DONJE RAMNJANE (Vitina): ruins of an old church registered at the start of the 19th c.
DRAGANAC (Gnjilane): monastery with the church of the Archangel Gabriel erected in the 19th c. over the ruins of an old church.
DRAGAŠ: remnants of an old churh and a graveyard on the site called Čukare.
DRAGOBILJE (Mališevo): church of the Mother of God mentioned in a 14th century written source.
DRAGOBRATA: unascertained village in the sanjak of Vučitrn; a monk mentioned in the 15th c., and the church of St. John in the 16th c.
DRAGOLJEVAC (Istok): remnants of two churches (in the Petkovica field and on the site called Crkvine (ruins of a church) and an old Serbian graveyard; as early as the 14th c., the so-called Krstovo Crkvište (i.e. ruins of the Church of the Cross) stood near the village.
DRAGOVAC (Priština) old graveyard.
DRAINOVIĆE (K. Mitrovica): ruins of an ancient church with an old graveyard.
DRAJČIĆI (Prizren): church of St. Nicholas (the end of the 16th c.), with frescos and icons from the 16th–17th c.
DRAJKOVCE (Uroševac): church of the 40 martyrs of Sebasteia from the 16th c. (restored).
DRAMNJAK (in the Middle Ages Drobnjak, Uroševac): an old church occupied the site called Crkvene Jaruge (Church Gullies).
DREN (Leposavić): remnants of a church.
DRENOVAC (Klina): remnants of the church of St. Nicholas registered in the 19th c.; at present, there is an old graveyard.
DRENOVAC (Orahovac): worship stone above the village (in all probability, remnant of the old church of St. Panteleimon).
DRENOVČIĆ (Klina): a church formerly existed on the hill above the village, on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church); at present, two cemeteries are located near the village.

Draganac Monastery, 19th century

Drajčići, Church of Saint Nicholas, 16th century

Drajčići, Church of Saint Nicholas, altar, 16th century

DRENOGLAVA (Kačanik): ruins of the so-called Macicka church, not far from the village.
DROBNJAK (Kačanik): graveyard and the church of St. George formerly existed (village priests mentioned in the censuses of 1452 and 1455).
DRSNIK (Klina): 1. remnants of an old fortress, on the hill above the village; 2. church of St. Paraskeve (St. Nicholas) with 16th-century frescos; 3. remnants of a former church in the place called Ćelije (Cells).

Drajkovce, Church of the Forty Martyrs

Drajkovce, Church of the Forty Martyrs

Drajčići, Founder's inscription from Deisis, church of Saint Nicholas, 17th century

Drsnik, Church of Saint Paraskeve, 16th century

Drsnik, Church of Saint Paraskeve, 16th century

DUBOKA (in the Middle Ages Glboko, Leposavić): a new church erected on the foundations of an old one, on Duplje hill.
DUBOKI POTOK (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): church of the Mother of God in the monastery of the Presentation of the Mother of God erected in the 14th c., restored in the 16th and 18th c., and also in recent times.
DUBOVNIK (Dečane): ruins of an old church and an old graveyard.
DUBOVO (Peć): according to tradition, the present-day mosque was erected on the site of a former church; the remnants of an old Serbian graveyard are situated at the foot of the Ozrim hill.
DUGA (Lipljan): microtoponym "Crkva" (Church) and a census from the 15th c. bear witness to the existence of a Serbian church.
DUJAK (Djakovica): ruins of an old church with a churchyard existed in the 19th c.
DULJE (in the Middle Ages Duhlje, Suva Reka): 1. remnants of the church of the Holy Savior in the graveyard, 2. ruins of the church of St. Paraskeve by the spring of the Lukara stream.
DUNAVO (Gnjilane): 1. ruins of an old church near the site called Velika Kosa; 2. ruins of a church near the site called Reka.
DUZ (formerly Dusje or Dusci, Podujevo): a Serbian church existed in the 15th c.; the ruins of three churches registered in the 19th c.

DVORANE (Suva Reka): 1. modest village church of the Holy Savior; 2. ruins of the church of the Archangel Michael; 3. Serbian cemetery demolished by the Albanians in 1984.
DJAKOVICA 1. unascertained church (in the 16th c.), metoch of the Dečani monastery, a village priest mentioned as early as the 15th c.); 2. church of the Dormition of the Mother of God (with icons from the 17th, 18th and 19th c.) in Srpska Street; 3. large church, mausoleum of the Serbian warriors fallen in the wars of 1912–1918 (dynamited in 1949).
DJELEKARE (Vitina): ruins of a church probably existed in the vicinity of today's Crkveni Kladenac (Church Well), (village priest mentioned in the census of 1455).
DJOCAJ (Dečane): microtoponym "Grobac" (Small Grave) marks a Serbian grave or graveyard (perished).
DJONAJ (Prizren): 1. remnants of the church of St. Catherine, near an old mill; 2. remnants of a church (Catholic?), on the site called Gedza.
DJURAKOVAC (Istok): 1. church of St. Nicholas, with a sepulchar slab from the 14th c. and frescos from the 16th c. a stećak tombstone from the 14th–15th c. in the Serbian graveyard in front of the church; 2. a Catholic church recently built over the remnants of the church of the Holy Anargyroi; 3. ruins of a former church with an old graveyard, at the present-day trash dump.
DJURDJEV DOL (Kačanik): remnants of an old church registered on the site called Crkva (Church).
DJURKOVCE (Uroševac): toponym "Crkvište" (ruins of a church) points to the existence of an old church.
ENCE (Priština): a microtoponym testifies to the existence of a church.

FIRAJA (Uroševac), see PAPRATNA
FIRIDJEJE (formerly Stanilovac, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old graveyard.

Duboki Potok, Presentation of the Mother of God Monastery, 15th century

Duboki Potok, Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God

Djakovica, Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God

Djurakovac, Church of Saint Nicholas, Icon of Mother of God with the Christ Child

GATANJE (Uroševac): the village had three churches: 1. on the site called Manastir (Monastery); 2. on the site called Kaludjere (of the Monks) 3. church of St. Nicholas (recently reconstructed in east of Gornja Mahala).

GAZIVODE (K. Mitrovica): remnants of a town-fortress stood on the hill above the village; an old graveyard located in the village.

GLADNO SELO (Glogovac): microtoponym "Crkveni Do" (Church Valley) points to the existence of a village church.

GLAVIČICA (Peć): old and present day cemetery.

GLIVNIK (Dragaš): ancient graveyard and ruins of a church on the site of an old, abandoned village.

GLOBOČICA (Dragaš): present day mosque constructed upon the foundations of a former church; the plateau above the village still called Crkva (Church).

GLOBOČICA (in the Middle Ages Dlbočica, Kačanik): at the end of the 19th c., the church of St. Nicholas (?) with an old graveyard, whose traces have been destroyed, stood in the center of the village.

GLODJANE (Dečane): old cemetery (called Živko's Cemetery), in the Živkaj mahala.

GLOGOVAC: remnants of the foundations of a medieval church, on Mt. Kosmača, south of the village; a Serbian cemetery in the village.

GLOGOVCE, GLOGOVICA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): ruins of an old church in the hamlet of Demovići.

GLOGOVCE (Lipljan): old cemetery (called Svatovsko, i.e. the Wellding Guests' Cemetery).

GMINCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): ruins of the old church of St. Paraskeve on the site called Crkve (Churches).

GNJEŽDANE (in the Middle Ages Gnježdani, Leposavić): old cemetery.

GNJILANE (in the Middle Ages Gnivljani): church of St. Paraskeve probably occupied the site called Petkovce (Petigovce); 2. monastery of St. John south of the town (demolished by the Turks in the 18th c.); 3. church of St. Nicholas, erected in the 19th c. on the foundations of an older church.

GODANCE (in the Middle Ages Hudince, Glogovac): according to written sources from the 15th and 17th c., the village had a church.

GOJBULJA (Vučitrn): old church of St. Paraskeve in the village graveyard (recently restored); a Serbian graveyard from the 18th c.

GORANCE (Kačanik): 1. church of St. Atanas (Athanasius) in the center of the village demolished by the Albanians, 2. ruins of the church (monastery?) of St. Elijah, above the village, 3. church of St. Nicholas, formerly located in the west part of the village; 4. ruins of the church of St. Paraskeve, in the west part of the village; 5. church of the Mother of God, situated in the north-east of the village; 6. church of St. George in the north of the village (demolished in the 19th c.); 7. church of the Holy Archangels, previously located in the north-east side of the village.

GORAŽDEVAC (in the Middle Ages Goražde Vas, Peć): 1. log-cabin church, dedicated to St. Jeremiah, dating from the 16th c. (the oldest in Serbia dedicated to this saint), in the old graveyard; 2. church of the Intercession of the Mother of God, erected in 1926.

GORNJA BITINJA (Uroševac): new church constructed over the remnants of the old church of St. George (the apse with old frescos), several stone slabs from the 14th c. have survived in the church and next to it (the Turkish census of 1455 makes mention of two village priests).

GORNJA BRNJICA (Priština): church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, erected in 1975 on the foundations of the old church of St. Nicholas.

GORNJA GUŠTERICA (Lipljan): 1. ruins of a former church, dedicated to St. Elijah; 2. ruins of the church of the Mother of God Amolyntos with an old graveyard.

GORNJA KLINA (Srbica): a 15th-century source makes mention of "the monastery of St. Ahilije" (Achilleius) in the vicinity of the village; several microtoponyms testify to the existence of a church.

GORNJA KRUŠICA (Suva Reka): microtoponym "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Cemetery).

GORNJA LAPAŠTICA (Podujevo): a village church existed in the 15th c. (when mention is made of its priest), probably on the site of the present-day ruins.

Gornja Bitinja, Church of Saint George, 16th century

Gornje Selo, Church of Saint George, 16th–17th century

Gornja Bitinja, the marble epigraph from 1592, with the last will of noblemen Nikodim and Petrus, who donated a mill and the land to the Church

Gornje Selo, frescos in the Church of Saint George, 16th century

GORNJA SLATINA (Vitina): microtoponym "Crkvene Njive" (Church Fields) testifies that the village used to have a church.
GORNJA SRBICA (Prizren): church of St. Basil, erected in 1863 over the ruins of an old church.
GORNJA SUDIMLJA (Vučitrn): remnants of a church on the site called "Crkvište" (ruins of a church) and two old Serbian graveyards.

Gornje Nerodimlje, Holy Archangels Monastery, 16th century

GORNJA ŠIPAŠNICA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): ruins of a church, in the village, and the church of St. Panteleimon, in a village field, toward Donja Šipašnica.
GORNJE GADIMLJE (Lipljan): ruins a former church and the significant archaeological site called Gradina (Lower Stone Age and Iron Age).
GORNJE GODANCE (Lipljan): ruins of an old church on the site called Žirovnica.
GORNJE KARAČEVO (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): a priest mentioned in the village in the 15th c., so that it must have had a church at that time, nowadays, the area of the old Serbian graveyard is used by the Albanians for grazing cattle.
GORNJE KORMINJANE (Izmornik): the demolished monastery of St. George in the wood not far from the village; an old graveyard next to the village.
GORNJE KUSCE (Gnjilane): remnants of the churches of St. Paraskeve and St. Kyriake.
GORNJE LJUBINJE (Prizren): remnants of the church of St. Paraskeve and St. Kyriake.
GORNJE LJUPČE (Podujevo): a church existed, and perhaps a monastery as well (the census of 1455 makes mention of a village priest and a monk).
GORNJE NERODIMLJE (Uroševac): in the 14th c., the palaces of Serbian rulers were situated in Nerodimlja (Rodimlja, Porodimlja). Today exist: 1. monastery of the Holy Archangels from the 14th c., restored in 1700; 2. church of the Dormition

of the Mother of God ("the Monastery of St. Uroš"), in the hamlet of Šarenik dating, according to legend from the 14th c., 3. remnants of the church of St. Nicholas, near the site called Kaludjerska Vodenica (Monks' Mill), where the ruins of several secular structures (as it seems, the palaces of rulers) are situated; 4. foundations of three churches in the village.

GORNJE POTOČANE (Orahovac): old church and graveyard formerly existed.

GORNJE PREKAZE (Srbica): in the 16th c., mention is made of the monastic church of the Dormition of the Mother of God; the old and new cemeteries exist nowadays.

GORNJE SELO (Prizren): the graveyard church of St. George with stone ornamentation and frescos from the 16th–17th c.

GORNJE VINARCE (K. Mitrovica): medieval church, restored in the 16th c.; in 1972, demolished by a group of Albanians.

GORNJI and **DONJI CRNOBREG** (in the Middle Ages Crveni Breg, Dečane): a written source from 1330 refers to the church of St. Nicholas (stir existed in the 19th c.) and St. George in the environs of the village.

GORNJI and **DONJI STREOC** (Dečane): in the 14th c., mention is made of the church of St. Stephen (Stefanja church) and the monastery of the Holy Anargyroi, the old Serbian cemetery with one *stećak* situated in Nevestin Vrh (Bride's Peak).

GORNJI JASENOVIK (K. Mitrovica): remnants of a church and an old graveyard on the Leskovača hillock and the site called Rovce.

Gotovuša, Church of Saint Nicholas, 16th century

GORNJI KRNJIN (in the Middle Ages Krnjino, Leposavić): ruins called the Latin church.

GORNJI LIVOČ (Gnjilane): the site of a former church, near the hamlet of Jabučani.

Gorioč Monastery, icon of St. Nicholas, late 17th century

Gorioč Monastery, icon of St. George, late 17th century

GORNJI MAKREŠ (Gnjilane): remnants of an old settlement and old graveyard on the site called Grobljište.
GORNJI OBILIĆ (Srbica): acccording to a 17th-century travel account and folk tradition, the monastery of St. George was situated in the vicinity of the village; next to the village, there is an old cemetery.
GORNJI PETRIČ (Klina): remnants of an ancient church in the graveyard (where according to tradition, was the monastery of St. John the Baptist) and the ruins of the medieval town of Petrič, on the his above the village.
GORNJI STRMAC (between Kolašin upon the Ibar and Drenica): old graveyard church (restored in recent times) in the hamlet of Perkovac, and the old Serbian cemetery in the hamlet of Rusce.
GORNJI STRMAC (Srbica): restored old church and an old graveyard.
GORNJI SUVI DO (K. Mitrovica): small church and an old graveyard.
GOROŽUP (Prizren): until recent times, the microroponym of the old Serbian cemetery was preserved.
GOTOVUŠA (Uroševac): 1. church of St. Nicholas with 16th-century frescos; 2. old church of the Dormition of the Mother of God (restored in 1886); 3. traces of an old church in the vicinity of the ancient fortress of Zidovica.
GRABAC (Klina): remnants of the church of the Holy Trinity and an old graveyard.
GRABANICA (Klina): the surviving name of the old Serbian cemetery.
GRABOVAC (K. Mitrovica): old graveyard and the ruins of a former church.
GRACE (Vučitrn): old graveyard and the ruins of a former church were situated in Ljigate, near the river Lab.
GRAČANICA (Priština): 1. Gračanica monastery; 2. medieval hermitage of St. Luke near the Kiznički stream; 3. monument to the Serbian soldiers fallen in the wars of 1912–1918; 4. Gladnice, an early Slavic necropolis from the 6th–7th c.
GRADICA (Glogovac): according to 15th-century Turkish census, a church existed there.
GRADJENIK (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): remnants of demolished church on the site called Selište and in the Kaludjerica mahala.
GRAMOČEL (in the Middle Ages Grmočel, Dečane): foundations of an old church with the remnants of medieval bricks and frescos (the census of 1455 makes mention of a village priest) in the present-day Catholic cemetery.
GRANIČANE (Leposavić): 1. remnants of an old church in the village graveyard, 2. church erected around 1860 in the old graveyard, razed to the ground in 1876.
GRAŽDANIK (in the Middle Ages Ogradjenik, Prizren): in the 14th c., the church of St. Pantaleemon stood on the hill near the village demolished in the 16th c. by Suzi Celebija a converted Turk from Prizren, who erecred a palace on its site.
GRČINA, GRČIN (Djakovica): according to tradition, the village had five churches.
GREBNIK (Klina) 1. ruins of the Church of St. Jeremiah and an old graveyard on the site called Kučine, where an old settlement was situated; 2. old cemetery, on the hill west of the village; 3. church erected in 1920 on the site of a former religious building (dedicated to St. Athanasius?).
GREBNO (Uroševac): at the end of the 19th c. and the beginning of the 20th c., the ruins of two churches stood in the village, and above the village was the church called Manastir (Monastery).
GREKOVCE (in the Middle Ages Grehovac, Suva Reka): ruins of an old church.
GRIZIME (in the Middle Ages Grizimjeh, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo) traces of an old settlement; according to tradition, an old church was situated on the present-day locality called Crkvište (ruins of a church).
GRKAJE (Leposavić): univestigated remnants of an old church.
GRMOVO (Vitina): a church existed in the village (priest mentioned in the Turkish census of 1455).
GRNČAR (Vitina): 1. village church of St. Nicholas constructed on the foundations of an old in all likelihood monastic church; 2. ruins of the church of St. Paraskeve, above the village; 3. ruins of an old fortress, called Staro Gradište or Kaleja, above the village; 4. shrine from the pagan epoch and late antiquity, and, as it appears, a Christian cell—hermitage, in the cave above the village.
GULIJE (Leposavić): small village church, south-east of the village.
GUMNIŠTE (Vučitrn): ruins of rwo churches, in the mahalas of Zekej and Memetej, an old cemetery situated on the site called Ulica.
GUNCATE (Mališevo): in the mid-19th c., remnants of a former church and of an old graveyard still existed.
GUŠICA (Vitina): old church with a graveyard formerly existed.
HOČA ZAGRADSKA (in the Middle Ages Hodča beneath Cviljen Prizren): 1. remnants of the church of St. Nicholas (mentioned in notes from the 16th and 17th c.) recorded in the 19th c.
HRTICA (in the Middle Ages Rtica, Podujevo): remnants of the church of St. Cyrill and Methodius, with an old graveyard, in Donja Hrtica.

IBARSKO POSTENJE (Leposavić): remnants of a church on the his called Crkvine (ruins of a church).
IGLAREVO (Klina): old church (a village priest mentioned in the 15th c.) and a graveyard existed.
IŠTINIĆ (Dečane): 1. monastery of St. Simeon, mentioned in 1485, 2. ruins of the church of St. Elijah, registered in the 19th c.; 3. so-called "Obaljena" ("Pulled down") church, mentioned in the 19th c.; 4. in the first half of the 20th c., old Serbian tombstones could still be seen in the present-day Albanian cemetery.
ISTOK: 1. remnants of an ancient church, in the old graveyard, on the site called Crkvine (ruins of a church); 2. church of St. Peter and Paul, erected in 1929; 3. Gorioč monastery with the old church of St. Nicholas (according to tradition, dating from the 14th c., repeatedly restored).
IVAJA (in the Middle Ages Ivanje, Kačanik): ruins of a church (of St. Demetrius?), on the site called Crkva (Church).

IZBICE (Srbica): the church of the Ascention in "Isbinac" known from historical sources, probably located in the vicinity of the village.

JABLANICA (Djakovica): ruins of a church and a graveyard noted down in 1868.
JABUKA (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): remnants of an ancient church and graveyard dating from the Late Middle Ages.
JANČIŠTE (Mališevo): in 1879, a graveyard with the remnants of a former church still existed un the village.
JANJEVO (Lipljan): 1. church of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel mentioned in the Plakaonička mahala in 1548; 2. church of the Annuciation mentioned in the Sopotska mahala in 1581; 3. on the foundations of the old church of St. Nicholas (with frescos and old inscriptions) a Catholic church was erected in the 19th c.
JARINJE (Leposavić): remnants of an old church and graveyard in the hamlet of Mijatovići; several specimens of old village houses typical of the area at the foot of Mt. Kopaonik.
JASENOVIK (Priština): a church existed in the 15th c.; today there are rwo old graveyards and the ruins of rwo churches: in Beli Breg and near the hamlet of Filipovci (dedicated to the Mother of God).
JAŽINCE (Uroševac): 1. church of St. Paraskeve erected on the site of the former log-cabin church; 2. the site called Crkvine (ruins of a church) (near the present-day school), on which an old church formerly stood.
JELAKCE (in the Middle Ages Jelašci, Leposavić): remnants of an old church near the hamlet of Strzin—perhaps the church of the Archangel Michael, erected by the Archbishop Danilo II (1324–1337).
JELOVAC (Klina): a church existed in the 15th c.; the remnants of the church of St. Paraskeve have survived in the graveyard and the ruins of another church on the hill called Ćelije (Cells).
JEŠKOVO (in the Middle Ages Elhovev or Elhovo, Prizren): in the 14th c., the church of St. Nicholas was situated in the neighbourhood of the village.
JEZERCE (Uroševac): 1. church of St. Elijah, once situated on the site called Crkvena Livada (Church Meadow); 2. church of St. Uroš, constructed in the 19th c. on the site of the large temple dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God; 3. ruins of a church in the hamlet called Prorok, on the Rid ridge.
JOŠANICA (in the Middle Ages Jelšanica, Klina): remnants of a church (of the Holy Savior?) with whose material the mosque in the village of Lešan (Peć) was constructed in the 19th c.
JOŠANICA (in the Middle Ages Jelšanica, Leposavić): remnants of the old church of the Resurrection in the village graveyard and 4 roadside tombstones from the beginning of the 20th c.
JUNIK (Dečane): old ruins of a church and a graveyrad in the Stepan-mahala.

KABAŠ (formerly Grm, Vitina): demolished church, formerly situated near the village; the old graveyard has been plowed.
KABAŠ HAS (Prizren): remnants of a medieval fortress with massive oval walls and a church in its center, on the his called Dubovi Svetog Djordja (Oaks of St. George).
KABAŠ KORIŠKI (formerly St. Peter, Prizren): 1. hermitage and monastery of St. Peter of Koriša with the remnants of three layers of frescos from the 13th c. and the 14th c.; 2. foundations of the church of the Mother of God next to the hermitage; 3. remnants of a church with a crypt in the Luka-mahala; 4. unascertained remnants of another church in the Luka-mahala, known from tradition; 5. ruins of the Graveyard church (remnants of frescos with Cyrillic inscriptions); next to the church was a cemetery with tombstones from the 15th c. and 16th c., used for the construction of boundary lines between estates; 6. walls of a massive tower or a bell tower, on the hill of Čuklja.
KAČIKOL (Priština): remnants of an old church and a graveyard in the mahala of Limonović.
KAJKOVO (in the Middle Ages Kaikovo, Leposavić): remnants of an old graveyard church.
KALIČANE (Istok): an old church formerly existed; slabs from the church of Studenica Hvostanska were incorporated into the walls of the village mosque.
KALUDRA (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): 1. old graveyard and the ruins of a church in the hamlet of Velika Kaludra; 2. another old graveyard, in Mala Kaludra.
KAMENICA (Leposavić): remnants of an old church with a dommitory, bell-tower and small graveyard.
KARAČE (Vučitrn): mycrotoponym "Crkva" (Church).
KARAČICA (Lipljan): a Serbian church existed in the 15th c., as it appears, in the present-day locality called "Crkva" (Church).
KARASINDJERDJ (Prizren): old church of St. George, after which the village was named, probably situated on the site called Crkvene Njive (Church Fields). Today this site is occupied by the memorial chapel of the Franciscan Stefan Djecovija.
KARMIL, KARMEL: unascertained monastery with the church of St. Elijah from the 14th c. (built by the Serbian Patriarch Joanikije); registered in a 15th-century census as situated somewhere "in the nachye of Peć."
KAŠICA (Istok): 1. remnants of an old church, in Brdo Mališica; 2. foundations of a church and an old graveyard (north of the village).
KIJEVČIĆE (in the Middle Ages also Doljani, Leposavić): ruins of a former church (above the counfluence of the Crnilovića stream), an old water mill (on the stream), and an old graveyard.
KIJEVO (Klina): old church of St. Nicholas from the 16th c., perhaps even from the 14th c., the narthex, added at a later date, was painted in 1602–1603; the bell-tower. Dates from the 19th c.

Kabaš of Koriša, foundation remnants of Church of Saint Luke in Luka Mahala, 14th century

Kačanik, Holy Prophet Elijah Church, 1929

Kijevo, Church of Saint Nicholas: Elevation on the Cross, 16th century

Kijevo, Church of Saint Nicholas, 16th century

KISELA BANJA (Podujevo): remnants of an old church on the site called Miloševa Crkva (Miloš's Church).
KIŠNA REKA (Glogovac): foundations of an old church, on the his above the village.
KLADERNICA (Srbica): microtoponyms "Crkveni Do" (Church Valley) and "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Cemetery).
KLEČKA (Lipljan): a church existed in the 15th c.; the surviving toponym "Crkveni Do" (Church Valley).
KLINA: 1. remnants of the church of the Presentation of the Mother of God in the nothern part of the village; the old and new cemetery located in proximity; 2. ruins of a former church were situated in the village, in the clearing called Vakaf.
KLINAVAC (Klina): remnants of the church of St. Paraskeve in the village graveyard.
KLOBUKAR (Priština): ruins of an old church on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church), and the remnants of the slag ground of a medieval mine (Novo Brdo).
KLOKOT (Vitina): 1. demolished church of St. Nicholas in the village; 2. Crkveni Lugovi (Church Groves) with the site called Lugovska Crkva (Grove Church) near the village; 3. traces of the old settlement called Vrban-grad; 4. old graveyard, formerly situated in the so-called Selište (remnants of a village); 5. archaeological remnants of a large Roman settlement.
KLOPOTNIK: ruins of the medieval fortress called Klopotnik, with the remnants of a church and a suburb on the hill of the same name between the villages of Ugljar and Dobroševina.
KMETOVCE (Gnjilane): ruins of the monastery and church of St. Demetrius (St. Barbara) from the 14th c. with the fray meets of frescos; next to the church is a very old cemetery.
KOBILJA GLAVA (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): old cemetery.
KOJLOVICA (Priština): an old graveyard in the village and the remnants of the old church of St. Elijah, not far from the village.
KOLIĆ (Priština): a church existed once.
KOLO (Vučitrn): church of St. Mark registered in the 15th c. (erected by Olivera Balšić in the 14th c.). The remnants of two churches exist today: in the Rasevački stream and in Klisura.
KOLOLEČ (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old graveyard and an old church.
KOMORANE (Glogovac): locality "Crkveni Lugovi" (Church Groves); an old Serbian cemetery situated next to the village.
KONJUH (Lipljan): old graveyard.

Pogradje near Klina, Holy Anargyroi Church (St. Demetrius), 16th century

Klina

Icon of Sts Peter and Paul from Saint Nicholas Church in Čabići (Klina). The church was mined and completely destroyed in 1999 by the Albanian extremists.

Koriša, remnants of Saint George Church at Serbian cemetery, 14th century

Koriša, remnants of Church of Saint Nicholas, 14th century

Saint Mark of Koriša: the grave of Sima Andrejević Igumanov, desecrated and vandalized on the centennial of his death, 1982 (on the wall, by the grave, are inscribed the words "Kosovo Republic")

KOPORIĆE (Leposavić): the village had churches as early as the 14th c., nowadays their remains are found on the hill called Mali Krst (Small Cross) and in the hamlet of Zavrata (Modri Mel) an old graveyard stands on the site called Dub and the ruins of an ancient town are on the hill of Stražnik; remnants of an old mining settlement have also survived.
KOPRIVNICA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): a village church existed in the 15th c.; the remnants of an old church and abandoned graveyard stand near the hill of Sitak, while the ruins of an old fortress are on the hill.
KORBULIĆ (Kačanik): an old church was situated in the wood, on the site called Crkva (Church), and an old graveyard on the site called Ključ.
KORENICA (Djakovica): old ruins, probably of a church.
KORETIN (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): a Slavic archaeological site (9th–11th c.).
KORETIŠTE, KURETIŠTE (Gnjilane): remnants of the church of the Mother of God, in the pan of the village called Seliste (remains of a village); an old graveyard (Kane's graveyard) located near the village, and an abandoned medieval mine situated on the Glam hill.
KORIŠA (Prizren): 1. remnants of the church of St. Peter erected before 1343 (with the fragments of 14th-century frescos); restored several times, for it was demolished in 1885 (the mosque in Koriša built with its stone remains), then in 1915–1918 and in 1941; 2. remnants of the church of St. Nicholas on the slopes of Gradište (demolished fortress) 3. ruins of the church of St. George (14th c.) with the fragments of frescos, in the village graveyard; 3. church of the Intercession of the Moth-

Monastery of Saint Mark of Koriša, 15th century

er of God with the fragments of murals from the 16th–17th c., riddled with bullets, in the hamlet of Vrelo; 5. remnants of the fortified monastery of Muzljak (with the fragments of frescos), abandoned in the 17th c., above the hamlet of Muzljak; 6. monastery of St. Mark of Koriša from 1467, restored in the 17th c.; in 1915, the Albanians devastated it and murdered the monks; the restored monastery was plundered in 1941, now restored again; 7. hermitage of St. Mark of Koriša, on the hill above the monastery.

KOSIN (Uroševac): remnants of a church in the hamlet of Selište.

KOSMAČA (Glogovac): the mountain on which the tums of a fortress are situated, as well as those of a church, or, according to tradition, the Ježevica monastery, King Milutin's foundation.

KOSORIĆ (in the Middle Ages Kosorići, Peć): remnants of an old graveyard.

KOSOVCE, KOSOVCI (Dragaš): locality "Crkva" (Church) in the meadows testifies to the existence of an old church.

KOSOVO POLJE: church of St. Nicholas erected in 1940 on the foundations of an older ecclesiastical structure.

KOSOVSKA KAMENICA: 1. ruins of an ancient fortress, in all likelihood Prizrenac, on the Kuline hill ruins of an old church are beneath it; 2. new church, erected at the beginning of the 20th c. on the foundations of an older one, in the town: surrounded by an old graveyard.

KOSOVSKA MITROVICA: 1. church of St. Demetrius (14th c.) stood at the foot of Mali Zvečan; 2. church of St. Sava (the end of the 19th c.), 3. traces of an old small church in today's graveyard, on the road to Priština, according to unconfirmed data, the church of St. Elijah was situated in the southem part of the town.

KOSTADINCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): remnants of an older Serbian village (devastated by the Turks in the mid-19th c.) and traces of an old cemetery on the site called Grobište.

KOSTIN POTOK (Leposavić): remnants of an old church and an old graveyard.

KOSTRC (Srbica): traces of two small medieval churches and a medieval graveyard.

KOSTRCE (in the Middle Ages Kostrc, Suva Reka): the Byzantine and Serbian medieval fortress of Kostrc formerly overlooked the present-day village.

KOŠ (Istok): of two churches (according to tradition dedicated to the Mother of God and St. Nicholas), only the ruins have survived—one in the Obradović mahala, near the neglected "Selarević" graveyard, and the other in the village cemetery (a more recent church erected over it). The traces of foundations (according to tradition a monastery) can be found on the site called Devičak. The new church of the Holy Prince Lazar was constructed in the center of the village in 1969.

KOŠARE (Uroševac): old necropolis called Srpsko Groblje (Serbian Graveyard).

KOŠTANJEVO (Uroševac): ruins of a church by the present day mosque, on the site called Crkva (Church); in the 19th c. the church of St. Peter was situated near the village.

KOŠTUNOVO (K. Mitrovica): ruins of a church existed in the locality called Crkva (Church).

KOŠUTOVO (Leposavić): according to unconfirmed data, the traces of the remnants of a church and a graveyard exist there.

Kosovska Mitrovica, Church of Saint Sava

KOTLINA (Kačanik): foundations of a medieval church and several Orthodox tombs uncovered on the site of the present-day mosque.

KOTORE (Srbica): microtoponyms "Crkva" (Church) and "Crkveni Do" (Church Valley) have preserved the memory of the destroyed church.

KOVAČEVAC (Kačanik): ruins of an old church formerly existed.

KOVAČICA (K. Mitrovica): remnants of a former church on the site called Crkvena Livada (Church Meadow).

KOZNIK (Orahovac): ruins of a modestly sized church surrounded by walls (probably a fortified monastery in the past).

KPUZ (formerly Kupusce, Klina): 1. remnants of an old church and an old graveyard on the hill of Dolinci; 2. ruins of a church (west of the village) whose stone fragments were used for marking boundaries between estates.

KRAJIŠTE (Lipljan): remnants of the monastic church of the Holy Anargyroi in the Serbian cemetery (mentioned in 15th century documents), demolished by Jashar-Pasha Džanić in the 19th c.

KRAJNI DEL (formerly Kranidol, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): monastery of St. Luke mentioned in the 15th c. and the 16th c. today there is the locality "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Graveyard; the traces of an old settlement exist on the site called "Selište" (remnants of a village).

KRALJANE (Djakovica): remnants of an old fortress and a church with a small graveyard situated on the hill near the village (according to tradition, it was a large royal town with the church of St. John the Baptist).

KRASMIROVAC (Srbica): locality "Srbinov Grob" (the Serb's Grave), probably occupied by a graveyard once.

KRAVASARIJA, KRAVOSERIJA (Mališevo): ruins of a church upon which a primary school building was erected after 1945.
KREMENATA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): remnants of an old church and graveyard on the site of a former settlement (not far from the present-day Serbian cemetery); the remnants of the medieval mine of Celovi are located in the vicinity of the village.
KRILJEVO (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): ruins of an old church on the site called Crkva (Church).
KRNJINA (Istok): old graveyard, formerly with a church, on the hill above the village the localities "Kod Crkve" (By the Church) and "Crkvište" (i.e. ruins of a church) exist in the village.
KRNJINCE (Klina): church of St. George, with a graveyard demolished in the second half of the 19th c.
KRPIMEJ (Podujevo): 1. church of St. Peter and Paul on the Kraljevica hill, erected upon the foundations of an older, according to tradition medieval, religious building; 2. remnants of medieval walls unearthed in the village, probably belonging to an ecclesiastical sttucture.
KRSTAC (Dragaš): 1. ruins of the church of St. Panteleimon, on the Pantelevac hill in Veliki Krstac; 2. remnants of a church on the Djula hill; 3. remnants of a former church and an old graveyard in Mali Krstac, on the site called Rudina.
KRUŠEVAC (Srbica): in the 13th c., the churches of St. Bartholomew and St. Elijah were situated near the village (unascertained).
KRUŠEVICA (Podujevo): a 15th-century written source indicates that a monastery may have existed in the village or its surroumdings.
KUĆICA (Srbica): the mid-19th century recorded the ruins of two churches today a microtoponym survives indicating that a graveyard also existed once.
KUKULJANE, KUKOLJANE (Dragaš): microtoponym "Crkva" (Church) survives.
KUTNJE (Leposavić): ruins of the Kutna church, on the hill by the Ibar river.
KUZMIKAN, KUZMIČANI, KOZMEKAN: an unscenained monastery in "the nachye of Peć" (mentioned in the Turkish censuses from the 15th c. and the 16th c.).
KUZMIN (in the Middle Ages Kuzmino, Priština): ruins of an old church and an old graveyard.
KRVENIK (in the Middle Ages Pokrivenik, Kačanik): ruins of the so-called Staro Selo with the remains of a church (the village burned down by the Turks in 1690).

LABLJANE (Peć): nor far from the village stands the ancient oak-tree next to which the Patriarch Arsenije III gathered the Serbs who escaped from the Turks in 1690 and started the Great Migration to the north. An old graveyard, and perhaps the old ruins of a former church was situated next to the oak.
LABLJANE (Priština): old cemetery.
LABUČEVO (Orahovac): anachoretic cave-dwellings the so called Uljarice north east of the village, in the ravine above the cascades of the Mirusa river; 1. the large rock-cut church from the 14th c. restored in the 16th c., with the fragments of medieval ceramics, glass and frescos; 2. small rock cut dwelling (the remnants of frescos completely destroyed by Albanian shepherds).
LAJČIĆ, LEJAČIĆ (in the Middle Ages Leočić, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): ruins of an old church and an old graveyard formerly existed.
LANDOVICA (in the Middle Ages Lutovica, Prizren): the 19th c. recorded the remnants of the church of St. Catherine and an old graveyard in Nemišlje.
LAPLJE SELO (in the Middle Ages Ljapov, Priština): church of St. Paraskeve, recently erected upon the remnants of an older church (village priests mentioned as early as the 15th c.).
LAUŠA (in the Middle Ages Loviša, Srbica): 1. medieval monastery of Devič, restored several times, with the complex of churches dedicated to the Presentation of the Mother of God, St. Joanikius and St. George. In 1941 destroyed by the Albanian nationalists. The monastery reconstruction, in whose ruins frescos from the 15th, 16th and 19th c. were umcovered, commenced in 1950; 2. hemmitage of St. Joanikius of Devič, on the hill north of the monastery, demolished in 1941; 3. medieval cemetery called Groblje Srba (Graveyard of the Serbs), in the village.
LEOČINA (in the Middle Ages Lel'cino, Srbica): 1. church of St. John from the 14th c. completely reconstructed in the 16th c., widh the remains of frescos (16th c.): next to it stretches a large graveyard with stone crosses from the 17th, 18th and the 19th c.; 2. remnants of the so-called Kaludjerska (Monks') church (of the Transfiguration) (14th c.).
LEPINA (Lipljan): church existed in the 15th c. old ruins of a church and an old graveyard survive.
LEPOSAVIĆ: 1. remnants of the church of the Dormition of the Mother of God, by the graveyard; 2. remnants of the church dedicated to the Palm Sunday, in the part of the settlement called Ulije; 3. church of the Crucifixion, constructed in 1935 on the foundations of an older church, on the Gradac hill.
LESKOVAC (in the Middle Ages Leskovec, Klina): an old church existed (the traces of which have perished)
LESKOVČIĆ (Priština): old graveyard.
LESKOVEC (Prizren): the site formerly occupied by an old graveyard.
LEŠAK (in the Middle Ages Lješak, Leposavić): 1. church of the Dormition of the Mother of God, erected in recent times on the foundations of an older church; 2. "Borjani" church in the hamlet of Kamen; 3. old graveyard in the hamlet of Vrujci, on the Okruglica hill; 4. drinking foumtain called Sulender in the hamlet of Vrujci earthen pipes brought water to it even in the Middle Ages.
LEŠANE (Suva Reka): remnants of the church dedicated to St. Kyriake.
LEŠNICA (Podujevo): a church existed (a village priest mentioned as early as the 15th c.).
LEŠTANE (Dragaš): in 1861, the ruins of a church were recorded to have existed in the village.
LEŠTAR, LJEŠTAR (in the Middle Ages Lestije, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): remnants of two demolished churches—on the site called Manastir (Monastery) and the present-day cemetary.
LETNICA (Vitina): new church of the Mother of God erected in 1934 on the foundations of the Catholic church from 1584 (restored in the 19th c.), treasuring two wooden statues from the 16th–17th c.

Leočina, a tombstone at old Serbian Cemetery, by Church of Saint John, 18th century

Leočina, Church of Saint John, east side, 16th century

Ljubižda, Church of Saint Nicholas, 16th century

LOKVICE (Prizren): 1. ruins of the church of the Holy Archangels (14th c.); 2. ruins of the church of St. John or St. George (16th c.); 3. church of St. Elijah, erected in 1866 on the foundations of an older church; 4. old cemetery.
LOVAC (in the Middle Ages Lovac Potok K. Mitrovica): old graveyard with the ruins of a former church.
LOVCE (Gnjilane): two demolished churches used to exist; at present, there is only the locality called Crkveno Brdo (Church Hill).
LUČKA RIJEKA (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): 1. church from more recent times built upon the foundations of an older religous building; 2. ruins of an old, small-sized church, in Prijeselo, in the old graveyard; 3. old graveyard in Prljevo.

LIPLJAN: 1. church of the Presentation of the Mother of God from the 14th c. (reconstructed and expanded in the 16th c.) with frescos from the 14th and 16th–17th c. beneath the church foundations, the remnants of two Florus basilicas have been uncovered; 2. church of Sts. Florus and Laurus, recently constructed.
LIPOVAC (Djakovica): a church probably existed on the site called Crkvena Stena (Church Rock), above the village.
LIPOVCI (Gnjilane): ruins of the old church of St. Paraskeve and an old graveyard, in the village; the remnants of an older settlement near the village.
LIPOVICA (K. Mitrovica): the remnants of an old, small church and an old cemetery.
LIPOVICA (in the Middle Ages Lipovci, Lipljan): a church formerly existed (suggested by a reference to a village priest in a 15th-century source and a microtoponym).
LISICA (K. Mitrovica): locality called "Staro Gorblje" (Old Graveyard) and the ruins of an old church.
LISOCKA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): traces of an old cemetery, on the site called Jovanovo Groblje (Jovan's graveyard); the ruins of an old Serbian church are situated next to it.
LIVADJE (in the Middle Ages Livadije, Lipljan): church of St. Gregory the Theologian erected in 1935 on the site of an old graveyard church, demolished to the order of the Turks.
LIZICA (Peć): according to historical sources, in this place (unascertained) the Archbishop Nikodim (1317–1324) constructed the church of St. Sava, adorned by his successor Danilo II.
LOĆANE (Dečane): remnants of a church existed until the end of the 19th c. an old cemetery and a village log-cabin (one of the oldest in Serbia) have survived.

Lipljan, Church of the Presentation of the Holy Mother of God, 14th century. Behind: the New Church, 20th century.

Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God, St. Blasius, detail, 14th century

LUKA (Dečane): remnants of a church and an old graveyard noted in the 19th c.
LUKARE (Priština): it is known where the sites of the ruins of a church and an old graveyard were located.
LUKINAJ, LUKINJE (Priština): ruins of a church (according ro tradition, of St. Luke) on the site called Crkveni Do (Church Valley).
LUŽANE (Podujevo): 1. medieval monastery of St. Nicholas, known from sources (unascertained); 2. Pasha's mill, built with the stone remnants of the Serbian churches in the villages of Burince and Bradaš.

LJEŠANE (Peć): after expelling the Serbs in the 19th c., Hadzi Zeka, an Albanian, erected a mosque in the village making use of the stone and marble columns taken from the vast church of the Holy Savior in the village of Jošanica.
LJEVOŠA (Peć): 1. remnants of the church of St. Nicholas, on Tavor; 2. remnants of the church of St. George "in Ždrelnik" (before 1411); 3. remnants of the church of St. Demetrius (14th c.) with the traces of frescos featunng Cyrillic letters in Meta's meadow; 4. remnants of the church of the Birth of St. John the Baptist on the site called Crkvine (Ruins of a Church); 5. remnants of the church of the Holy Archangels in the village; 6. remnants of the church of St. Simeon the Myrrobletos; 7. monastic bell-tower on the Idvorac hill; 8. old graveyard above Savo's meadow 9. remnants of the medieval fortress of Ždrelo, at the entrance to the Rugovska ravine; 10. Kuzmića Peštera (the Kuzmics' Caves), a rock-cut dwelling west of the village; 11. according to tradition, the residence of a Patriarch of Peć was formerly situated in the hamlet of Krstelan.
LJUBENIC (Peć): old and new cemetery.
LJUBIĆEVO (Prizren): a written source from 1348 makes mention of the church of St. Nicholas (unascertained).
LJUBIŽDA (in the Middle Ages Ljubižnja, Mališevo): 1. remnants of a former church in the center of the village in the locality called "Kod Crkve" (by the Church); 2. remnants of a structure, probably religious, and several graves, on the Ljubiždanski peak.
LJUBIŽDA (in the Middle Ages Ljubižnja, Prizren): 1. church of St. Nicholas from the 16th c., restored and painted in 1867; 2. ruins of the church of the Holy Savior (the surviving Royal Doors dating from the 16th c.) upon which apartment houses have been recently constructed; 3. ruins of the church of St. Paraskeve on the right bank of the Ljubiždanska river; 4. remnants of the church of St. John (the surviving Royal Doors from the 16th c.) on the hill above the village; 5. remnants of the church of St. Kyriake, near the village drinking fountain; 6. remnants of the church of St. Kyriake in the hamlet of St. John; 7. remnants of the church of St. Nicholas, in the hamlet of St. John; 8. remnants of the church of the Holy Anargyroi, in the hamlet of Todosići; 9. new church of St. Elijah, in the Serbian cemetery, erected on the remnants of an older church dedicated to the same saint; 10. remnants of the church of the Holy Archangels, in the yard of the present-day mosque; 11. remnants of the church of St. George near the Cooperative center.
LJUBIŽDA HAS (Prizren): a church existed, perhaps on the site called Grobovi (Tombs).
LJUBOVAC (in the Middle Ages Ljubonce, Srbica): old and new cemetery of the expelled Serbs.
LJUBOVIŠTE (in the Middle Ages Ljubovići Dragaš): according to tradition, the village had nine churches; the remnants of only one, allegedly monastic, church have survived on the site called Dub.
LJUBOVO (Istok): 1. church of St. Basil of Ostrog built in 1939; 2. traces of an old graveyard, on the site called) Markov Cer (Marko's Oak).

Icons from Ljubižda,
14th century

The Annunciation, icon from Ljubižda, Angel, detail, 14th century

LJUBOŽDA (in the Middle Ages Ljubošta, Istok): 1. foundations of a church (with the fragments of frescos) and a dormitory, in the village; 2. remnants of a church and an old graveyard in the present-day graveyard; 3. remnants of an old town--fortress, on the hill called Gradina.
LJUBUŠA (in the Middle Ages Streoce, Dečane): in 1854 the ruins of the church of St. Elijah were seen by A. Boue in the village.
LJUMBARDA, LJUBARDA (Dečane): ruins of an old church and a modest-sized cemetery recorded in the 19th c.
LJUŠTA (in the Middle Ages Ljuštica, K. Mitrovica): remnants of a small, old church, below the hill in the village.
LJUTOGLAV (Prizren): old cemetery.
LJUTOGLAVA (Peć): 1. ruins of an old church formerly stood in the graveyard; 2. remnants of an ancient town (mentioned in 1220), on the hill above the village.

MAČITEVO (Suva Reka): ruins of an old church in the center of the village, and an old graveyard.
MADJERA (K. Mitrovica): a microtoponym testifies that a church existed in the village.
MAJANCE (in the Middle Ages Mojanovce, Podujevo): a church existed in the 15th c.
MAJDEVO (Leposavić): walls of an old church in the village, and the remnants of a fortified structure on the site called Kuline.
MAKOVAC (Priština): microtoponyms "Crkvene Njive" (Church Fields) and "Crkveni Do" (Church Valley) bear witness to the existence of a church before the Albanians settled here.
MALA SLATINA (Priština): microtoponym "Crkva" (Church) and the Serbian graveyard formerly existed in the village.
MALI DJURDJEVIK (Klina): old graveyard and the ruins of an old church.
MALI GODEN (Gnjilane): the Albanians that settled in 1780 found a dilapidated Serbian church and an old well which still exists today.
MALIŠEVO (formerly Maleševo, Gnjilane): a church and an abandoned old graveyard were situated by the Vlajkovac stream.
MALO KRUŠEVO (Klina): remnants of the church of the Mother of God Amolyntos and an old cemetery.
MALOPOLJCE (Uroševac): 1. three localities bearing the name "Crkva" (Church) exist today in the village whose priest is mentioned in the 15th c.; 2. walls of a demolished church on the ridge called Pokvarena Crkva (Ruined Church) (Rid).
MALO ROPOTOVO (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old and abandoned church of St. Nicholas, on the hill outside the village.
MAMUŠA (in the Middle Ages Momuša, Prizren): clocktower (1815) in the yard of the mosque its bell was taken from a Smederevo church and brought as a booty by Mahmud-Pasha Rotul.
MANASTIRCE (Uroševac): a church (Drenkova Church) and a monastery existed in the 15th and 16th c., the ruins of the latter have survived (on the site called Vrelo).
MANASTIRICA (Prizren): a church stood on the hill, northeast of the village (its traces have disappeared).
MANIŠINCE (Priština): 1. traces of an old settlement and a church in the part of the village called Selište (i.e. remnants of a village); an old cemetery.
MAREVCE (in the Middle Ages Maroevci, Priština): 1. ruins of a church by the Kukavička river; 2. remnants of a church by the Modri stream; 3. ruins of a church in Klokoc; 4. demolished church in the settlement called Nikšino Kolo (whose priest is mentioned in a note from the 16th c.; 5. remnants of ore processing facilities from the Middle Ages.
MARINA (Srbica): written sources from the 15th and 16th c. testify to the former existence of a church.
MARMULE (Djakovica): ruins of a church and an old cemetery registered in the 19th c.; the remnants of an old church and a graveyard can be discerned on the Režina hillock above the village; another old graveyard located at the entrance to the village.
MATICA (K. Mitrovica): traces of the old ruins of a church and a graveyard.
MATIČANE (Priština): 1. large 10th-century necropolis, belonging ro the so-called Belobrdska Slavic culture; 2. old and abandoned graveyard.
MAZAP (in the Middle Ages Mihozub, Podujevo): old graveyard.
MAZGIT (Priština): 1. memorial turbeh to the Ottoman Sultan Murad I on the site where he was murdered by a Serbian nobleman (Miloš Obilić) during the battle of Kosovo in 1389; 2. Marble Column (destroyed) erecred by the Despot Stefan Lazarević on the site of the battle of Kosovo; the text written on the column, dedicated to the Serbian warriors, has survived in copies; 3. monument to the legendary Serbian hero Miloš Obilić, destroyed by the Albanian nationalists in 1941.
MAZNIK (Dečane): ruins of a church and the remnants of a graveyard recorded in the 19th c.

MAZIĆ (K. Mitrovica): 1. ruins of an old church in the village; 2. ruins of two churches formerly situated on the site called Stara Trepča, in the village area, 3. ruins of the oldest mosque in Kosovo (15th–16th c.).
MEDREGOVAC (in the Middle Ages Milidrugovce, Podujevo): Serbian cemetery.
MEDVECE (Lipljan): old graveyard.
MEDJEDJI POTOK (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): 1. ruins of a former church and an old graveyard in the hamlet of Krivčevići; 2. old graveyard in the hamlet of Kopilovići; 3. old graveyard called Grobljište, above the Čukića mahala.
MELJENICA (K. Mitrovica): microtoponym "Kod Crkve" (By the Church) points to the site of a former ecclesiastical structure.
MEŠINA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): 1. ruins of a church on the sire called Svilas; 2. walls of a Serbian church in the graveyard, in the hamlet of Potok.
METOHIJA (Podujevo): remnants of an old church on the site called "Crkva" (Church) in the village whose priests are mentioned in the 15th c.; another church was situated in the village cemetery, in the Donja Metohija mahala.
MIGANOVCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old ruins of a church and an old graveyard.
MIJALIĆ (Vučitrn): ruins of rwo churches—in the hamlet of Topal-Mihalić and by the Church stream.
MILANOVIĆ (Mališevo): microtoponym "Crkvište" (Ruins of a Church).
MILJAJ, MILA (in the Middle Ages Milišta Prizren): ruins of a church recorded on the Kulin hill near the village, in the 19th c.
MIOKOVIĆE (Leposavić): old ruins of a church and a graveyard; two water-mills on the stream.
MIRUŠA (Mališevo): church treasuring a collection of medieval manuscripts formerly existed; the foundations of a church were situated in the vicinity of the village on the site called "Kod Crkvenog Cera" (By the Church Oak).
MLEČANE (formerly Mlečani, Klina): church of St. Nicholas (called St. Paraskeve) with frescos from 1601/1602, in the graveyard on the hill above the village.
MLIKE (Dragaš): foundations of a church recorded in the 19th c.; the ruins of a former church and an old cemetery presently situated in the hamlet of Djurdjevica.
MOČARE (K. Kamenica): ruins of the monastery of Ubožac (Rdjavac) from the first half of the 14th c., with the church dedicated to the Presentation of the Mother of God with surviving fragments of frescos.
MOGILA (Vitina): church of St. Theodore on the hill in the center of the village; the old cemetery near the village has been plowed.
MOGLICA (Djakovica): ruins of an old church in today's Catholic cemetery; microtoponym "Pusto" or "Svadbarsko Groblje" (Deserted or Wedding Guests' Graveyard).
MOJSTIR (Istok): two churches existed—in the present-day hamlet of Staro Selo, on the site called Crkvište (Ruins of a Church), and in the cemetery situated in the village.
MOKRI DOL: unascertained monastery, somewhere in the vicinity of Peć (mentioned in Turkish census from 1485 and the 16th c.).
MONASTERY OF STS. PETER AND PAUL: unascertained monastery, formerly belonging to Vučitrn, mentioned in a 16th-century Turkish census.
MORINA (in the Middle Ages Homorje, Djakovica): historical sources indicate that a church might have existed there.
MOŠINCE (Leposavić): old ruins of a church and a graveyard.
MOVLJANE (in the Middle Ages Muhovljani, Suva Reka): ruins of an old church and an old cemetery.
MRAMOR (Priština): two churches existed—on the site called Ljog, and the site called Manastir (Monastery) (the latter probably monastic).
MUČIVORCE, MUČIVRCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): a priest mentioned in the village as early as the 15th c. at present, the ruins of a Serbian church and an old Serbian graveyard are situated in it.
MURGA (Srbica): remnants of an old church.
MURGULA (Podujevo): a church existed in the 15th c.
MUŠNIKOVO (Prizren): 1. church of St. Peter and Paul with frescos from 1563/1564 erected, according to tradition, upon the foundations of a 14th-century church; 2. church of St. Nicholas in the graveyard, erected and painted in the second half of the 16th c., with icons from the 17th c.
MUŠUTIŠTE (Suva Reka): 1. church of the Mother of God Hodeghetria, erected in 1315 and frescoed soon afterwards; apart from the remnants of frescos, the church is embellished with two icons from 1603, totally destroyed in 1999; 2. remnants of the church of St. Nicholas in the Upper mahala; 3. small church of the Holy Savior in the Mecićeva mahala; 4. church of St. Simeon (mentioned in 1326) which has perished; 5. remnants of the church of the Holy Archangel Michael in Pasha's mahala; 6. ruins of the church of St. Nicholas in Pasha s (Golema) mahala; 7. remnants of the church of St. Athanasius in Pashas mahala; 8. remnants of the church of St. George in the Kovačevićeva mahala on the site called Mijovac; 9. church of St. Paraskeve, west of the village; 10. ruins of a church beneath the Bolovan mountain ridge, on the site called Carevac; 11. monastery of the Holy Trinity—Rusinica (the 14th–16th c.); 12. Rusinica hermitage (in all probability, from the 14th c.), above the monastery; 13. Matoške hermitages, by the spring

Mušnikovo, Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, 16th century

Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, altar apse, 16th century

Mušnikovo, remants of frescos on the south wall, 16th century

of the Matoški stream; 14. locality called "Gradac" with the remnants of an old fortress upon which a hunting house has been recently erected (above the hermitages).
MUŽEVINE (Istok): remnants of an old church (completely perished).
MUŽIČANE (Uroševac): small church and an old graveyard near the village, on the site called Staro Selo.

NABRDJE (Peć): ancient ruins of a church ttnd an old graveyard.
NAGLAVCI (Klina): remnants of an old church, dedicated, according to tradition, to St. Arsenije of Serbia, formerly existed in the old village graveyard.
NAKLO (in the Middle Ages Nakla Vas, Peć): in the Middle Ages Nakla Vas (Peć): new church. erected in 1985, upon the remnants of an old church (of St. John the Baptist?) in the old graveyard.
NAŠEC (Prizren): 1. remnants of the summer residence ("Ribnik") of the Serbian emperors Dušan and Uroš, uncovered on the hill above the Drim river on the site of today's motel; 2. remnants of an old church situated in the village, flooded by an artificial lake.
NEBREGOŠTE (in the Middle Ages Nebregošta, Prizren): ruins of the church of St. Elijah.
NEC (formerly Netic, Djakovica): foundations of a Serbian church erected in 1920; in 1941, it was demolished the Albanians, who also set the village ablaze.
NEČAVCE, NEĆAVCE (Kačanik): remnants of an old church.
NEGROVAC (Glogovac): mention of a village priest in the 15th c. and the microtoponym "Crkva" (Church) testify to the existence of a church.
NEKODIM, NIKODIM (Uroševac): residence of the Serbian Archbishop Nikodim (1317–1324) and a church were situated in the village; the localiry called "Stare Crkva" (Old Church) and the church of St. Elijah, restored in 1975, exist today.
NEPOLJE (in the Middle Ages Dnepolje, Peć): old graveyard on the site called Čamov Do.
NEVOLJANE (Vučitrn): remnants of an old church on the site called Crkvište (Ruins of a Church), and an old graveyard.
NIKA (Kačanik): remnants of an old church on the site called Kamenica.
NOSALJE (Gnjilane): ruins of the church of the Holy Sa viour on the Glavica hill and the locality called "Crkvište" (Ruins of a Church).
NOVA ŠUMADIJA (Prizren): remnants of the cemetery of the expelled Serbs.
NOVI MIRAŠ (Uroševac): traces of a church on the site called Crkveni Laz (Church Lane) (a village priest mentioned in the 15th c.).
NOVO BRDO (Priština): 1. ruins of the cathedral church erected in the second half of the 14th c., with the fragments of frescos and stonework featuring Serbian inscriptions (converted into a mosque in 1466); 2. remnants of a modest-sized and somewhat older town church next to which a large place of worship was constructed; 3. remnants of the medieval Jovca church, in Jovan's mahala; 4. two churches, the so-called Cifte Kilise (Paired Churches)—St. Mark's churches by the old road to the fortress; one of the two old town cemeteries lies next to them; 6. church of St. Stephen, situated in the vicinity of St. Mark's church; 7. church of the Mother of God (subsequently called "Pod Javorom" (beneath Mt. Javor) located north-east to the fortress; demolished by the Ottomans on their seizure of Novo Brdo.
NOVO SELO (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): remnants of an old church and an old cemetery near the village, on the site called Crkva (Church).
NOVO SELO (Peć): in the 15th c., two villages bearing this name were mentioned to have existed in the vicinity of Peć, one of them had a church. Present day Novo Selo had a graveyard at the beginning of the 20th c.
NOVO SELO (in the Middle Ages Selce, Priština): remnants of the church of the Holy Archangels and an old graveyard became flooded when an aritficial lake was constructed on the Gračanka river in 1965.

Nec (Djakovica), remnants of the church destroyed in April 1941

OBILIĆ (formerly Globoderica, Priština): old graveyard and a more recent church building in the graveyard.
OBJEDNIK (Dragaš): the site in the župa of Gora where the remnants of a church and a graveyard are located.
OBRANČA, OBRANDŽA (Podujevo): locality "Kod Crkve" (By the Church), in the hamlet of Đurići.
OBRINJE (Glogovac): a church existed in the 15th c. according to tradition, it occupied the site of the present-day mosque.
ODANOVCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): a church formerly situated next to the present-day Serbian graveyard.
ODEVCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): 1. ruins of the church of St. Paraskeve in the present-day cemetery; 2. old graveyard on the site called Dublje.
OGOŠTE (in the Middle Ages Holgošta, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): in the 14th century, mention is made of the church of the Mother of God (located in the old cemetery in the hamlet of Bobovnik).
OKLANCE (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): 1. remnants of an old church and a century-old graveyard in the hamlet of Tmjane; 2. remnants of the foundations of a church in the hamlet of Crkvine (ruins of a church), on the site called Orah.
OKRASTICA (Vučitrn): a church formerly existed; its priest was mentioned in a census from the 15th c.
OPRAŠKE, OPRAŠKA (Istok): remnants of the church of St. Jeremiah (whose priest was mentioned in the 15th c.) and an old graveyard.
OPTERUŠA (Orahovac): 1. ruins of the church of St. George from the 16th–17th c. with the remnants of frescos, on the hill in the old graveyard; 2. church erected in 1925 over the remnants of the church of the Holy Savior, south of the village; 3. church of St. Nicholas, restored in 1934, upon old foundations.
ORAHOVAC: 1. church of the Dormition of the Holy Mother of God, reconstructed on its old foundations in 1859; 2. dormitory of the Monastery of the Patriarchate of Peć, erected in 1848 in the spirit of traditional architecture; 3. clock-tower erected in 1815 by Mahmud-Pasha Rotulović and furnished with a bell from the plundered churches in Smederevo; 4. until recentidy, the remnants of a church stood on the site called Dubljane.

Novo Brdo, Monastery of Saint Nicholas, 16th century

ORAHOVO, ORAOVO (in the Middle Ages Orjahovo, K. Mitrovica): locality called "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Graveyard).
ORAOVICA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old graveyard.
ORĆUŠA (in the Middle Ages Orcusa, Dragaš): ruins of an old church formerly existed.
ORLANE (in the Middle Ages Orlani, Podujevo): according to a testimony from the 16th c., the so-called Izborna church was located in the vicinity of the village. Nowadays in the village (not far from the Brvenik fortress) there are the ruins of a church. The remnants of another church (of St. Constantine and Helena?) stand on the hilltop where the present-day cemetery is situated; further to the east, an older Serbian necropolis has survived.
ORLATE formerly Orlat (Glogovac): Orlate monastery near the village, demolished in 1885 so that the village mosque would be constructed with its stone.
ORLOVIĆ (Priština): on the Gazimestan hill (near the village) there are: 1. monument to the Serbian warriors fallen in the battle of Kosovo in 1389, erected in 1953 on the site of the former demolished in 1941; 2. turbeh with tombs of the Ottoman warriors fallen in 1389.
ORNO BRDO, RUDNO BRDO (Istok): the site of an old graveyard is known.
OSEK HILJA (formerly Osak or Usak, Djakovica): remnants of a medieval church, outside the village, by the Jagoila river, where the old graveyard was also situated in the 19th c.
OSOJANE (Istok): 1. "Ivanja Crkva" (the church of St. John), mentioned in sources from 1314 and 1485 appears to have been situated on the hill in the Serbian garveyard; 2. Nikoljača church (of St. Nicholas) in the meadow on the hill; 3. ruins of a former church, beneath the site called Zvečan.
OSTRAĆE (Leposavić): 1. ruins of the old Borjanica church, in the hamlet of Zigolj; 2. medieval graveyard on the Kula hill in Zigolj; 3. remnants of medieval structures—of a town, according to tradition, and the ruins of the graveyard church on the site called Velika Livada; 4. old graveyard on the site called Tuturica; 5. remnants of a Turkish watch tower from the 19th c., on the site called Merkez.
OSTROZUB (Mališevo): a written source from the 15th c. indicates that a church or a monastery may have existed here.
OŠLJANE (Vučitrn): old cemetery situated on the site called Bojlija; in the 15th c., the village must have had a church (a census from that time makes mention of a village priest).
OVČAREVO (Srbica): 19th century writers of travel accounts saw the ruins of three churches in the village, of which one certainly was the church of St. Nicholas, mentioned in a notice from 1562.
PACAJ (Djakovica): a church erected after 1918 formerly existed. In 1941, the Albanians demolished it together with the entire village.
PADALIŠTE (Srbica): 1. foundations of an old church on the hill in the lower part of the village (50 years ago the church still had vaults), an old graveyard was next to it; 2. remnants of a small church, in the southern part of the village, on the site called Vakuf.

Orahovac, Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God

Orahovac, Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God

PALATNA (in the Middle Ages Polatna, Podujevo): remnants of church foundations, encircled by an old graveyard.
PALIVODENICE (Kačanik): traces of a larger place of worship, probably a church, oriented in the west east direction.
PANČELO (Izmornik): abandoned old graveyard, further to the west of the present day village.
PANTINA (Vučitrn): ruins of an old church in the old and new graveyards, in Glavica also called Verište.
PAPRAĆANE (Dečane): a church existed in the 15th c. (mention made of its priest). Today, a graveyard is located in the village.
PAPRATNA, PAPRADINA (now Firaja, Uroševac): the 19th c. recorded the existence of a half-demolished church with frescos and icons, surrounded by a large graveyard.
PARALOVO (Gnjilane): 1. ruins of a church in the Perinska mahala; 2. remnants of the church in the Petkovska mahala.
PARTEŠ (Gnjilane): ruined church of the Holy Savior, on the hill of Glavičica above the village and the old graveyard called Svatovsko (the Wedding Guests').
PAŠINO SELO (Peć): neglected old graveyard called Srpsko Groblje (Serbian Graveyard).
PAŠTRIK (in the Middle Ages Paštric, Prizren): the mountain on whose summit two cult tombs are situated—that of St. Elijah (formerly with a church) and of St. Panteleimon.
PEĆ: 1. monastery of the Patriarchate of Peć; 2. unascertained monastery of St. Nicholas "on Tabor" from the 14th c., situated in the vicinity of the Patriarchate; 3. unascertained church of St. Sava of Serbia in Lizica, erected and painted owing to the efforts of the Serbian Archbishops Nikodim (1317–1324) and Danilo II (1324–1337); 4. Marks cave-dwelling, a prehistoric residence and medieval hermitage, above the spring called Crne Vode; remnants of a medieval church or a bell-tower are located above the cave; 5. Ružica church according to tradition formerly standing on the site of the present-day Bajrakli-mosque; 6. Ivanovac church unascertained (St. Nicholas in Ivanac), mentioned in the 14th and the 16th c., located near the Patriarchate; 7. Ivanica chapel, recently demolished, in the mahala of Kapistnica; 8. small church of St. Paraskeve, constructed upon the remnants of an older church, in Kargac park; 9. small church of St. Gregory in the yard of the Institute of Agriculture, converted into a Muslim turbeh; 10. chapel of St. Basil, near the sugar refinery, converted into a turbeh; 11. Defterdar-mosque constructed with the material of the old town church, called Djurdjevi Stupovi, on its former site; 12. Kenavija, Cenavija a convent with a school for girls and a small church, stood in the town center in the 19th c.; 13. town church of St. John erected in 1982 in the center (Pesak), instead of the dilapidated old church; 14. Jerinka the hillock on the northern side of Peć, formerly occupied by an old graveyard (destroyed by the Turks); 15 another old graveyard, for the most part destroyed during the construction of new buildings in recent times; 16. church of the Mother of God of the Passion, the Tenderness, stood on the site of the present-day Djul-Fatas mosque; 17. church of St. Paraskeve, once situated on the site of the Red Mosque; 18. rock-cut dwellings (Jerina's caves) in the rocks of Srednja Gora in the Rugovska gorge) the hermitage called Crne Makaze (Karamakaz) (Black Scissors), inhabited in prehistoric age; in the Middle Ages parritioned by walls and painted by frescos; b) hermitages on the left bank of the Pećka Bistrica—a series of hermitages active from the 13th c.
PEĆANE (Suva Reka): 1. remnants of the church of the Presentation of the Mother of God constructed and painted in 1451/1452 (part of frescos in the National Museum Belgrade); 2. rock cut dwelling above the church; 3. remnants of a small church below the village, to the south.
PERANE (Podujevo): old graveyard with the remnants of a church, and the remnants of another church building, on the hill near the village.
PESTOVO (Vučitrn): remnants of an old church in the village graveyard.
PETIGOVAC, PETKOVAC (a suburb of Gnjilane): a medieval church, undoubtedly dedicated to St. Paraskeve, formerly existed.
PETKOVIĆ (Orahovac): in the 19th c. an old graveyard was recorded to have existed in the vicinity of the village.
PETRAKOVAC (Peć): hill with the remnants of an uninvestigated place of worship.
PETRAŠICA (Lipljan): mention of a village priest in a census from the 15th c. and two microtoponyms testify that the village used to have a church.

PETROVCE (Izmornik): church of the recently expelled Serbs restored in the old graveyard.
PETROVO (in the Middle Ages Petrova Crkva, Uroševac): old ruins of a church in the locality "Crkveno Mesto" (Church Site); the remnants of an old fortress situated above the village.
PETRUŠAN (Djakovica): remnants of a church demolished by the Turks and an old graveyard.
PIDIĆ (Gnjilane): remnants of the old fortress called Gradište-Kalaja, above the village.
PIRANE (Prizren): ruins of the church of St. George, near the village.
PIŠTANE (Peć): foundations of the church of St. Paraskeve, in the center of the village, east of the old graveyard.
PLAJNIK (Dragaš): remnants of an old church, on the hill above the village.
PLAKAONICA (Leposavić): 1. traces of medieval mining facilities and settlements in the village and in the hamlet of Staro Selo; 2. remnants of the old, according to tradition "mining," church on the site called Crkvine (ruins of a church); 3. church erected in the graveyard on the hill of Dublje in 1926.
PLANEJA (in the Middle Ages Plano, Prizren): remnants of the church of St. Panteleimon mentioned in a document from 1355, above the confluence of the Bistrica river into the Drim.
PLANJANE (in the Middle Ages Planjani, Prizren): church of the Nativity of the Mother of God erected in 1868, upon the foundations of the old church of the Holy Trinity (icons from the 17th–19th c.).
PLAVLJANE (Peć): old graveyard next to the Ljaovica mill.
PLEMETINA (Priština): remnants of an old church with an old graveyard and the new, small village church erected in 1971.
PLESINA (Uroševac): in the 15th c. the village had priests the ruins of rwo former churches have survived—in the Lower mahala and Popov Do (Priest's Valley).
PLOČICA (Mališevo): the site of an old graveyard is known in the village.
PLUŽINE (Srbica): ruins of an old church called Crkva (Church) and the remnants of the so-called Groblje (Graveyard) with Serbian crosses.
POČESĆE (Peć): remnants of an old church (of St. Nicholas) on the right bank of the Pećka Bistrica (a village priest mentioned as early as the 15th c.).
PODGORCE (Vitina): remnants of the old church of St. Paraskeve and an old graveyard, on the hill above the village.
PODGRADJE (Gnjilane): 1. remnants of a town-fortress, with the ruins of a church, above the village; 2. remnants of the old settlement called Mećava which had a church in the Mećava mahala; 3. another two churches existed in the village; 4. remnants of old structures in which materials from antiquity and late antiquity have been excavated, on the site called Goven.
PODUJEVO: a priest mentioned in the 15th c.; the church of St. Elijah erected in 1930 (demolished in 1941–1945, restored in 1971).
POGRADJE (Klina): the village had a priest as early as 1455. Today exist: 1. church of the Holy Anargyroi or the Lower church formerly dedicated to St. Nicholas or St. Demetrius (16th c.), with badly damaged frescos (second half of the 16th c.); 2. ruins of the Upper church to the west above the village; the narthex built at a later date has 16th century frescos; 3. ruins of the medieval fortress—Gradište, in the south east part of the village; 4. remnants of a medieval fortress, on the Jernjak hill.
POLUŽA (Orahovac): old graveyard existed in the 19th c.
POLUŽJE (in the Middle Ages Podlužje, Glogovac): mention of a village priest in the 15th c. and folk tradition point to the existence of a church.
POLJANCE (Srbica): old and new graveyard of expelled Serbs.
POLJANE (Istok): two localities called Crkvište (ruins of a church)—in the area of Paljevo where the old graveyard is located, and on the Glavica hill, where several tombstones are situated. On one of these sites, the remnants of the church of the Visitation of the Mother of God still stood in the 19th c.
POMAZATIN (Priština): church of St. Elijah, erected in 1937.
PONEŠ (in the Middle Ages Poniša, Gnjilane): 1. ruins of a church on the site called Letovac; 2. remnants of a church in the present-day Orthodox cemetery; 3. old ruins of a fortress, above the village.
PONORAC (Mališevo): in the 14th c., mention was made of "a church wood" and "Gradište" (ruins of a former fortress) in the village.
PONOŠEVAC (Djakovica): the newly-constructed church was demolished in 1941 by the Albanians, who burnt all Serbian houses in the village as well.
POPOVAC (Djakovica): old ruins of a church formerly existed.
POPOVCE (Leposavić): a village priest mentioned in the 15th c.; remnants of an old place of worship on the site called Mramorak.
POPOVLJANE (Suva Reka): church of St. Nicholas erected and painted in 1626; surrounded by an old graveyard.
POPOVO (Podujevo): old church of the displaced Serbs was situated on the site called Crkveni Tesnac (Church Gorge).

Podujevo, Church of Saint Elias, early 20th century
(burned by Albanian extremists in March Pogrom 2004)

Pakaštica near Podujevo, "King's Church", on Kraljevac hill, 16th century

Pomazatin, Church of the Holy Prophet Elijah, broken doors and windows, 1982–1985

POSLIŠTE (in the Middle Ages Ploskistino, Prizren): the site of an old graveyard is known.
POTKOMNJE (Leposavić): old cemetery.
POŽAR (Dečane): remnants of a church and a small graveyard recorded in the 19th c.
POŽARANJE (Vitina): two demolished churches are recorded to have stood next to each other: the so-called White church, dedicated to St. Paraskeve, and the Black church; at present, an old graveyard exists.
PRČEVO (Klina): 1. at the beginning of the 14th c., "the ruins of the old church of St. Peter" were situated within the village boundaries; 2. the archaeological site of Boka, with the remains of the so-called Glasnička culture (Bronze and Iron Age) and Slavic culture (10th–12th c.); 3. old graveyard stood in the locality called "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Cemetery).
PRESLO (Leposavić): old ruins of a church, in Borčansko Preslo.
PRIDVORICA (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): ruins of the medieval fortified settlement called Zubodolacki, above the village.
PRIDVORICA (Leposavić) 1. remnants of the foundations of the church of the Holy Savior, in the Lower mahala; 2. remnants of a medieval mining settlement, on the site called Gradina.
PRILEP (in the Middle Ages Hrastovica, Dečane): until 1898, the remnants of an old church were preserved (village priest mentioned as early as the 15th c.).
PRILEPNICA (Gnjilane): 1. ruins of an old church; 2. small medieval town of Prilepac, several villages; 3. Draganac monastery, above the town of Prilepac.
PRILUŽJE (Vučitrn): church of St. Kyriake, constructed in 1969 on the site called Sv. Nedelja (St. Kyriake), the traces of another two churches also exist.
PRIŠTINA: 1. church of the Holy Savior in which the remnants of the Serbian Prince Lazar were buried after his death in the battle of Kosovo; the Turks demolished it at a later date and erected a mosque on its site; 2. Turkish censuses from the 15th and the 16th c. recorded the existence of the monastery of "Bukovac" or "the Mother of God"; 3. church of St. Nicholas, erected on the foundations of the monastery of St. Nicholas (mentioned in the 16th c.); 4. monastery of St. George, mentioned in the 16th c.; a caravanserai was erected on its site; 5. old metropolitan building (mentioned in censuses from the 15th and the 16th c.) stood in the Christian mahala called Mitropolit (Metropolitan) with its stone the Pirinac mosque was constructed; 6. church of St. Paraskeve stood on the site of today's Kopt-mosque; 7. church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross situated in the Panadjurište mahala; 8. data pointing to the existence of the churches of the Holy Archangels and St. Kyriake have not been archaeologically confirmed; 9. according to the Turkish census of 1544, there was the Hagia Sophia mahala, so that in the Middle Ages Priština probably had the church of St. Sophia; 10. monuments to Serbian and French soldiers fallen in World War I, situated in the town (Serbian) cemetery.

Popovljane, Church of Saint Nicholas, icon of St. Cosmas and Damian, 1626

Popovljane, Church of Saint Nicholas, 1626

PRIZREN (occasionaly the Serbian capital in the Middle Ages): 1. church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša; 2. monastery of the Holy Archangels; 3. church of the Holy Savior, erected and frescoed in the 3rd or 4th decade of the 14th c. (with the remnants of wall paintings); 4. church of St. Demetrius (mentioned in the 13th and the 14th c.), demolished in the 19th c. so that the

Prilužje, Holy Transfiguration Church

Dečani Monastery depicted in the Church of Saint Nicholas in Priština, south wall, 1830

Catholic church of the Mother of God would be erected on its site; 5. church of St. Nicholas—Korać's, from the 14th c., converted into a mosque at a later date; 6. cathedral church of St. George, erected in 1887, with an icon of the Mother of God from the 14th and an 18th-century iconostasis; 7. church of the Holy Anargyroi, built in the 19th c. on the foundations of an older church with several icons from the 18th–19th c.; 8. church

Priština, Church of Saint Nicholas

Church of Saint Nicholas in Priština, postcard, late 19th century

Church of Saint Nicholas in Priština

Pustenik, remnants of the Church dedicated to an unknown Saint, external view of the apse, 14th century

of St. Panteleemon in the Pantelija mahala, constructed in 1937 on the foundations of an older ecclesiastical sturcture; 9. foundations of the church of St. Thomas beneath the Prizren fortress; 10. ruins of the church of St. Prokopius, in the Pantelija mahala; 11. church of St. Anna stood on the present-day site of Mustapha-Pasha's mosque; 12. church of St. Athanasius situated in the Prizren Fortress (Kaljaja); on its site Emin-Pasha Rotul erected a mosque and clock-tower in 1805 (the mosque was demolished by the Bulgarians); 13. remnants of the Church of St. Peter, on the left bank of the Bistrica river; 14. church of St. Elias formerly situated on the right bank of the Bistrica, until 1915 a graveyard was also located there; 15. church of the Epiphany, upon whose foundations a mosque was erected in the Maraš-mahala; 16. church of the Transfiguration, according to tradition part of the Emperor Dušan's court, on the present-day site of Mehmed-Pasha's mosque; 17. church of St. Nicholas, the so-called Town church (mentioned in the 14th c.) in the ancient Višegrad fortress, above the monastery of the Holy Archangels; 18. "Gospodjina Crkva" (church of the Mother of God) mentioned in a charter of the Emperor Dušan in 1348; 19. monastery of St. Barbara, in Prizren or its surroundings mentioned in the Turkish defter of 1526–1559; 20. remnants of a rock-cut church and monastery (15th c.) in the locality called Golem Kamen near Prizren; 21. church of St. Nicholas Rajkov from the 14th c., restored in 1857 (treasuring a 16th century icon); 22. church of St. George Runović from the 15th c. (the Royal doors from the 16th c.) in the yard of the Cathedral church; 23. hermitage of St. Nicholas, the most significant in the series of hermitages in the Bistrica gorge, adjusted to the form of a church (remnants of 14th-century frescos); 24. church of St. Helena stood on the site of the mosque erected by Mustapha-Pasha of Prizren; 25. ruins of the building of the old Prizren Metropolitan with the Bishop's chapel south-east to the Mother of God of Ljeviša; 26. church of St. Blasius (mentioned in a charter of the Emperor Dušan of 1348) situated somewhere in Pnzren or its vicinity; 27. church of St. Nicholas—Tutić, erected in 1331/1332 and painted soon aftetwards, with the remnants of frescos; 28. foundations of the church of the Presentation of the Mother of God, the endowment of the young Serbian King Marko from 1371 (the remnants of frescos from the 14th c.), discovered beneath a more recent church of St. Kyriake; 29. church of St. Stephen (unascertained), probably erected by the Serbian King Milutin; 30. monument to the Serbian warriors fallen in the wars 1912 and 1914–1918; 31. memorial chappel of Serbian soldiers fallen in the liberation of Prizren in 1912 and during World War I; 32. Studenac Kosovo, the memorial drinking fountain to the officers and soldiers of the 3rd Serbian army fallen in the battle for the liberation of Prizren in 1912.

Priština, inscription for exonarthex of the Serbian church of Saint Nicholas, 1906

PROPAŠTICA (Priština): 1. foundations of a church near the present-day mosque; 2. ruins of an old church, south-west of the primary school building; 3. remains of a church and of foundations probably belonging to monastic structures (the so-called Milica's church) in the Church valley.

PRUGOVAC (in the milldlle Ages Prugovce, Priština): at the beginning of the 20th c. the remains of a church were known to have existed (a village priest mentioned in the 15th c.).

PUSTENIK (Kačanik): ruins of a 14th-century church on the hill above the village.

PUSTINJA-LESKOVAC: an unascertained monastery on the Lab river (mentioned in the Turkish census of 1455).

RABOVCE (in the Middle Ages Robovci, Lipljan): new village church erected in 1984 on the foundations of the medieval church of St. Kyriake, in the Crkvena (Church) mahala.

RAČA (Djakovica): remains of an old church still existed at the beginning of the 20th c. on the site called Račanska Crkva (Račanska Church).

RAČAK (Uroševac): remains of the foundations of a church (of the Holy Anargyroi?) from the 14th c., with the fragments of frescos and stone ornaments.

RADAVAC (Peć): 14th and 15th-century documents make mention of the monastery of the Holy Savior the church and subsidiary buildings whose remains stand above the present-day hydro-electric power plant probably belonged to it; a modest-sized church (on the site of today s sawmill) and an old graveyard also existed.

RADEŠA (Dragaš): in the 14th c., the churches of St. Nicholas and St. Elias were situated in the village surroundings the foundations of an old church have survived on the site called Zagrajce. The village also had two old graveyards—in the Lower mahala and in the Peterce mahala.

RADEVO (in the Middle Ages Radojevo, Lipljan): ruins of an old church and the medieval cemetery called "Čivutsko Groblje" (Jewish Cemetery).

RADIŠEVO (Srbica): a reference to a village priest in the 15th c. and folk tradition indicate that the village had a church; an old graveyard has survived.

RADIVOJCE (Vitina): censuses from the 15th and the 16th c. make mention of the monastery of the Holy Archangels the locality called "Crkvište" (ruins of a church) is situated next to the village.

RADONJIĆ (Djakovica): ruins of Radonja's tower and the church of St. Paraskeve noted down by 19th century writers of travel accounts (according to tradition, the present day village mosque was erected with their stone remains).
RADOŠEVAC (Priština): at the beginning of the 20th c., the ruins of an old church still existed.
RADULOVAC (in the Middle Ages Radilovc, Klina): traces of the old graveyard existed until recent times.
RAHOVICA (in the Middle Ages Horavica, Uroševac): remains of an old church on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church), (village priest mentioned as early as the 15th c.).
RAJANOVCE (in the Middle Ages Radanovce, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): traces of an older settlement on the site called Selište and the ruins of the church of St. George on the site called Zli Do; an old graveyard.
RAKITNICA (Podujevo): church of the Holy Archangel Michael (Lazar's church), erected in the 14th–15th c., restored in the 16th c., with the remains of frescos; formerly surrounded by an old graveyard.
RAKITNICA (Srbica): according to tradition, the site called Crkva (Church) was occupied by the church of St. George and an old graveyard, called Serbian.
RAKOC (in the Middle Ages Rogat'c and Rakovac, Djakovica): ruins of a church and a small graveyard recorded in the 19th c.
RAKOŠ (Istok): an old church formerly existed (its traces have perished); an old graveyard is situated on the hill above the village.
RANILUG (Izmornik): 1. ruins of the church of the Holy Savior on the site called Reljan; 2. old graveyard, near the village.
RAPČA, RAPCE (Dragaš): there were two churches once in Gornja Rapča on the site called Crkvine (ruins of a church) and the church of St. Paraskeve, in the Marinac area (a mosque erected over its foundations) a charter of 1348 makes mention of the Mratinja church, south east of the village.
RASKOVO (Priština): old graveyard with interesting tombstones.
RASTAVICA (in the Middle Ages Hrastovica, Dečane): ruins of a church and a graveyard were recorded in the 19th c. The church built at a more recent date was devastated by the Albanians in 1941, and razed to the ground not so long ago.
RAŠINCE (Uroševac): microtoponym "Crkva" (Church) points to the site formerly occupied by an old church.

Rakitnica, Holy Archangel Michael church, southwest side, 14th century

RATIŠ (in the Middle Ages Ratiševci, Dečane): church of the Holy Trinity erected in 1935 on the foundations of an older church; devastated in 1941, and not long ago completely destroyed; formerly surrounded by a graveyard. In 1993 the church was rebuilt again.
RATKOVAC (Orahovac): a church formerly occupied the site called Crkvina (Ruins of a Church), next to the present day Albanian burial-ground on the Bridje hill.
RAUŠIĆ (Peć): old graveyard (called Groblje Spasića, i.e. the Spasićs' Graveyard) in the Upper mahala; tombstones demolished in 1941–1944 by Albanian nationalists.
REČICA (Podujevo): remains of the church of St. Peter, behind the village, toward Mt. Kopaonik (village priest mentioned in the 15th c.).
RESNIK (Klina): old church (monastery?) of the Mother of God formerly existed (village priest mentioned in the 15th c.); an old graveyard was situated next to the church.
RESNIK (Vučitrn): 1. ruins of a former church on the site called Crkveni Kladenac (Church Well); 2. old graveyard on the site called Srpsko Groblje (Serbian Graveyard).
RESTELICA (Dragaš): church (monastery?) of St. Barbara stood in the old graveyard, on the site called Krstine.
RETIMLJE (in the Middle Ages Retivlja, Orahovac): small church of the Presentation of the Mother of God (a new mosque erected in its vicinity); an old graveyard on the hill north of the village.
REVUĆE (in the Middle Ages Ravuce, Podujevo): an old church existed (village priest mentioned in a Turkish census from the 15th c.).
REZALA (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): remains of an old church and graveyard (its stone and tombstones used for the construction of the Cooperative hall).
REZALO (Srbica): in the village in which 27 Serbian households and a village priests were mentioned in the 15th c., only the toponym "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Graveyard) recalls today the former presence of the expelled Serbs.
REŽANCE (Kačanik): 1. church of St. George, situated in the Rogac-mahala, on the site called Crkva (Church), 2. church in the south-east part of the village.
RIBNIK (Vitina): 15th-century census makes mention of a village priest; an old cemetery exists today.
ROBOVAC (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): ruins of a church on the site near Golem Kamen; next to the church was the graveyard desecrated and abandoned long ago.
RODELJ (Leposavić): small church and a very old cemetery.
ROGAČICA (in the Middle Ages Rogačić, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): an older and new cemetery formerly existed (de vastated in 1985).
ROGOVO (Djakovica): elements of a Christian temple incorporated into the so-called "oldest house" according to one opinion, the Old Mosque in the village was constructed on the site and with the material of a Serbian church.
ROMAJA (Prizren): 1. old cemetery above the village on the site called Crkva (Church); 2. "Crkveno Groblje" ("Churchyard") where, according to Albanian legend, "a Serbian church has been buried," on the left bank of the Daštica stream; 3. archaeological site of Romaja with cultural layers from the Neolithic period until the early Middle Ages.
ROMUNE (Peć): old and new graveyard.

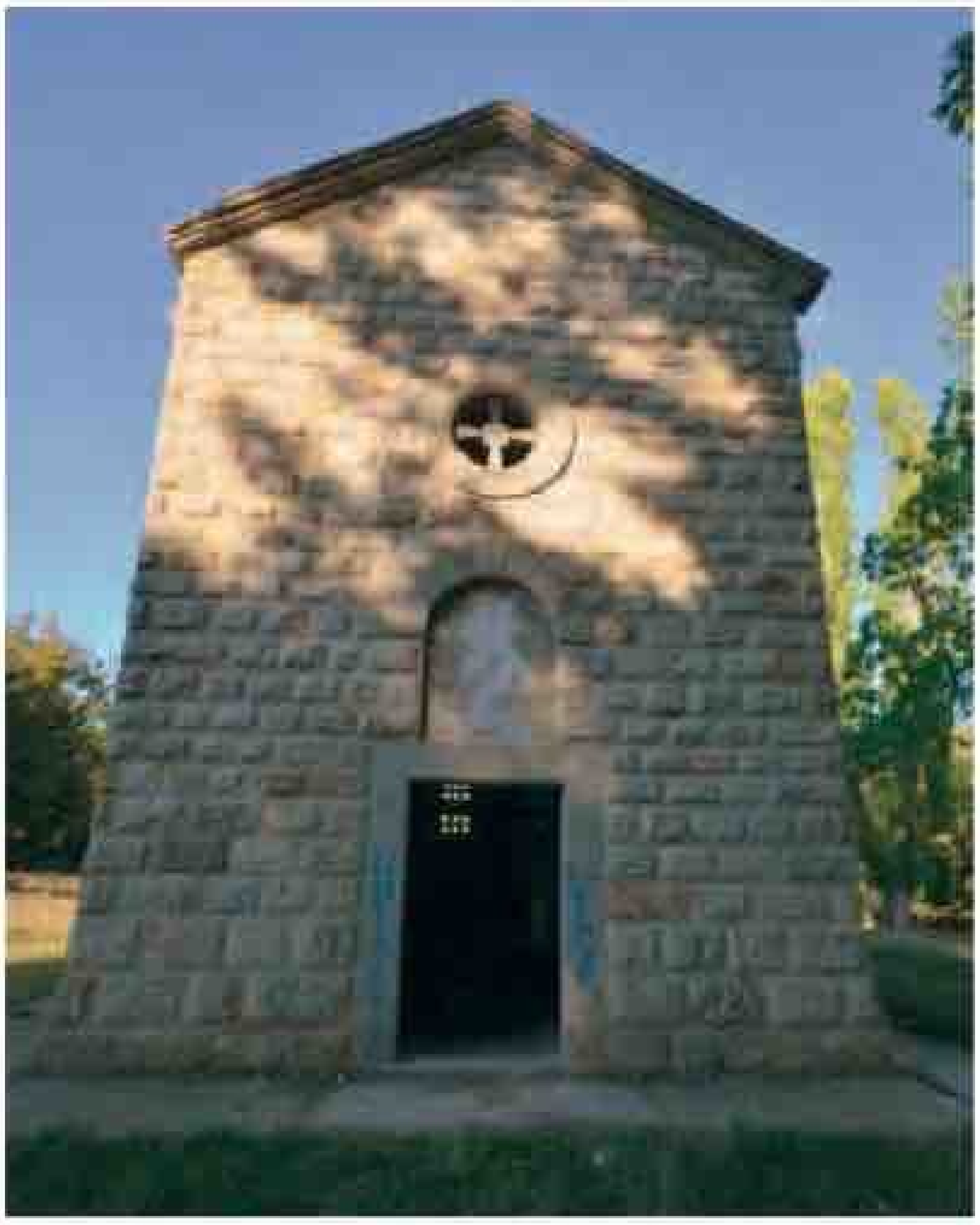
RUDNIK (Srbica): church of St. George restored in the 16th c. with several frescos dating from the time of reconstruction, next to it is an old cemetery the foundations of another church situated on the locality called Crkvine (Ruins of a Church).
RUGOVO, see **ALAGINA RIJEKA** and **PEĆ**.
RUNJEVO (Kačanik): the site called Crkva (Church) (a village priest mentioned in the census of 1452).
RUSINOVCE (Lipljan): mention of a village priest in a 15th century census and a microtoponym testify to the existence of a church in the village.
RVATSKA (Leposavić): remains of an old church and old graveyard on the site called Ostrvica.
RZNIĆ (in the Middle Ages Rzinići, Dečane): ruins of the church of Sts. Sergius and Bacchus were recorded to have existed in the 19th c. (the present day mosque has been constructed with its building material).

Rudnik (Srbica), Church of Saint George, 16th century

SAMODRAŽA (in the Middle Ages Slamodreža, Suva Reka): foundations of the church of St. Nicholas with a modest-sized graveyard were recorded in the 19th c.; according to tradition, the village also had three small churches.
SAMODREŽA (Vučitrn): on the remains of the church of St. John Prodromos (where, according to tradition, the Serbian army took Communion before the battle of Kosovo) a new church was constructed and painted in 1932; next to the church there was an old graveyard with large stone crosses.
SANOVAC (Orahovac): ruins of an old church and the site formerly occupied by an old graveyard.
SEDLARE (Lipljan): reference to a village priest in a 15th century census and a microtoponym point to the existence of the church.
SELOGRAŽDE (in the Middle Ages Crevogražde, Suva Reka): ruins of the old church of St. Kyriake and an old graveyard.
SELJANCE (K. Mitrovica): an old graveyard and the site formerly occupied by the ruins of a church.
SEMANJA (Kačanik): remains of an old church (a village priest mentioned in the 15th c.) demolished in the 19th c., and those of an old graveyard.

Serbian asceterion on the left side of Bistrica river, 13th–14th century, Rugova gorge near Peć

SEVCE (Uroševac): 1. church of St. Nicholas with frescos from 1861; 2. church of St. Athanasius, built in 1921 on the foundations of an older religious building.
SIĆEVO (Klina): church of St. Nicholas erected in the 15th c. restored and painted in the second half of the 16th c.; the remains of an old cemetery are east of the church.
SIBOVAC (Priština): 1. church of St. Nicholas of Sibovac recorded in the 16th c. (a village priest mentioned as early as the 15th c.) was located on the site called St. Nicholas (demolished in the 19th c. by Jashar-Pasha Džanić who used its stone to build a mill in the Mjekićska gorge); 2. traces of a church in the hamlet of Bregovine.
SIĆEVO (Priština): a church was formerly situated in the locality called Crkveni Do (Church Valley) (a village priest mentioned in 1455).
SIGA (Peć): church of St. Demetrius, constructed in 1937 on the remains of an older religious building (demolished in 1941–1945, restoted in 1977), surrounded by an old graveyard (tombstones used for the construction of the Cooperative hall).



Samodreža near Vučitrn: "The White Church Samodreža on Kosovo" (restored in 1932)

SILJEVICA (Podujevo): locality "Kod Crkve" (By the Church).
SINAJE (Istok): 1. ruins of the church called Kaludjerice (Nuns) below the hill of Ćelije (Cells); 2. remains of a church in the village; 3. foundations of a smaller church, in the Zuvica graveyard; 4. a church also existed in the old cemetery on the hill. According to folk tradition rwo of these churches were dedicated to St. Nicholas, and the third to St. John the Baptist
SKIVJANE (in the Middle Ages Ljivljani, Djakovica): tradition has it that the village church (a village priest mentioned in the 15th c.) was located on the site of the present-day mosque.
SKOČNA (Vučitrn): 1. an old church was previously situated in the locality called "Crkveni Do" (Church Valley); 2. remains of a medieval fortress on the Skočna peak, above the village.
SKROVNA (Vučitrn): old church formerly stood on the site called Crkvena Livada (Church Meadow).
SKULANOVO (Lipljan): old church ruins (a village priest mentioned in the 15th c.) and an old graveyard.
SLAKOVCE (Vučitrn): ruins of the old church of St. Stephen in the old graveyard.
SLAPUŽANE (in the Middle Ages Zapl'zane Suva Reka): according to tradition, a church existed once; the present day mosque has been erected on its site.
SLATINA (Kačanik): ruins of a church (two village priests mentioned in 1455) and an old graveyard on the site called Crkva (Church).
SLATINA (Leposavić): 1. ruins of an old church next to the hamlet of Staro Selo (Staloga); 2. foundations of a church among the remains of an antique and medieval complex (cal led by the people "the monastery of Sts. Constantine and Helena"), upstream of the Sočanica, on the left bank of the Ibar.
SLATINA (Podujevo): 1. monastery of St. Nicholas, unascertained (mentioned in the 15th c.); 2. church of St. Peter (the parish church until 1878), stood on the site called Crkva (Church).
SLIVOVO (Uroševac): church dating from more recent times erected on the foundations of an older ecclesiastical structure (a priest mentioned as early as the 15th c.).
SLOVINJE (Lipljan): 1. ruins of the church of St. John (the 14th and the 16th c.) the Albanians demolished it so as to construct the village mosque; 2. ruins of the church of St. Nicholas (16th c.); the Albanians demolished it in order to sell its stone to the railway bridges construction company (1871–1873); 3. monastery of St. George (14th c.) in the mountain above the village demolished in the 19th c. by Jashar Pasha Džanić who used its material for the construction of bridges on the Sitnica river.
SMAČ (Djakovica): new Catholic church on the Glavica hillock built with the stone of the church ruins situated on the site called Kod Dva Bresta (By Two Elms).
SMAĆ (Prizren): old graveyard recorded in the 19th c.
SMIRA (Vitina): 1. ruins of the church of the Holy Savior (the Resurrection), erected in the 16th c.; 2. ruins of the so-called Upper Church dedicated to St. Simeon Myrrobletos, next to

Sevce, Church of Saint Nicholas

Sićevo near Klina, Church of Saint Nicholas: The Holy Warriors, 16 century

the spring of the Smirinska river; 3. ruins of the so-called Macicka church, on the road to the village of Drenoglava. Stone slabs from some of these churches were built in the village mosque. At the beginning of the 20th c., an old cemetery still stood next to the village.

SMOLUŠA (Lipljan): ruins of an old church (a village priest mentioned in the 15th c.) and a desecrated graveyard of the expelled Serbs, near the village.

SMREKOVNICA (in the Middle Ages Smrekovica, Vučitrn): locality "Crkva" (Church).

SOČANICA (in the Middle Ages Selčanica, Leposavić): 1. church of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist, erected in 1863 on the foundations of a medieval church, in the hamlet of Rakovac; 2. remains of the church of St. Paraskeve not far from the Zeratova meadow; 3. remains of the medieval church of the Presentation of the Mother of God (the Mother of God Amolyntos) opposite the Galic fortress; 4. medieval fortress of Galic, above the village; 5. remains of a Roman provincial center (Municipium DD from the 2nd–4th c. AD).

SOJEVO (in the Middle Ages also Sivojevo Uroševac): ruins of an old church formerly existed (the Albanians—immigrants found it in 1750).

SOPNIĆ, SOPINIĆ (Orahovac): ruins of the churches of St. Helena (the Popovići mahala) and of the Holy Archangels.

SOPOT (Djakovica): a 14th century source makes mention of the "Gradišlaljska church," in the vicinity of the village.

SOPOTNICA (Kačanik): until recently, the ruins of a former church and the site of an old graveyard existed (a 15th-century census makes mention of a priest and a monk).

SRBICA: cemetery and the monument to the Yugoslav fighters fallen in the battles in 1944–1945.

SRBOVAC (K. Mitrovica): old cemetery.

SREDSKA (Prizren): 1. remains of the church of St. Paraskeve (mentioned in a charter from 1348); 2. church of St. George with 16th-century frescos; 3. church of the Mother of God (17th c.) with frescos from 1646–1647; 4. church of St. Nicholas, erected and painted in 1875.

SRPSKI BABUŠ (in the Middle Ages Bobuša, Uroševac): old graveyard.

STAGOVO (Kačanik): abandoned church, recorded in the 19th c.

STANIŠOR (Gnjilane): Stanisor church, on an elevation in the village the remains of the former village called Staro Selo situated in the plain near the village while an old church occupied the site called Crkvište (Ruins of the Church); next to the village is an old graveyard. Recently, a Byzantine vault has been uncovered in the village.

Smira: wood-carved, plated silver cross of the Metropolitan of Gracanica Nikanor (from 1551), donated to the Church of the Holy Savior in Smira

Srbica, Rudnik, Church of Saint George, 16th century

STARI KAČANIK (Kačanik): remains of an old church (the Rečka church) in the Reč mahala.

STARI TRG (K. Mitrovica): remains of the large three-aisled basilica (of St. Peter's) the so-called Latin or Saxon church erected in the 13th c. in the spirit of Gothic, painted at the end of the 13th c. and the first half of the 14th c. in the Byzantine manner.

STARODVORANE, STARO DVORANE (Istok): large old cemetery, west of the village.

STARO RUJCE (Lipljan): remains of Byzantine walls and an old graveyard with the ruins of a former church.

STEPANICA (Klina): in the 14th c., mention is made of the Stepanja church (unascertained) not far from the village.

STRANA (K. Mitrovica): microtoponym "Crkva" (Church).

STRAŽA (Gnjilane): 1. ruins of the church of St. Nicholas, on the site called Manastir (Monastery); 2. village church erected on the foundations of an older church structure; 3. 20 medieval mining shafts on the Glama hill.

STRAŽA (Kačanik): ruins of a church by the destroyed Orthodox graveyard, on the road to the village of Kotlina.

STRELICA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): the village probably had a church (a census from the 15th c. refers to a priest); remains of an old village, on the site called Selište.

STREOVCE STROVCE (in the Middle Ages Strelac Vučitrn): until recently, the remains of the church of St. Nicholas occupied the site called Crkveni Do (Church Valley) (a church mentioned in a document from the start of the 15th c.).

STREZOVCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): ruins of an old church beneath the present-day cemetery (according to 15th century documents, a monastery may have existed in the village at that time).

STRUŽIJE (Prizren): locality called "Grobište" (remains of a graveyard) where an old cemetery was formerly situated.

STUDENICA (Istok): stone slabs and cut stones from the ruins of Studenica Hvostanska incorporated into the village mosque.

STUDENIČANE (Suva Reka): locality "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Graveyard); according to tradition, a large church formerly existed (demolished in the 19th c. so that a mosque would be constructed on its site).

STUP (in the Middle Ages St'lpezi, Klina): remains of an old and new cemetery.

SURKIŠ (Podujevo): remains of an old church on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church).

SUŠICA (Istok): according to tradition the church of St. George existed (a village priest mentioned in the census of 1485); demolished so that a mosque would be built with its material.

Sokolica, Church of the Intercession of Mother of God

Sredska, Church of Saint Nicholas, altar apse

Sokolica, Transfiguration of Christ

Sredska, Church of Saint Nicholas

Sokolica Monastery

SUŠICA (Priština): church of St. Demetrius in Susica (a villa ge priest mentioned as early as the 15th c.), demolished at the beginning of the 19th c. by Jashar-Pasha Džanić who used the material for the construction of several bridges on the Sitnica river.

SUVA REKA: 1. ruins of a church on the site called Crkvište (remains of a church) next to the Serbian graveyard, still existed in 1880; 2. in the 19th c., a hermitage surrounded by cells stood on the hill near Suha Reka; 3. new church erected in 1938 in the east part of the settlement, near the present-day cemetery.

SUVI LUKAVAC (Istok): 1. traces of a church (of St. Luke?) on the site called Crkvine (ruins of a church), 2. ruins of a former church in the old graveyard; 3. a church considered to have been sitaued near the so-called Smrdel spring 4. according to tradition, the church of the Holy Savior once stood in the Spasance fields.

SUVO GRLO (Istok): 1. church of "the Mother of God on the Suhogrlska land" (unascertained) mentioned in King Milutin's charters (1282–1320); 2. remains of the church of the Presentation of the Mother of God (mentioned in 1596) perhaps identical with the former; 3. ruins of the church of St. Nicholas; 4. remains of the church of the Holy Archangels and the foundations of two ecclesiastical structures on the site called Brda; 5. foundations of the church by the site called Crkveni

Kladenac (Church Well) (the Kamberovica mahala); 6. ruins of the church of St. John on the site called Crkvine (ruins of a church), below the Cutek hill; 7. remains of "Kaludjerski Grad" (Monks' Town) on the elevation called Gradina above the village; 8. ruins of a former church on the estate of Seferaj Salija; 9. ruins of a former church in the barn of Hajzeraj Ramadan; 10. remains of an old town in the Šipovik wood, above the village.

SUVO GRLO II or GORNJE SUVO GRLO (Srbica): remains of several churches or the surviving names of the sites of former churches: 1. remains of the church of the Mother of God; 2. the site of the former church of Epiphany; 3. the site of the former church "Kod Murike" (By the Mulberry Tree); 4. the site called Kaludjerska Gradina (Ruins of the Monks' Castle) with Kaludjerski Izvor (Monks' Spring); 5. Lupoglav with the remains of the church of the Holy Trinity and; 6. Ćelije (Cells) with a spring and Ćelijski Krš above it.

SVETLJE (Podujevo): according to a 15th-century census, the monastery of St. Menas was situated somewhere around the village, while the church was in the village itself.

SVINJARE (K. Mitrovica): church and the ruins of a church in the village; the ruins of another church situated on the site called Troja.

SVRČIN (Uroševac): in the 14th c. the courts of Serbian rulers were located here, together with the church of St. John in which King Dušan was coronated in 1331 (the palace stood on the Sarajište estate and the church on the Glavica hill on the site called Crkvine—i.e. ruins of a church); with the church's stone-remains, Jashar Pasha built the bridge on the Sitnica river.

SVRKE (Peć): an old graveyard; the ruins called St. Sava also existed.

SVRKE VOLUJAČKE (Klina): remains of an old church (mentioned in a notice from the 17th c.) its stone was taken away and used for the construction of village houses. An old Serbian graveyard is situated next to the ruins.

ŠAIC (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old graveyard of the former settlement occupied the site called Grobljanska Ravan (Graveyard Plain).

ŠAJKOVAC (Podujevo): a church formerly existed (a village priest mentioned as early as 1455), while nowadays there is only a graveyard.

ŠALCE (Vučitrn): locality "Crkvena Kosa" (Church Slope) in the hamlet of Ugljare indicates that the village used to have a church outside the village another church stood on the site called Šalačka Crkva (Sadačka Church); the remains of an old Serbian graveyard in the village (on the site called Isenov Za bel).

ŠALJINOVICA (Istok): remains of a church (with the fragments of frescos and a bell-tower in the old graveyard, on the right bank of the Kujavca river (tradition associates the church with St. Arsenije of Serbia).

ŠAPELJ, ŠAPTEJ (Dečane): locality "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Graveyard).

ŠARBAN (Priština): ruins of an old church existed until 1878.

ŠAŠARE (Vitina): ruins of the Catholic church of St. Rocco.

ŠAŠKOVAC (Priština): remains of the medieval church of St. Paraskeve and the Cells of Šaškovac (frequent abode of Serbian patriarchs in the 17th c.), above the village, at the foot of Veletina.

ŠILOVO (Gnjilane): 1. ruins of the church of St. Mark near the village; 2. foundations of an old, large edifice, in the locality called Slamnište.

ŠIPOLJE (K. Mitrovica): old cemetery, repetedly desecrated in recent times

ŠLJIVOVICA, SLIVOVICA (Vučitrn): ruins of a former church and an old graveyard on the site called Jesice.

ŠPINADIJA (Prizren): remains of the church of the Mother of God Amolyntos (probably from the 16th c.) near the village, several old tombstones are situated around the church.

ŠTIMLJE (Uroševac): one of the courts of Stefan Dečanski (1321–1331) was situated in the village; in 15th century, a village priest is referred to; the present-day church of the Holy Archangel Michael was erected in 1920–1922 on the foundations of an older church in the graveyard in the east side of the settlement, the church of St. Nicholas was constructed in 1926 on the foundations of the old graveyard church.

ŠTITARICA (Vučitrn): in the village which as early as 1455 had a priest a church existed once (confirmed by the ruins of an old church).

ŠTRPCE (Uroševac): 1. church of St. Nicholas raised in the village and painted in 1576/1577; 2. church of St. John the Baptist erected in 1911 on the site of a former church, east of the visage; 3. old graveyard, in the village.

ŠTUPELJ (Klina): foundations of the church of the Presentations of the Mother of God (also called St. Paraskeve), in the Serbian graveyard, on the site called Vakuf (as early as 1485, the village had a priest).

ŠTUTICA (in the Middle Ages Štucanci, Glogovac): locality "Crkva" (Church), where a Serbian church used to stand.

ŠUMATI BOGOVAC: unascertained monastery in the nachye of Peć (mentioned in the Turkish census of 1485).

ŠUMNIK: unascertained monastery in the nachye of Peć (mentioned in Turkish censuses from the 15th and 16th c.).

ŠUMNJA LUKA, ŠAMALUK (Podujevo): locality "Kod Crkve" (By the Church).

TALINOVAC, JERLI TALINOVAC (Uroševac): 1. according to traditon, a church stood on the site of the present-day mosque before the Albanians settled in 1840 (a village priest mentioned in the 15th and the 17th c.); 2. Paun's field (near the

Štimlje, Holy Archangels Michael Church, 1922

village), where the unascertained summer residence of Serbian rulers, called Pauni, was situated, as well as a chruch where the Archbishop sojourned. The church of St. John the Baptist also existed in that area (mentioned last in 1788).

TAMNICA, MONASTERY, see **AJNOVCE**.

TARADŽA (Vučitrn): 1. microtoponym "Crkveni Potok" (Church Stream) indicates that a church once stood in the village; 2. settlement from late antiquity and the early Middle Ages with a medieval necropolis, on the Čečan hill.

TENEZ DO (in the Middle Ages Trndol, Priština): an old church formerly existed (a 15th-century census makes mention of a village priest).

TICA (in the Middle Ages Tip'c or Tipčinja Luka, Srbica): microtoponym "Crkvena Glavica" (Church Peak).

TIRINCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): ruins of two churches in the village territory (one devoted to Sts. Constantine and Helena); in the 15th c., mention is made of a village priest and a monk.

TOMANCE (Istok): 15th and 16th-century documents refer to the Tumenica monastery near the village; the village had a church on the site called Gumourača (Gumurača).

TOPLIČANE (Lipljan): remains of a church by the Toplik spring (demolished in the 19th c. by Jashar-Pasha Džanić so as to build bridges with its stone), and a very old graveyard called Svatovsko (Weddding Guests').

TOPONICA, TOPOLNICA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): old and new cemetery, desecrated and demolished in 1985.

TRBOVCE, TRBUVCE (Lipljan): remains of an old church ("the church of the Empress Milica), above the village.

TRBUHOVAC (in the Middle Ages Trbuhovci, Istok): until recently, the remains of the foundations of an old church still existed (according to tradition, demolished during Turkish rule).

TRDEVAC, TRDEVCE (Glogovac): a church formerly existed (a village priest mentioned in a 15th century census), as well as the locality "Crkva" (Church).

TREPČA (K. Mitrovica): two Catholic churches existed: the so-called Latin or Saxon church in Stari Trg (of St. Peter?) and the unascertained church of St. Mary; also, there were three Orthodox churches—the so called Monks' church and two churches above the village of Mažići, on the site called Stara Trepča. In Stara Trepča the remains of an old mosque (the midd 15th c.) are situated as well.

TRIKOSE (in the Middle Ages Tarkosi, Leposavić): walls of an ancient structure (in popular opinion, the remains of a church) and an old graveyard.

TRLABUĆ (Vučitrn): microtoponym "Popova Glavica" (Priest's Peak) points to the possible existence of a church.

TRNAVA (Podujevo): a church formerly existed (village priest mentioned as early as 1455).

TRNAVCE (Srbica): localities "Crkvište" (i.e. ruins of a church) and "Staro Groblje" (Old Graveyard) (a 15th-century census makes mention of two priests).

TRNAVICA, TRNOVICA (Podujevo): a church had existed until the Serbian population migrated in 1878.

TRNIĆEVCE (Priština): remains of medieval mining shafts and two old graveyards.

TRNJE (Suva Reka): the locality whose name indicates that an old graveyard used to exist there.

TRPEZA (Vitina): 1. remains of the monastery of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel (mentioned in 17th-century notices) on the site called Gradište; with its stones the Turks built the bridge on the Morava river near Klokot in the 19th c.; 2. remains of the monastery of St. George by the spring of the Svintula river; 3. ruins of the church of St. Nicholas, in the village.

TRSTENA (K. Mitrovica): large cemetery occupied the site called Srbinov Grob (the Serbs Grave).

TRSTENA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): a church formerly existed – suggested by the microtoponyms "Ajdukova Crkva" (Brigand's Church) and "Popovo Brdo" (Priest's Hill).

TRSTENIK (Glogovac): remains of the monastery of the Ar changer Michael (mentioned in 1346 and 1365, subsequently in the 15th c. and the 16th c.) next to the walls, the old churchyard (called Srpsko Groblje i.e. Serbian Graveyard) occupies the site called Crkve (Churches).

TRSTENIK (Peć): a church existed (village priest mentioned in the 15th c.), probably in the old ganeyard.

TRSTENIK (Vitina): ruins of a church and the remains of a graveyard (a 15th-century census makes mention of rwo priests and "the Trstenik monastery" with two monks).

TRUDNA (Priština): a church existed (suggested by the reference to a village priest in a 15th-century census and several microtoponyms).

TUČEP (Istok): locality "Crkvine" (ruins of a church), next to the graveyard and the ruins of a former church in the fields above the village (a 15th-century census makes mention of two village priests).

TUDJEVCE (in the Middle Ages Todjozevci, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): locality called "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Graveyard).

TUPEC (Prizren): an important archaeological site, situated north of the village, was flooded in the construction of a dam in Alban ia.

TURIĆEVAC (in the Middle Ages Tudorićevci, Srbica): the site of an old graveyard is known in the village.

TURJAKE (Mališevo): ruins of a town or a monastery, on the Gradina hill.

TURUČICA (Podujevo): in the village which in the 15th c. had an archpriest and a priest, the remains of four churches are located: 1. ruins of a former church in Donji Lugovi in the Simkovac valley, with the traces of an old graveyard; 2. remains of a church (of the Resurrection?) and subsidiary church buildings, on the estate that formerly belonged to Sava Aleksić; 3. ruins of a church in the Sinkovac valley, on the estate of Dušan Radojević; 4. "Crkvište na sedlu brega" ("church ruins on the ridge of the hill"), on the other bank of the Turučićka stream.

TUŠICE (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): two old cemeteries (one on the site called Repište, and the other on the site called Sta re Kobile).

TUSILJE (Srbica): in 1685/1686, a reference is made to the monastery of the Holy Archangel Michael "called Tusimlja" nowadays, the remains of a medieval fortress or monastery occupy the site called Gradevac.

TVRDJAN (Leposavić): remains of an old structure (considered to be the ruins of a church), on the hill by the Tvrdjanska river.

UGLJARE (in the Middle Ages Uliare, Priština): remains of an old church on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church).
UJZ (Djakovica): old graveyard.
UKČA (in the Middle Ages Usce, Istok): a Turkish census from the 15th c. makes mention of a village priest and a monk; the traces of the old church have perished.
UROŠEVAC: the church dating from 1901 formerly existed; it was abandoned after the construction of the new church of the Holy King Uroš in 1933 (the new church treasures an interesting collection of 19th-century icons).

Uroševac, church of Holy Emperor Uroš, 20th century.
The church was demolished and burnt by the Albanian extremists after the arrival of KFOR to Uroševac, at the end of June 1999.

VAGANEŠ (K. Kamenica): church of the Mother of God from 1354/1355, with frescos from the 14th and the 16th c.; the remains of a graveyard from medieval and more recent times surround the church.
VALAČ (K. Mitrovica): remains of a modest sized church building and a significant prehistoric settlement.
VARAGE (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): two ancient churches, restored at a recent time, and an old graveyard.
VAROŠ SELO (Uroševac): a small church and an old graveyard.
VELEKINCE (Gnjilane): the old, demolished Serbian church on the site called Vakaf.
VELETIN (Priština): ruins of the medieval fortress of Veletin.
VELEŽA (Prizren): remains of the old church of the Mother of God Amolyntos with a graveyard (near the village); in the 14th c., "the Berislavci church" was located in the vicinity peak of the same name, with the remains of a church.
VELIKA DOBRANJA (Lipljan): remains of an old church were situated in the hamlet of Lesnica.
VELIKA HOČA (in the Middle Ages Hotca, Orahovac): 1. church of St. Nicholas, in the graveyard (probably from the second half of the 14th c. restored in the 16th c. with the remains of frescos from the 14th and the 16th c.; 2. church of St. John, with 14th and 16th century frescos; 3. church of St. Stephen from the 14th c. (subseqently restored) with the frescos painted in the 16th and the 19th c.; 4. church of St. Kyriake, erected in the 19th c. on the foundations of an older church; 5. church of St. Paraskeve, constructed over the remains of an older church; 6. church of St. Anna, erected in the 20th c. on the foundations of an older church; 7. ruins of the church of St. Luke (recently reconstructed); 8. ruins of the church of the Holy Archangels from the 16 c. (the surviving iconostasis dating from 1601); 9. remains of the church of St. Peter (16th c.) on

Ubožac, Ambo rosette, 14th century

Uroševac, church of Holy Emperor Uroš

Vaganeš, Church of the Mother of God, west side, 14th century

Vaganeš, The Church of the Mother of God: fresco fragments, 14th and 16th century

Vaganeš, The Church of the Mother of God: founder's inscriptions of Dabižav, Drobnjak's grandson, 1355

Vaganeš, The Church of the Mother of God, southeast view, 14th century

the hill above the village; 10. remains of the church of the Mother of God Amolyntos; 11. foundations of the church of St. Elijah at the entrance to the village; 12. tradition has it that there was a church in Dugi Rid; 13. a clock-tower formerly existed in the village (demolished after 1908).

VELIKA JABLANICA (Peć): 1. remains of a larger church or monastery above the village; 2. rock cut hermitage—the so-called Popova Pećina (Priest's cave), in the gorge above the village; 3. the vast site of a former town, above the village called Grad; 4. tradition has it that the present day mosque was erected on the site of an old church.

VELIKA KRUŠA (Orahovac): a graveyard in the northern part of the village.

VELIKA REKA (Vučitrn): remains of an old church in the wood above the village.

VELIKI ALAS (Lipljan): old graveyard.

VELIKI BELAĆEVAC (Priština): a stone church from more recent times, demolished in 1941/1945.
VELIKI DJURDJEVIK (Klina): in the village in which a priest was mentioned as early as 1485, today exist: 1. ruins of the church of St. Basil, in the graveyard; 2. remains of a church, above the site called Kaludjerska Česma (i.e Monks' drinking fountain).
VELIKI GODEN (Vitina): until recently the ruins of a church could be seen in the village; outside the village, there are the remains of another church and the monastery of St. Nicholas, above which the ruins of old Gradište stand.
VELIKI KIČIĆ (K. Mitrovica): old graveyard; four microtoponyms point to the existence of several churches.
VELIKO KRUŠEVO (Klina): remains of the church of the Presentation of the Mother of God (recently reconstructed) with a tombstone from the 14th c. in the old graveyard.
VELIKO RIBARE (Lipljan): in the 16th c., the monastery of the Holy Archangels was situated in the vicinity of the village, old church ruins and an old graveyard exist today.
VELIKO ROPOTOVO (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): a 16th-century source makes mention of the village church; the church of the Archangel Gabriel and the locality "Crkovište" (ruins of a church) exist today.
VELIKO RUDARE (in the Middle Ages Rudarije, K. Mitrovica): remains of a small church in the old graveyard.
VELJEGLAVA (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): the old village had a church.
VELJI BRIJEG (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): old graveyard with a small church; the remains of a small medieval town (Gradina) are situated on the hill above the village.
VERIĆ, VERICE (Istok): 1. remains of the church of the Holy Trinity on the site called Crkvina (ruins of a church); 2. Old graveyard on the hill above the village.
VIDANJE: unascertained church (perhaps a monastery) in the Lapska nachye, mentioned in the defter of 1487.
VIDANJE, VIDENJE (Klina): remains of the church or monastery of Paškalica in the Vaganište plain (perhaps the monastery of St. Simeon, mentioned in 1485 and in the 16 c.).
VIDOMIRIĆ (in the Middle Ages Vidomirići, K. Mitrovica): old graveyard.
VIDUŠIĆ (in the Middle Ages Vidoševci, K. Mitrovica): 1. remains of an old church on the site called Crkva (Church); 2. ruins of a medieval mining settlement and marketplace in the Zidovi valley.
VILANCE (Vučitrn): old and present-day Serbian cemetery.
VITAKOVO (in the Middle Ages Vitahovo, K. Mitrovica): two old graveyards—in the village on the site called Njivceta and the so-called Rusalijsko graveyard outside the village with monolithic tombstones.
VITINA KOSOVSKA: 1. large stone church from the 19th c.; 2. log-cabin church, devoted to St. Paraskeve, dating from 1785.
VITOMIRICA (Peć): church of St. Luke (erected after 1912) in the village graveyard.
VLADOVO (Gnjilane): a Serbian church and an old graveyard formerly existed.
VLAHINJA (K. Mitrovica): old church ruins with surviving walls and an old graveyard.
VLAŠTICA (Gnjilane): ruins of a church and an old graveyard and the microtoponyms "Crkvište" (ruins of a church) and "Manastirce" (small monastery).
VOĆNJAK (Srbica): according to tradition, ruins of several churches formerly existed in the village; today there is only the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church), with an old graveyard in which a church stood once.
VOGOVO (Djakovica): ruins of a church in the old village graveyard; the Catholic church of St. Mark erected in recent times.
VOJINOVCE, VOJNOVCE (Uroševac): according to tradition, an old church existed on the site called Crkvine (ruins of a church).

Vračevo, Holy Anargyroi (Healers) Church, a marble rosette on ambon, 16th century

Vračevo, Holy Anargyroi (Healers) Church, rebuilt in 19th century

VOLUJAK (Klina): two rock-cut hermitages with the remains of frescos and vessels from the 14th c.; in the ravine of the Miruša river.
VRAČEVO (Leposavić): church of St. Kosmas and Damianos, appears to date from the 14th c.; since the 16th c., thoroughly reconstructed for several times.
VRAGOLIJA (Priština): the bridge on the Sitnica river (19th c.), erected by Jashar-Pasha Džanić, a Turk, with the material from demolished Serbian churches.
VRANIĆ (Djakovica): in the 19th c., the ruins of a church and a modest-sized old graveyard could still be seen.
VRANIĆ (Suva Reka): microtoponym "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Graveyard) formerly existed in the village.
VRANI DO (in the Middle Ages Vranin Dol, Priština): 1. traces of an old church in the village; 2. remains of a medieval fortress on the Kulan hill, near the village.
VRANIŠTE (Dragaš): remains of two old graveyards and the ruins of three churches situated in the village; not far from the village, another church occupied the site called Čukar.
VRANOVAC (Peć): on the south-west slope of the Vranovac hill, the old Ružica church was situated; tradition has it that the village mosque was constructed with its stone remains (19th c.); an old graveyard is located to the north of the ruins of this church.
VRBAN (Vitina): traces of the old settlement called Vrbangrad, in the vicinity of the locality called Selište.

Zočište, Royal Doors,
17th–18th century

VRBEŠTICA (Uroševac): 1. remains of the church of St. Peter called Manastir (monastery); 2. ruins of a church on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church); 3. church of St. Elijah erected on the foundations of an older church.
VRBICA (Gnjilane): remains of a demolished church on the site called Lojza.
VRBIČANE (in the Middle Ages Vrbičani, Prizren): ruins of an old church and a graveyard.
VRBNICA (Podujevo): a settlement that has perished; in a written source from 1455 the monastery of St. Menas is mentioned to have existed in it.
VRBNICA (Prizren): an archaeological locality rich in the finds of the early Slavic culture flooded in the construction of a hydro power-plant in Albania.
VRBOVAC (Glogovac): in the 14th c., the ruins of a former church and the church of St. Demetrius were situated in the vicinity of the village; the localities "Crkva" (Church), "Crkveni Izvor" (Church Spring) and "Crkvene Njive" (Church Fields) exist in the village.
VRBOVAC (Vitina): church of St. Demetrius erected in the 19th c. on the remains of a medieval church (old apse with a part of frescos). At the start of the 20th c., the Albanians devastated the church treasury.

Vučitrn, Vojinović fortress,
14th century

Fortified castle of the Vojinović family, 14th century, Vučitrn

The remnants of the fortified castle, traditionally related to the noble family Vojinović from the 14th century, is located in Vučitrn, on the right banks of the river Sitnica, north-western Kosovo. During the first decades of the 15th century it was the castle of the Despot George Branković, where guests were received and charters were written. Due to its favorable location, Vučitrn was, both during this period and later under the Turkish rule, an important town, until the first decades of the 17th century. The fortified castle, with several towers, still existed in the core of the town at the beginning of the 19th century. The preserved structures include remains of ramparts 3–4 m high, with an imposing one floor tower of rectangular foundation, 6–7 m high, built of processed stone. No research or conservation works have been done on the fortified castle in Vučitrn.

VRELA (Istok): 1. remains of the monastery of Studenica Hvostanska; 2. ruins of a fortress, above the monastery; 3. traces of rock-cut dwellings on Crveni Krš.

VRELO (Lipljan): small village church erected after World War I.

VRNICA (Vučitrn): church situated in the graveyard.

VRTOMICA (in the Middle Ages Vrtomirce, Kačanik): church of the Resurrection mentioned in 1434, probably located on the site called Crkva (Church) today.

VRŠEVCE (Lipljan): remains of an old cemetery on the site called Krst (Cross).

VUČA (in the Middle Ages V'lčija Leposavić): 1. foundations of an old church (called Crkvina Kod Zapisa); 2. remains of an antique town (the locality called Anine i.e. of Anna); 3. remains of an ancient church and graveyard (the Vučanska church), below the Vrabac hill.

VUČITRN: the center of a medieval Serbian district and subsequently of a Turkish sanjak. According to Turkish censuses, this sanjak had 42 monasteries and 11 churches. Today exist: 1. the Vojnović tower, the remains of the Branković' court (14th–15th c.); 2. according to tradition the sites of the present-day Turskih bath and tekija in the Turkish cemetery were formerly occupied by churches; 3. church of St. Elijah, erected in 1834.

ZABLAĆE (Istok): large stone bridge on the Istok river (constructed by the Turks with stone fragments from demolished Serbian churches).

ZABRDJE (Klina): a mosque erected on the site of the old church dedicated according to tradition, to the Holy Savior (the Resurrection).

ZABRDJE (K. Mitrovica): locality "Srpsko Groblje" (Serbian Graveyard).

ZAJČEVCE (Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): ruins of an old church on the site called Vakaf and the locality "Stojanovo Groblje" (Stojan's Graveyard) where an old Serbian necropolis was situated.

ZAKUT (Podujevo): in the 14th and the 15th c., mention was made of the churches of St. Peter and St. Nicholas; nowadays there are the ruins of two churches and a graveyard.

ZAPLUŽJE (in the Middle Ages Zaplužani, Dragaš): the legend that the village had a large church whose remains are situated in the vicinity of the village, was noted down in 1861.

ZASKOK (Uroševac): remains of a medieval church and a necropolis from the 10th–14th c. (a stone icon from the 14th c. has been uncovered there).

ZATRIČ (Orahovac): 1. yard boundary markers constructed over the foundations of an old church (in the vicinity of the village mosque); 2. remains of the medieval fortress of Zatrić, south of the village.

ZBORCE (Uroševac): the site formerly occupied by an old cemetery is known in the village.

ZEBINCE (Priština): old graveyard; in the 15th c., the church of St. Nicholas was located near the village.

ZEČEVIĆ (K. Mitrovica): 1. new church erected on the foundations of an older one; 2. remains of a church in the old graveyard, on the site called Kamenjača.

ZEMANICA (Leposavić): the site formerly occupied by old church ruins and an old Serbian graveyard.

ZJUM (formerly Subi or Zumbi, Prizren): 1. ruins of a former church above the Limez mahala on the site called Crkva (Church); 2. ruins of the church of St. George, above a small lake; 3. old graveyard in the Hurdi wood; 4. an old grave in the village, called the Priest's grave; 5. Catholic church of the Mother of God.

ZLATARE (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): remains of an old church and several old graves in the village cemetery.

ZLATARE (Priština): old graveyard.

ZLATARE (Uroševac): abandoned church with an old graveyard existed in the past.

ZLAŠ (Priština): in the 15th c., mention is made of a monastery with the church of St. Luke.

ZLI POTOK (Dragaš): in the hamlet of Ogradje, the ruins of the church of the Transfiguration with a graveyard stood on the site called Zborište (a surviving tombstone in the form of a *stećak* with a Cyrillic inscription).

ZLOKUĆANE (Klina): 1. old cemetery; 2. large Catholic church erected at a recent time.

ZLOKUĆANE (Lipljan): in the census of 1487, mention is made of the monastery in the village surroundings, south of the village is an old graveyard; the microtoponym "Crkvena Livada" (Church Meadow) is recorded in the village.

ZLOPEK (Peć): remains of an old church near the village on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church); an old graveyard situated to the south-west of it.

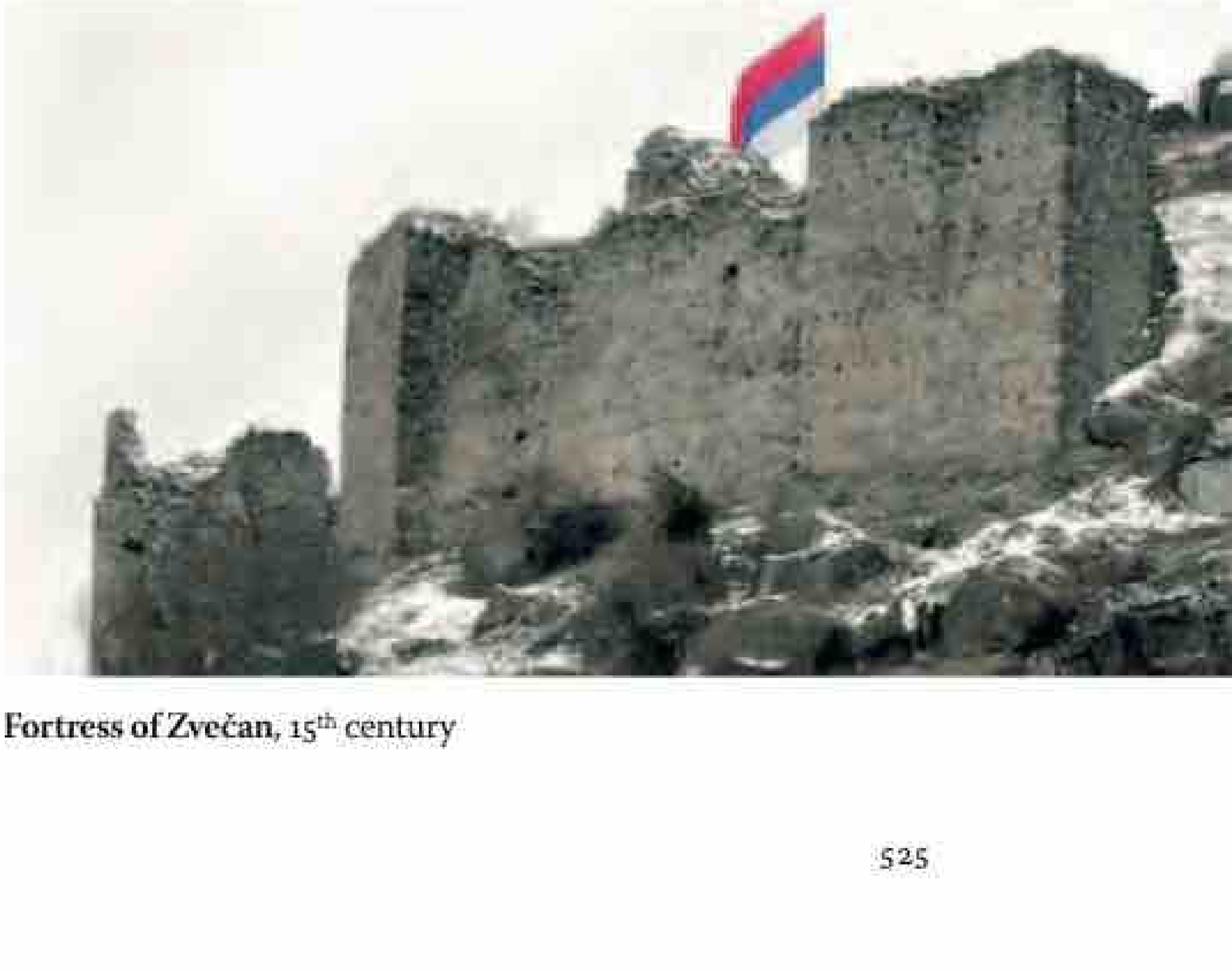
ZOČIŠTE (Orahovac): 1. Zočište monastery with the church of the Holy Anargyroi (remains of frescos) mentioned in a

charter from 1327; 2. ruins of the church of the Presentation of the Mother of God, in the village; 3. ruins of the church of St. John, in the monastic vineyard.
ZOJIĆ (Prizren): old graveyard.
ZRZE, ZERZEVO (Dragaš): in the 19th c., the remains of an old graveyard still existed.
ZRZE (in the Middle Ages Zerzevo, Orahovac): a graveyard next to the hamlet of Orlović; the church of St. Prokopius existed in the 14th c.
ZUPČE (in Kolašin upon the Ibar): old walls in Zubačka Rijeka; a graveyard and a church (restored in 1938) situated in their vicinity.
ZVEČAN (K. Mitrovica): 1. the medieval fortress of Zvečan with the remains of the church of St. George; 2. church of St. Demetrius (mentioned as early as 1315) situated beneath Mali Zvečan, on the site where the Serbian, and subsequently Ottoman, cemetery used to stand until the 19th c.
ŽABELJ (Djakovica): ruins of a church and an old graveyard existed in the 19th c.
ŽAČ (Istok): a new graveyard church, on the site called Kruglice, erected on the ruins of an older church (according to folk tradition, demolished hy the Turks).
ŽAKOVO (Istok): 1. remains of the church of the Mother of God Amolyntos above the Vakav wood; 2. foundations of a church on the site called Crkvište (ruins of a church), in the village; 3. an old graveyard on the Glavača hill.
ŽAŽA (K. Mitrovica): locality "Kod Crkve" (By the Church).
ŽDRELO (Djakovica): the ruins of a church and a graveyard existed in the mid-19th c.
ŽEGRA (Gnjilane): remains of two demolished churches and an abandoned graveyard; a new village church erected in the recent time.
ŽEROVNICA (K. Mitrovica): ruins of a former church and an old graveyard.
ŽILIVODA (in the Middle Ages Zlivode, Vučitrn): at the beginning of the 19th c., the ruins of three churches were recorded to have existed in the village and its surroundings.
ŽITINJE (Podujevo): a church existed in the 15th c., probably on the site called Kod Crkve (By the Church); the surviving remains of a medieval mining shah.
ŽITINJE (Vitina): 1. church of the Holy Trinity in the graveyard, recently erected over the ruins of the church of the Mother of God; 2. ruins of the church of St. Nicholas (St. Theodore), by the river.
ŽITKOVAC (K. Mitrovica): 1. an old graveyard with the ruins of a former church; 2. archaeological remains of a Neolitic settlement.
ŽIVINJANE (Prizren): church of St. Kyriake, erected in the 19th c. on the foundations of an old church from the 16th–17th c.
ŽUJA (formerly Cerka, Kriva Reka near Novo Brdo): a Turkish census from the 16th c. refers to "the monastery of the monk Simon".

This list of Shrines is based on a study by Milan Ivanović, "*Church Monuments from 13th to 20th century*" (in Serbian) in: *Zadužbine Kosova* (eds. A. Jevtić & Živorad Stojković), Prizren-Belgrade 1987, and other recent publications. Dragan Jovanović, researcher, compiled the major part of this list.

Zvečan, Church of Saint George

Zvečan



Fortress of Zvečan, 15th century

Historic Monuments of Serbia: Kosovo and Metohija

Districts: Peć, Prizren, and Priština

JUSTIFICATION OF
"OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE":
—Criteria met: 24 (a) (ii), (iv), (vi) (b) (i), (ii)
—Assurance of authenticity or integrity:
The immobile cultural property of the Metohija Region is protected under the Law on Cultural Property adopted by the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia (*Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije № 71, 1994*), and is categorized according to the Decision on the Identification of Immobile Cultural Property of Outstanding Value (*Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije № 16 and № 25, 1990*).

I DISTRICT OF PEĆ

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

* Municipalities of Dečani, Peć, Klina, Istok, Srbica
* Kosovo and Metohija
* Southern Serbia

DESCRIPTION

The central part of the Metohija valley which comprises the upper section of the Beli Drim river drainage area is a fertile plain inhabited even in prehistoric times and Antiquity, which came to prominence when at the end of the 13th century the seat of the autonomous Serbian Church was transferred to Peć with the strengthening of the Serbian medieval state and its expansion toward the southern parts of the Balkan peninsula. The Peć Patriarchate and Dečani have been in existence since the 14th century as two major ecclesiastical seats in Metohija and their building was accompanied by the erection of a large number of other sacral monuments of outstanding value (Budisavci, Djurakovac, Crkolez, the Belodrim monuments), mainly as the estates of the mentioned monasteries which governed the monastic life of this region, or as foundations of the Serbian nobility. Ottoman rule in the Balkans did not affect construction activity and painting which continued unabated led by Peć and Dečani as constantly active and powerful strongholds of Orthodoxy. A large number of smaller churches and monasteries (the Belodrim monuments, Gorioč) were erected or restored in parallel. The oldest examples of folk architecture in Serbia—traditionally linked to the main centers of church life in Metohija—have been preserved precisely in this area and date back to the 18th century (Goraždevac, Loćane). In addition to numerous remains of churches with graveyards, the extensive medieval architectural activity in this region is illustrated by numerous fortifications and hermitages located mostly in inaccessible caves of the Rugova gorge while the past two centuries are characterized by a widespread and very specific type of secular architecture adapted to the geographical features of Metohija and the way of life of most of its inhabitants (residential towers).

COMPARISON WITH OTHER
SIMILAR PROPERTIES:

In historic-artistic and religious terms, the region of Metohija is eminently under the influence of two exceptional ecclesiastical centers, the Monasteries of the Peć Patriarchate and Dečani. As architectural and painting masterpieces (in 1994 Dečani was nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List) they hallmarked not only the creative endeavour of their epoch but also of centuries to come, their activity in the period under Ottoman rule making them renowned centers of spiritual life around which not only the Serbian people but also members of other confessions rallied.

1. The Mother of God of Hvosno
2. The Patriarchate of Peć, Monastery
3. Dečani Monastery
4. Djurakovac, Church of Saint Nicholas

The little Djurakovac Church has one nave, semi-oval vault, apse which is three-sided from outside and semicircular inside and the wooden narthex. It was built with trimmed and broken stone and limestone soaked in mortar and the roof is covered with stone blocks. It was erected on the foundations of an older building from the 14th century which is evidenced by the tombstone of a Danilo, possibly a founder, from 1362. It was completely renewed by the villagers headed by priest Cvetko in 1592 and was painted by "sinful Milija zograf (painter)" as evidenced by the inscription above the entrance to the naos. The paintings are of average value for that age and were renewed in 1863.

Djurakovac, Saint Nicholas Church, 14th–16th century

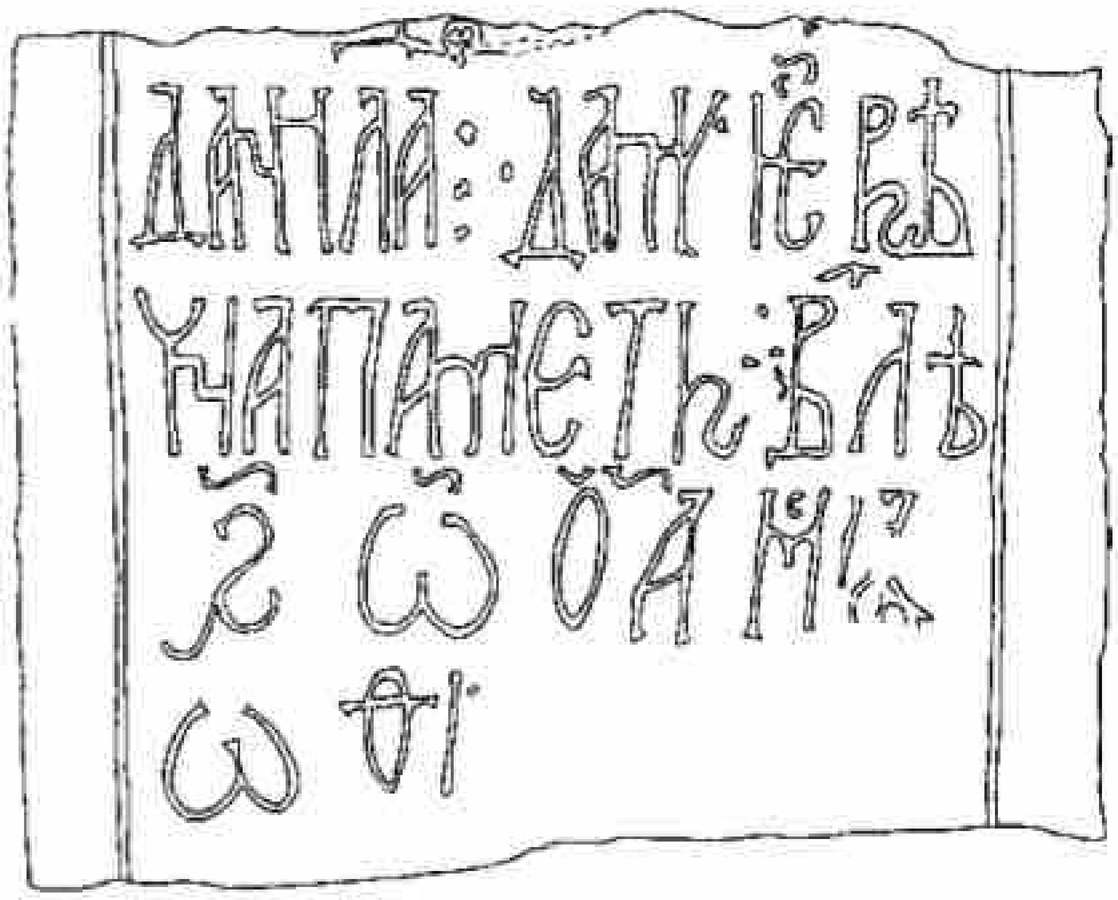
Djurakovac, remnants of Saint Nicholas Church, destroyed by Albanian extremists after June 1999

The architectural renewal also included the erection of wooden narthex with the door decorated with shallow relief with the inscriptions of the names of founders and engravers. The roofs of narthex and altar are lower than the naos and the floor of exonarthex is considerably below the level of soil. The shrine belongs to the group of cemetery churches similar to those in the Beli Drim valley and represents a rare combination of stone and wood. In its interior, imperial gates built during the transition from the 16th century to the 17th century are kept as well as four big icons from 1630 and the manuscript *Bogorodičnik* (the book of poems about the Mother of God) from the 16th century. In the graveyard surrounding the church, in its older part which stretches to the new one, the tombstone with a deer can be noticed. Conservation works on the architecture, paintings and iconography took place in 1968.

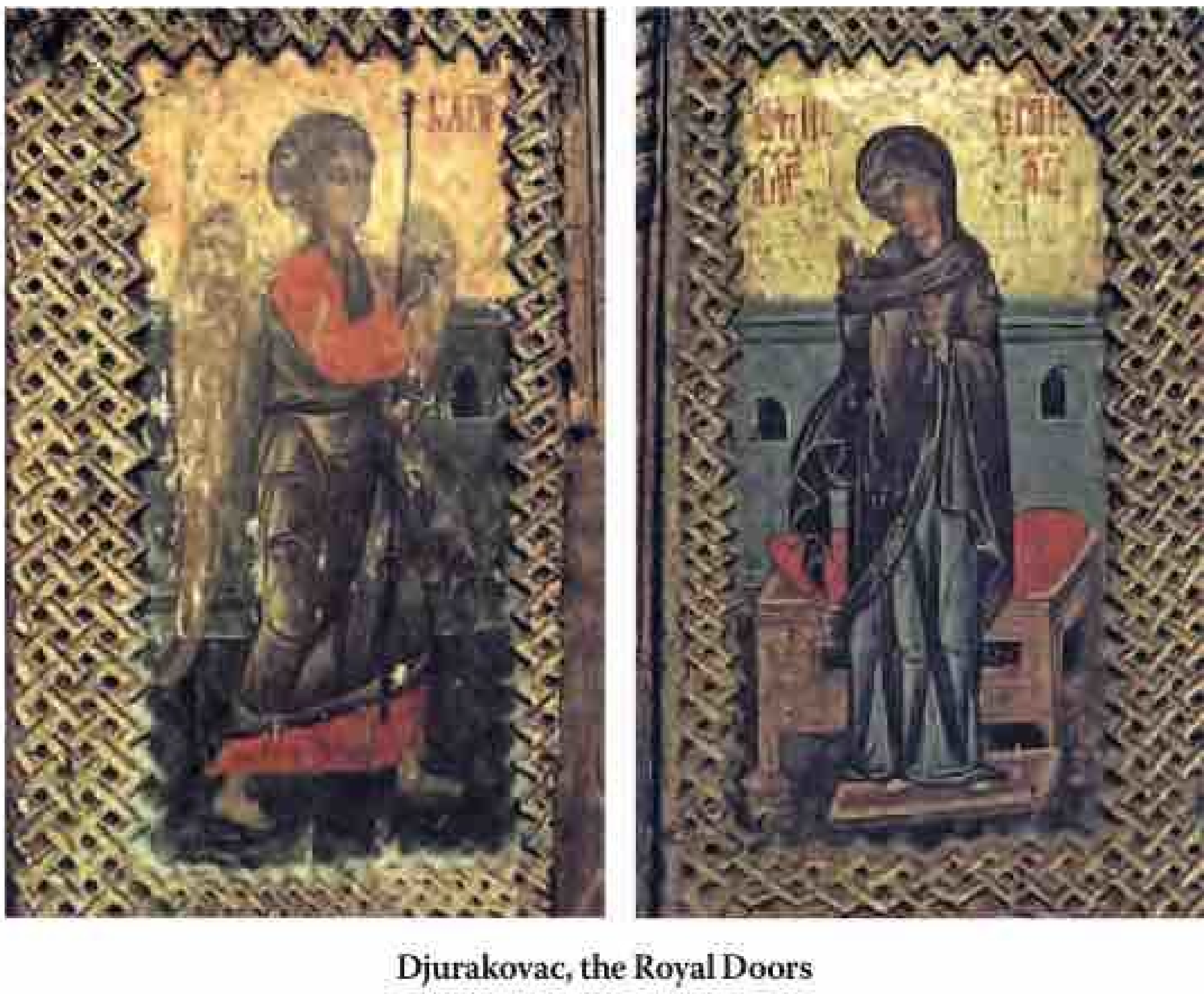
The church was mined and destroyed in 1999, after the arrival of KFOR. Royal Doors and two icons, found in the ruins, are now kept in the monastery of the Patriarchate of Peć. The large centuries old oak tree was cut into pieces and burned.

5. Crkolez, Church of Saint John

The Church of St. John, built by 1355 on the old graveyard above the village of Crkolez, is the endowment of landlord Radoslav (John as monk), buried in the shrine. It was mentioned in the charter of nun Evgenija (Princess Milica) in 1395 by which it was confirmed that Duke Novak and his wife Vidosava presented the Church of St. John as a gift to the Monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mt. Athos. The building is a typical village one-nave church with narthex and semi-oval vault. The apse is five-sided from outside and there is a modest rosette on the western façade carved in the level of the surface of the wall. The paintings from the 14th century were repainted in 1672/1673 by a new layer of the well preserved paintings painted by Serbian most famous painter of the second half of the 17th century named Radul during the rule of Patriarch Maksim. This can be seen by the fresco-inscription on the southern window. Particularly interesting is the detailed representation of the Last Judgment with many sinners, who by their social status belong to the village environment, as well as



Inscription on the grave of certain Danilo from 1362, Djurakovac



Djurakovac, the Royal Doors

Royal doors, Crkolez

Icon of St. John, Crkolez

believers. The inscriptions are written in the folk language which is rare and is a special value of this fresco entity. Eight icons and royal doorsfrom the old iconostasis are preserved. An exceptionally valuable old collection of manuscripts on parchment and paper dating from the 13th century to the 16th century was kept at Crkolez by 1955 to be moved to the Dečani Treasury. Conservation and restoration works on the paintings took place in 1972/1973.

6. Budisavci, Church of Christ's Transfiguration

7. Beli Drim Monastery and Churches

The part of the Beli Drim valley (whose administrative seats today are Klina of Metohija and Mališevo) is an area whose material traces of life can be reliably followed throughout the entire middle age and the period of the Ottoman rule in the Balkans. One of the first Serbian local ascetics of the early 13th century, saint Petar of Koriša, was born, entered the monastic order and began his ascetic life precisely in that area. In the Beli Drim basin, the monastic life in mid-14th century was organized under the auspices of Dečani (Dobra Voda, Dolac), while the rich district villages (Čabići) belonged to the Dečani lands. The mention of their names in hrisovuljas (official documents with a gold seal), which remained unchanged to the present date, is the best proof of the continuity, intensive and creative life in this part of Metohija. Later on, in the changed political and historical conditions, those activities did not lose in their intesiveness. Adjusted to the new conditions, they were expressed in more reduced forms and more modest artistic achievements of the local founders, most frequently villagers of those villages (Drsnik, even two churches in tiny Pogradje, as well as Kijevo and Mlečane, today in the municipality of Mališevo). It is a noble task to preserve them, in their diversity, for future generations.

8. Dobra Voda, Monastery

The hardly accessible crest near the village of Dobra Voda (Unjemir) over the Klina river is most probably the place where ascetic Petar of Koriša became a monk in the 13th century. An one-nave stone church of Sts. Peter and Paul as a metochion of the Dečani Monastery was erected there in the 1340s. It had the dome on free columns and the pairs of built semi-circular niches on the lateral walls. Sculptural ornaments of stone basis and capitals in the late Gothic style as well as the way it was built testify that it was built by coastal masons. Painted fragments of three standing figures are enough to claim that they were painted by the painters of such stylistic orientation that represents the paintings of the Dečani church. During the great renewal in the second half of the 16th century the old church was converted into narthex and enlarged by a modest one-nave church with semi-circular apse, while a spacious storeyed exonarthex was added on its western side. Wall paintings decorated only the apse and lunettes. At a certain period of time, a monastery was built around the church which is evidenced by the remains of massive walls, towers and entry gate. This magnificent edifice with the layers representing many ages is today in ruins and minor conservation works took place in 1966–1967.

9. Dolac, Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God

According to archeological data, there was a monastery on the elevation above the village of Dolac already in the 14th century. The Turkish census of 1455 mentioned the names of its three monks. The great renewal of the monastery at the end of the 16th century and in the first decades of the 17th century is evidenced by the stone remains of the fence wall, tower, entry gate and the fountain, while the storeyed dormitories of the monks are certainly of a later

Crkolez, western view

date. A small one-nave church with semi-circular apse is located in the center of the churchyard. Its only architectural decoration is the arch leaning against consoles which have the contour of the dome on the transversal façades. It has been recently noticed that there are even three chronologically different groups of wall paintings within the church. The oldest, in the zone of standing figures on the western and northern walls, could date back to the transition from the 14th century to the 15th century and, according to the stylistic characteristics, they are attributed to the famous Zrze workshop of monk Makarije. The frescos in the eastern part of the church date back to the end of the 15th century or the beginning of the 16th century, while the third phase is dated back to 1619/1620. There is no usual founder's inscription, but the names of contributors are written besides the frescos whose painting they paid. Minor archeological excavation was carried out in the complex in the 1993–1995 period and necessary conservation works on frescos took place in 1991.

10. Drsnik Church of Saint Paraskeve

Today, a small church is located in the center of the village dedicated to popular *skoropomoćnica* (one who helps immediately) St. Paraskeve. Its outer façades are mortared. The church has the stone socle of the roughly arranged stone and the two-guttered roof covered with stone blocks. The one-nave shrine with undivided space is vaulted by the semi-oval vault along its length. The alter apse having the outer irregular semi-circular shape represents from within a deep semi-circular niche which took over the function of the holy throne. Diaconicon and prothesis have niches of rectangular shape on the walls along its length besides semi-circular niches on the eastern wall. Two narrow windows—one on the southern and the other on the apse wall—provide light to the interior. Wall paintings are preserved only on lower surfaces including—besides the standard altar contents—the zones of the socle, standing figures, frieze with saints' busts on medallions and the scenes from the cycle of Great Feasts with added chosen pictures from the cycle of Passion of Christ. As to the style, the frescos show a sure drawing and the variety of colors and since they are technologically at an enviable level they were the work of an experienced art workshop. Since there are no historical data about the church, it is dated back to the 1570s on the basis of the characteristics of the wall paintings.

11. Pograđe, Upper Church

At least three construction phases can be recognized among the remains of a big temple at Pogradje called by the villagers Holy Anargyroi (doctors who healed free of charge). The oldest part is the church in the narrow sense of the word—one-nave naos with arches leaning against the longer walls and the apse preserved in traces. The narthex built subsequently has almost square foundation and is preserved to the height of the beginning of the vault. The remaining wall paintings present unmarked standing figures of saints in the richly decorated clothes. Although small, the fragments lead to the possible conclusion that they were painted by the same painters who painted in the nearby Lower Church, so that this phase could date back to the second half of the 16th century. The third construction phase is represented by the part of wall with rectangular niche leaning against the western corner of the northern façade of narthex. Since the wall has not been archeologically explored, nothing can be said for certain about its original shape and use.

Ascension of Christ, detail of fresco, Dolac

Dome of the church of the Transfiguration,
14th century, Budisavci

Čabići, Saint Nicholas Church

Čabići, Saint Nicholas Church: scenes from the life of St. Nicholas, St. Simeon, St. Sava and the Holy Anargyroi

Čabići, Saint Nicholas Church after its destruction, 1999

12. Pogradje, Lower Church

The cemetery church, today dedicated to Holy Anargyroi Cosmas and Damian, most probably originally had St. Nicholas as its patron, while, subsequently, the villagers gathered there on the holiday of St. Demetrius. Modest one-nave and semi-oval vaulted space is without narthex and with semi-circular niches which mark the prothesis, altar apse and diaconicon. From the outside, the altar apse is semi-circular. The only entrance with arch and lunette is on the western wall, while the three remaining façades have a small window without ornaments. The architectural characteristic of this church is the elevated floor to the level of solea (elevated part in front of the altar) by one stair. The preserved fresco fragments indicate that the approximate time of its building can be considered the second half of the 16th century. Today, wall paintings include the zone of standing figures and some compositions from the cycle of Great Feasts. As to the style, drawings and the bright colors of paintings are of a standard quality and indicate to the average talent of an anonymous painter. Having been ruined for a long time, the church was renewed during extensive restoration works in the 1964–1967 period, domed and covered with two-gutter roof with stone blocks, while the wall paintings underwent conservation and were cleaned from the layers of soot and salt.

13. Čabići, Church of Saint Nicholas

The medieval settlement of Čabići was the biggest village of the Dečani estate mentioned in chrysobulls (official documents with a gold seal) in mid-16th century. A modest, one-nave, semi-ovally vaulted church built with trimmed stone and covered by stone blocks on two-guttered roof was erected there at the end of the 16th century or at the beginning of the 17th century. The only ornament decorating the eastern and western façades is a slightly raised arch marking the contour of the dome. The altar apse is three-sided from outside and semi-circular in its interior, while prothesis and diaconicon are replaced by the pairs of niches. The iconostasis was built subsequently with two passages to the altar. It was built to the height of the dome and had icons on a board. There is one narrow window on the apse and on the southern wall. The interior is decorated by frescos with the repertoire which, above the zone of standing figures, represents the cycles of Great Feasts and the life of patron. Judging by bright colors, insecure drawing and miniature proportions of figures, the paintings were painted by a painter of modest talent, more inclined to ico-

Mlečane, remains of frescos

St. Nicholas restores the Sight of St. Stefan Dečanski, Gorioč

nography, in the first decades of the 17th century. Icons, which were kept in the church until recently, are of higher artistic value than the wall paintings. Narthex which was built subsequently is today in ruins. Architectural conservation works and the cleaning of paintings were carried out in 1968. However, this monument of the Serbian past can no longer be seen because it was entirely destroyed in August 1999.

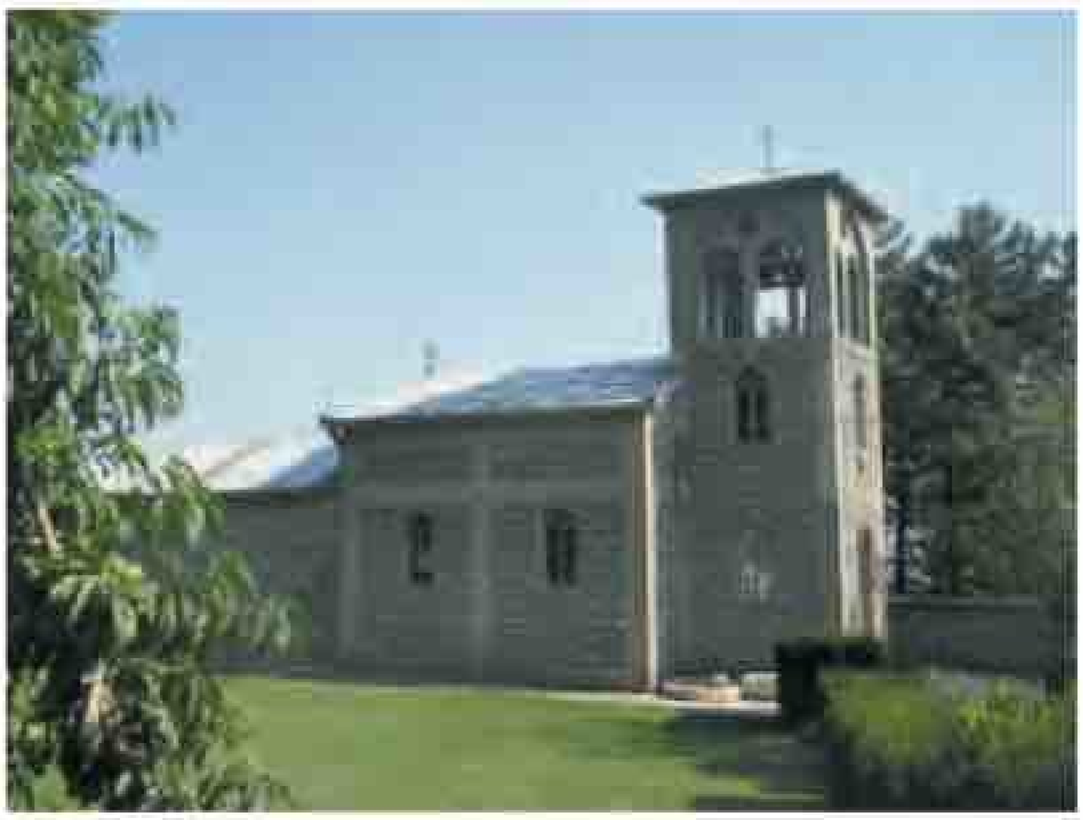
14. Kijevo, Church of Saint Nicholas

It is located in the spacious churchyard beside the village cemetery and it belongs to the group of monasteries and churches in the Beli Drim valley that were erected after the renewal of the Peć Patriarchate. The one-nave building was successively enlarged by narthex and belfry. This small church vaulted along its length was certainly built in the second half of the 16th century. The apse, semi-circular by shape from outside, is a niche inside. The church has no wall paintings. The narthex is a spacious building with rectangular foundation and is somewhat lower than the church, has semi-oval dome, is lit from a southern narrow window and has the entrance on the west. It has the completely preserved wall paintings from 1602/1603. The standard but exceptionally rich contents includes chosen Serbian saints, holy warriors and doctors in the zone of standing figures, developed composition of the Last Judgment, ten scenes from the cycle of Passion of Christ and the same number of scenes from the cycle of Christ's activities and miracles as well as the decorations on the top of the vault. A large group of villagers as a collective founder did not succeed in engaging a talented painter so that the narrative wall paintings of the Kijevo narthex has careless drawing and unskillful composition. However, some rare iconography details deny the judgment about their self-taughtness. A solid storeyed belfry was built in front of narthex in the 19th century. Today, the church continues to keep the important collection of chronologically and stylistically different icons.

St. Nicholas, icon from Monastery Gorioč, 16th century, National Museum, Belgrade

Altar apse, Gorioč

Icon of Christ Pantokrator, Gorioč



Gorioč Monastery, Istok in Metohija

15. Mlečane, Church of Saint Nicholas

The village as the collective founder built this shrine with narthex and one-nave semi-circularly vaulted naos around 1600. Naos is separated from the altar space by a pair of pilasters linked by a semi-circular arch between which there was the iconostasis partition. Although the apse is constructed as a deep niche, its outer shape is semicircular as usual, while the niches of prothesis and diaconicon are constructed within the width of the wall. There are no windows on the northern wall and the windows on the southern and eastern walls are high and narrow from the outside. The simple wall surface of trimmed stone is decorated only by a spacious niche on the southern façade of the narthex. Fragments of wall paintings dating back to 1601/1602 are preserved mainly in the zone of standing figures. Detailed presentation of the Last Judgment on the western wall of narthex stretches partially to the longer walls. Bright colors, sure drawing and inclination toward decorativeness are most prominent on the horse presentations of St. George and St. Demetrius in narthex and the basic characteristics of painters who decorated the temple. After being in ruins for a long time, conservation and restoration works were carried out in 1968 and the church assumed its original shape.

Goraždevac, St. Jeremiah log cabin church, 16th century

It had been in ruinous condition long time before it was restored in 1968. The church has been shelled and destroyed in 1999, after the arrival of KFOR.

16. Gorioč Monastery

The Gorioč Monastery (Gorioča, Ogorioč), metochion of the Dečani Monastery with the Church of St. Nicholas, dormitories of the monks and belfry, is located on Bela Stena (White Stone) above the little town of Istok. According to the folk tradition, it was built by King Stephen Dečanski who devoted it to St. Nicholas as a sign of gratitude for healing his "burned" eyes on that place. However, since the same tradition is linked to a number of other toponymys it is not possible to establish for sure which place was really the endowment of the healed King. The old church of St. Nicholas at Gorioč, most probably from the 14th century, is not preserved. It was renewed in the 16th and 18th centuries and at the beginning of the 20th century. The church of St. Nicholas is a modest one-nave semi-ovally vaulted building without wall paintings. It keeps 11 icons painted during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The Monastery used to keep a rich collection of Serbian medieval books, including several Serbian manuscripts from the 14th and 15th centuries which the Russian Consul and historian A. Hilferding took from the Monastery. Today, they are kept in the Public Library in Petrograd. During World War Two, the Monastery was used by Albanian fascists as a prison for mass arrests of Serbs and Montenegrins. In the churchyard, dormitories of the monks, belfry and the fountain were restored.

17. Goraždevac, Saint Jeremiah Church-Log Cabin

The church-log cabin of St. Jeremiah, near Peć, is the oldest church of that kind in Serbia. It was dated back, on the basis of the imperial gates, to the end of the 16th century or the beginning of the 17th century. According to the folk tradition, it was built by Srbljaci, the oldest tribe in that area. Since this was the name for the inhabitants in the up-

per course of the Lim river who were expelled from their homes and settled in Metohija in 1737/1738, this church might have been built at the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth decade of the 18th century at the earliest. The church has modest dimensions, with shallow foundations and very simple architecture. It has the rectangular basis, with two-sided apse as the result of cutting two acute sides. The roof is low and covered with heavy stone blocks. The interior is divided into narthex, main church and the altar area. Partitions are built in the walls in the same manner in which the whole church is built. The floor is made of irregular stone blocks, while the ceiling is flat and made of boards. Attention is drawn by two small openings in the boards in the shape of equally-sided cross and double six-leaf rosette. Movable property mentioned in the literature is no longer in the church. By the time when it was built this is the oldest church and by its location the only one church-log cabin outside today's main area. Detailed restoration and conservation works were carried out in 1968.

18. Loćane, Danilović' Log Cabin

In the vicinity of Dečani, in the center of the village of Loćane, there is a log cabin built most probably in the first decade of the 18th century. Its age can be determined on the basis of the folk tradition which says that the first fire in the Dečani Monastery was brought from the fireplace of this cabin. It is built on the flat terrain, it has the rectangular foundation and a porch, four-guttered roof covered with tiles. It was built in phases, enlarged by a room and a store room to the original one-space log cabin intended for the residence of people and the accommodation of livestock. By its enlargements, it was converted from the archaic plain cabin to a peasant's house. By reminding, originally, of the biblical concept of residence and, after its conversion, of the process of transforming rayah into peasants, Danilović log cabin, as the oldest preserved cabin in Serbia, represents the testimony to the social and historical events and the position of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija endangered by the violence of foreign, heterodox and aggressive Albanian settlers, which also found reflection in the said folk tradition as the confirmation of its age, i.e. the long-standing existence of Serbs in this territory and their rights to it. The log cabin is still functioning today. Despite its exceptional value, no conservation works were carried out.

19. Peć, Bajrakli Mosque

It is located in the town center. The precise time of its construction is not known, but it is supposed that it was built already in the first decades of the Ottoman occupation, i.e. in the second half of the 15th century. It is called the main mosque in the town since by flying its banner on the minaret it determines the time when other mosques should begin their prayers. It is a monumental edifice with octangular dome, 11.65 m in diameter, leaning on pendentives above the central area. The top of calotte is high 13.5 m from the floor. A high open porch with three cupolas leaning on lateral walls and four columns linked by arches is in front of the entrance to the central area. The high and slender polygonal minaret is leaning on the main dome. The high mahvil (gallery), elevated above the entrance, is leaning on the columns with capitals and is stretching along the entire wall. Its fence is richly decorated by ornamental carvings, while the supporting arches are painted with floral ornaments. Mihrab (central preaching niche) is marked by a shallow niche, while mimbar (pulpit), in the southeast part of the mosque, is built of marble and has monumental dimensions. Especially interesting is the fountain with carved floral medallion and the symbols of Moon and stars as well as the tablets with Arabic inscriptions. The cemetery also has interesting carved sights. Of particular importance is the sarcophagus of Hajri-beg Miralaj with the relief of heraldic meaning, floral ornaments and the representation of weapons and object-symbols.

RECOGNIZED CULTURAL MONUMENTS

MUNICIPALITY OF ISTOK

1. Banjica—remains of the classical and early christian basilica, 6th century
2. Belica—church of St. George, 14th–15th century; remains of the church with the old cemetery, 14th–16th century
3. Dobruša, Vučar—remains of the church with the cemetery, 14th century
4. Žač—stone bridge over the river Istok on the road to Budisavci, 17th century
5. Istok—corn crib in the house of Radoje Djurić, 20th century; church of Sts. Peter and Paul, 1929
6. Kaličani—mosques from the 19th and 20th century
7. Koš—villlage residential building with the granary and residential tower, 19th century
8. Ljubovo—church of St. Basil from Ostrog, 19th century
9. Suvo Grlo, Gradina or Gradište—two fortifications on two hills, 13th–14th century; remains of the fortified town with mine shafts, 14th century
10. Crni Lug—remains of the church with the old cemetery, 16th–19th century

MUNICIPALITY OF SRBICA

1. Banja Rudnička—landowner Rodop's church of St. Nicholas, before 1432, reconstructed in the 20th century
2. Gornji Obilić—Roman necropolis
3. Leočna—church of St. John, 14th century; "Preobraška" (Transfiguration) church, 14th century; engraved cross in the Zdravko Šmigić's house, 14th–16th century
4. Rudnik—church of St. George with cemetery, 16th century

MUNICIPALITY OF PEĆ

1. Belo Polje—church of the Mother of God, 16th–18th century
2. Bucane—old cemetery of the Stojković family, 18th century

3. Vranovac—archeological site from the late Iron Age and early Byzantine period, 8th century B.C. and 6th century A.D.

4. Dobri Do—archeological site from the late Iron Age and early Byzantine period, 8th–5th century B.C. and 6th century A.D.

5. Kruševac—archeological site from the classical and early Byzantine period, 2nd–6th century

6. Kruševo—church with the tombstone, 14th century

7. Ljevoša, Idvorac—remains of the fortress, 13th–14th century; remains of the church of St. Demetrius in Metina livada, 14th century; Ždrelnik—remains of the fortified site with the well, 13th–14th century; remains of the church of St. George, 14th century; remains of the church of St. Mark, 14th century; remains of the church of St. Nicholas, 14th century; old cemetery in "Savova livada," 17th century

8. Ljutoglava—on the hill near the village—remains of the fortified town, 13th century

9. Paskalica—remains of the Paskalija church, 13th century

10. Peć—archeological site Gradina from the late classical period, 3rd–4th century; Bajrakli—Ružica Mosque, 16th century; Halil-beg's tombstone, 16th century; old patriarchate cemetery, 16th–19th century; old city center, 19th century; Jashar-pasha's house, 19th century; old city tower and haremluk (women department in the muslim house); 17 November street, 19th century; Tahir-beg's house, 19th century; residential towers of Qamil Limani in 28 Bore Vukmirović street, in 61 Bore Vukmirović street, of Janićije Jokić in 24 Borisa Kidriča street and of Mihailo Jovanović in 7 Djure Salaja street, 19th century; Seremet tower and the Tower-water mill, 19th century; complex of the Hadji Zeka's mill, 19th century; Ali pasha Gusinje of tombstone, 19th century; collection of the folk costume of the Begolli family, 19th–20th century; Hadji-Zeka's tombstone, 20th century

11. Plavljane—old cemetery, 16th–18th century

12. Radavac—caves of Radavac, prehistorical archeological site

13. Rugovo's gorge—caves hermitages, 13th–14th century

14. Siga—church of St. George (Demetrius), 16th century, reconstructed in the 20th century

MUNICIPALITY OF KLINA

1. Veliki Djurdjevik—remains of the church, 14th century

2. Dolac—remains of the church from the 15th century with the old cemetery

3. Drsnik, locality Gradine—classical and early Byzantine fortified site, 2nd–6th century; locality Podvodno polje—villa rustica from the Roman period; locality Ćelije—classical period; locality Zucajsko groblje, medieval necropolis

4. Klinavac, locality Gradina—remains of the medieval fortified town

5. Pogradje, Gradište—remains of the fortified town, 14th century

6. Svrhe Volujačke—remains of the church, 14th century

7. Sićevo—church of St. Nicholas, 16th century

8. Uljarice—hermitage with the church, 13th–14th century

9. Stupelj—remains of the church of the Mother of God, 14th–15th century

MUNICIPALITY OF DEČANI

1. Gornji Streoc—Shaban Curri's tower, 19th century

2. Gornji Crnobreg—residential towers of Lah Seljmanaj and Lah Loshaj, 19th century

3. Dečane—Belaje's hermitage, 14th century; residential towers of Ram Dobruna, Redž Alija, Mus Iber Hisaj and Zimer Hima, 19th century

4. Istinic—Hadji Os Miftari's residential tower, 19th century

5. Papraćane—Ram Shabani's residential tower, 19th century

II DISTRICT OF PRIZREN

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

* Municipalities of Prizren, Orahovac, Suva Reka, Štrpce and Uroševac

* Kosovo and Metohija

* Southern Serbia

DESCRIPTION:

The Šara—Drim River Valley (Podrima) region encompasses the northern slopes of Mt. Šara, Mt. Jezerska and the southernmost part of the Metohija valley and coincides with the northern section of the Šara National Park. In its territory there are a large number of monuments of exceptional value, concentrated primarily in Prizren (a fortress, construction of which first started in the 11th century; the churches of the Mother of God Ljeviška, St. Nicholas, the Holy Savior and the Monastery of the Holy Archangels; the Sinan Pasha mosque and Turkish bath (hamam) from the 17th century), in the territory of two medieval districts established as early as in the 13th–14th century—the districts of Sirinić and Sredska—with churches from the 16th and 17th centuries, churches, monasteries, hermit cells and castles from the time of the Serbian medieval state during the rule of the Nemanjić dynasty (Velika Hoča, Mušutište, Rečani, Koriša, Nerodimlje), as well as a number of archaeological localities from the Early Iron Age to the Middle Ages, numerous examples of lay and sacral architecture from the 14th to the 20th centuries, as well as an older facility of technical culture in Serbia, the Prizrenka hydroelectric power plant. The construction of the majority of the mentioned monuments of culture chronologically coincided with the period of rule of the Nemanjić dynasty over the independent Serbian state and they were built mainly as foundations of members of the ruling class or nobility, representing outstanding architectural and painting achieve-

ments of late Serbian, Byzantine-inspired art. The concentration of a large number of monuments from prehistoric times to the 20th century in the territory of the Šara-Podrima district attests to the historic continuity of life in this region, which flourished between the 13th and the 14th century when its largest urban center (Prizren) was established along with several very important ecclesiastical-monastic centers and hermitages (Koriša, Velika Hoča, Mušutište, District of Sredska and District of Sirinić).

Fortress of Prizren (Prizren Kaljaja), 1897 and the Serbian part of the city, with the Saint George Cathedral, seat of the Raška-Prizren **Bishopric**

COMPARISON WITH OTHER SIMILAR PROPERTIES:

The Šara-Podrima region is a unique cultural and natural monumental complex reflecting historic and artistic trends at the time of the greatest rise of the Serbian medieval state and belongs to the territory which represented its core. Intensive urban and religious life in this area was sustained even during the period of Ottoman domination in the Balkans and continues to this day, enriched by a series of lay and sacral architectural achievements demonstrating the impact of turbulent historic developments of the past two centuries.

1. Prizren, Kaljaja Fortress

The fortified town of Kaljaja is located above the present-day Prizren, on the hill of great strategic importance. The ramparts of the fortress are parallel with the edge of hill—the foundation has the shape of irregular ellipse, 190 m x 150 m. The main entrance to the fortress, divided into the Upper and Lower Town, was on the western rampart. The Upper Town encompassed the elevated area in the southern-eastern part of the fortress and was protected by separate ramparts stretching to the west and north. The Upper Town was entered through the gate in the western part of the internal rampart. Since it was used for centuries, the fortress changed its masters several times who pulled it down, repaired and enlarged it. Archeological excavations indicate two main periods of construction (medieval and Ottoman), each having several phases of development. The medieval period consists of three phases: Byzantine Prizdrijana from the 11th century, the period of the 12th and the 13th centuries and the objects built at the time of the rule of Emperor Dušan (southern tower, internal rampart, part of the eastern rampart to the underground passage and lower parts of the western rampart). The Ottoman period consists of five phases and most objects belong to the second one dating back to the 17th century. These are: southern town, vaulted corridor built next to the southern rampart of the Upper Town, upper parts of the western rampart of the Lower Town with the main gate, eastern rampart with semi-circular tower and the underground passage leading to the Bistrica river.

2. Prizren, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša

3. Prizren, Church of Saint Nicholas

4. Prizren, Church of the Ascension of Christ (Holy Savior)

5. Prizren, Holy Archangels' Monastery

6. Prizren, Sinan Pasha's Mosque

It was built in 1615, i.e. in 1026 according to the Hegira Islamic system of measuring time. In the interior on the wall there is an inscription "Jennet—misali"—Paradisiacal. It was built using the material from the previously torn down monastery of the Holy Archangels near Prizren. The diameter of the cupola is about 14.5 meters. According to its architecture, it belongs to the so-called classical style of Ottoman art, although it is a rather rare example in terms of its spatial concept. The ground plan consists of two areas: the main prayer area and the area containing the mihrab (central preaching niche). It was built of neatly dressed stone blocks. The mosque has a tall and slender polygonal minaret. The porch was torn down in the past so that its present-day appearance does not correspond to the original one. The interior features a sculpted gallery (mahvil). Ornamental decorations were painted on the internal walls on several occasions of which the oldest layer in the cupola calotte were painted in 1628.

7. Prizren, Hamam (Turkish Bath)

In the old part of the town of Prizren, the Turkish bath is dominant as a building which is proportionally shaped and which was built by Gazi Mehmed-pasha in the 17th century. It is a dual bath, meaning that one half was used by men and the other by women. The halves are divided by the central lateral wall to almost identical wholes. Within each half, the rooms are strictly divided according to their use. These are: the entrance area with dressing room and fountain in the center, room for rest, bath, steam room, water reservoir and water heating room. The bath was built with stone and brick alternatively. The construction and spatial concepts of the building speak of a very good mason who showed special skill in the construction of dome and cupolas. Conservation works were carried out in 1968.

8. Sirinić District, Churches

The medieval district of Sirinić was located in the stretched Lepenica ravine on the northern slopes of Šara Mountain. It was mentioned already in the fourth decade of the 14th century in the charters released first by King and subsequently Emperor Dušan to the Hilandar Monastery confirming the possession of its lands. Inhabited by cattle breeders, the district could hardly have a shrine made of a

more lasting material. Therefore, despite its very old age, the continuity of spiritual life in this district was followed from the second half of the 16th century on the basis of the material evidence. The aspiration can be noted that every village should have its own shrine, sometimes not only on cemeteries but also within settlements so that, at the end of the 19th century, a traveller counted eleven shrines in eight Sirinić villages. Today, only four of them have kept some authentic architectural elements after the renewal of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557. Simple, one-nave, vaulted and without narthex, the churches of the Sirinić district are characteristic by their leaning columns which are almost obligatory as an architectural ornament on the outside polygonal apses. Fragments of the preserved paintings are the works of local, village painters and primarily have cultural significance.

9. Bitinja, Gornja (Upper) and Donja (Lower)

The church of St. George at Gornja Bitinja, built most probably immediately after the renewal of the Peć Patriarchate, underwent significant renewal in 1920. However, even during the renewal, the one-nave structure of the naos was retained, as well as the small semi-circular apse, in contrast to other apses, and a part of the floor originally made of the blocks from the nearby, then already destroyed, Prizren monastery of Holy Archangels. The fresco inscription which is lost today testified that the paintings were commissioned and financed by certain Jelena, while another stone inscription said that Nikodim Prtusin donated a water mill, forest and a meadow to the church in 1592. The cemetery church of St. Theodore Tiro at Donja Bitinja has a similar architectural structure to the shrine in the neighbouring village, the difference being that the former has three-sided apse from outside. Only fragments on the western wall and in the altar area have left from the paintings painted in the 1560s. Having an average quality for the paintings of that time, a limited palette and certain roughness in drawings, the frescos are the work of a village painter whose expressiveness cannot be denied. The fact that he used somewhat rare motives is testified by the composition of the Assumption which, besides the earthly events, includes the assumption in heaven. The church keeps the icon representing the Vision of prophet Eliah from 1635/1636 which could be a throne icon by its dimensions.

10. Gotovuša, Church of Saint Nicholas

There are two churches at Gotovuša and the older one is located on the village cemetery, today dedicated to the Holy Savior which is also known as the church of St. Demetrius. However, the fact that it was originally dedicated to St. Nicholas is beyond any doubt considering the founder's fresco inscription partially preserved on the western wall of naos, above the entrance. Simple, small, one-nave building with the three-sided apse from outside is vaulted with the semi-oval vault and covered with the two-guttered stone-blocks roof. The façade decoration, besides the niche above the entrance on the western façade and the

Sinan Pasha's Mosque in Prizren

prayers' niche on the northern façade, includes niches of particular shape on all sides of the apse and the leaning columns connected by arch emphasizing the eastern surface of the apse. Fragments of the preserved paintings include two zones with the scenes from the Great Feasts cycle, decoration of the ceiling with friezes each having ten prophets' busts and on the top the medallions with the figures of Christ Emmanuel, Angels of the Great Council, the Pantocrator as well as the upper part of the Ascension composition. The paintings in the altar area are best preserved and are reduced to the usual motives and the most necessary figures, so that the Liturgy of Archpriests represents only St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom. Since similar paintings can be found in the neighbouring churches of the Sredska district, at Bogoševac and Gornje Selo, it is believed that the paintings date back to the 1570s.

11. Štrpce, Church of Saint Nicholas

On the basis of the transcription of the destroyed founders' inscription it is known that the church of St. Nicholas was built and decorated with paintings in 1576–1577 with the donations of many villagers. The old village mentioned in an Ottoman written source of 1455 as having 65 households got a shrine of a lasting material. After the renewal in the 19th century, only a part of the apse and of the northern wall were left showing a careful building technique with the trimmed stone and the five-sided apse conch from outside. The decorative element in the building is expressed in leaning columns to the juncture of sides. The great quality

of the original paintings is testified by a figure of a deacon in the northern part of the altar and several fragments in socle zone. During the great renewal, the western wall was pulled down in order to enlarge the church while other walls were made higher and arched. Furthermore, the church got a belfry and it seems that painter Jevgenije from Galičnik, who painted the iconostasis for the new church of the Mother of God at Gotovuša in 1888, painted the icons for the renewed Štrpce shrine.

12. Sredska District, Churches

East of Prizren, in the gorge of Prizrenska Bistrica, several mountainous villages around the village of Sredska have been established as a district ever since the middle age. It was mentioned for the first time in the donation charter of King Dragutin to the Hilandar Monastery in 1276–1281; it became more important at the time of Emperor Dušan through the building of the monastery of Holy Archangels, while its increasing economic strength can be followed in the Turkish documents from the beginning of the 16th century. The material traces of such a rise are churches built in every village and hamlet starting with around 1530 until mid-17th century. One-nave, semi-ovally vaulted churches without narthex, with apses three-sided from outside being only long niches inside, were built mainly with trimmed stone, while the façades had niches as the only decoration. The villagers took every effort to equip their churches, they engaged painters, ordered icons for iconostases and items necessary for the service, noting their names in the founders' inscriptions. The second wave of the intensive construction in the Sredska district, when old churches were repaired and new ones were built, took place in the changed political conditions before the liberation from Ottoman Turks in the short period between 1865 and 1875. Although they, then, lost part of their authenticity, the churches of the Sredska district illustrate interesting changes in the district at the time of the re-establishment of the Patriarchate of Peć.

Bogoševci, southeastern view

Gornja Bitinja, Saint George Church, part of the floor with the spolia from the Monastery of the Holy Archangels near Prizren

13. Bogoševci, Church of Saint Nicholas

The one-nave semi-ovally vaulted church dating back, on the basis of its architectural characteristics and paintings, to the end of the 16th century or the beginning of the 17th century is located on the village graveyard, on the terraced plateau falling sharply toward the river bank. It will never be possible to determine when it was built since the founder's fresco inscription is damaged. The narrow interior, lit by one window on the south and east, has only semi--circular niches of the altar and prothesis. The altar niche is three-sided from outside and the northern façade surface, with no openings, has two niches. The preserved paintings indicate that they were used for prayers so that they have—as fresco icons—the down-to-the-waist representations of Holy Archangel Michael and St. Paraskeve. The well preserved whole of wall paintings inside the church is the work of an unknown painter of sure drawing and inclined to narration so that he managed to present the full usual contents without summarizing it in this small temple. Judging by the preserved icon of St. Barbara, he most probably painted the icons for the altar partition. The church was enlarged by the poorly built narthex with wooden belfry over it. Minor architectural conservation works took place in 1959–1960.

14. Gornje Selo, Church of Saint George

The history of the cemetery church of St. George at Gornje Selo (Upper Village) is not known, but its architecture and paintings belong to the 1570s and the first decades of the 17th century. The church consists of three successively built units. The eastern one is the oldest—the original one-nave semi-ovally vaulted temple with the altar and prothesis niches. By pulling down the western wall naos was extended and expanded and two entrances in the church were made, one from the west and the other from the south. A stone shallow-relief tablet with the blooming cross and two birds on it is above the southern entrance. The third phase is represented by narthex with wooden domed bel-

Štrpce, Saint Nicholas Church

fry. Paintings are preserved only in the oldest part of the church, on its three remaining walls. Stylistically very similar to the paintings at Bogoševci and Gotovuša from the Sirinić district, wall paintings are attributed to the same painters characterized by narrativeness, free drawing and live colors.

15. Drajčići, Church of Saint Nicholas

Shallow and semi-circular apse is the characteristic that, architecturally, differs the Drajčići church from other churches belonging to the Sredska group. It is also interesting that this one-nave semi-ovally vaulted edifice has the floor with stone tiles lower in naos and elevated at the level of solea and the altar area. The southern façade has a semi-circular niche with the down-to-the-waist fresco painting of an archangel. The period of the described first phase of the construction of the church is determined on the basis of paintings as the last decade of the 16th century. The original appearance was changed by the removal of the western wall and the significant extension of naos in the 1630s. In addition to architectural changes, the restoration also implied the repainting of the church so that the new paintings covered or replaced almost the entire old ones. The quality of the original wall paintings can be judged today only by the icons preserved in the iconostasis in the throne series and the frieze making the Great Deisis which is supposed to be the work of the same painter. Characterized by sure drawing and the noble colors, these works are the expression of a mature painter who, by wide strokes, defined the form and achieved magnificence that lacks in other painters from the same region. Conservation works on icons were carried out in 1960–1961.

16. Mušnikovo, Church of the Holy Apostles

The church originally dedicated to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul whose patron today is St. Paraskeve is located above the village of Mušnikovo. It was built and painted in 1563/1564 and extensively renewed in the second half of the 19th century. That restoration included the removal of the western wall, expansion of naos by the width of wall and its extension to the west, the enlargement of windows and the changing of the appearance of the front—instead of triangular it got a high sloping gable. The original appearance of the church shows that it was built with trimmed stone, without ornaments, and that it had an apse three-sided from outside. In the interior, only two niches necessary for rites were built, the altar and prothesis. Although only a small part of the original fresco paintings was preserved, the work of a painter who gained knowledge in one of the Cretan workshops is recognizable in the zone of standing figures on the southern wall. Besides Greek inscriptions and style, recognizable is also the rare iconography solution of the representation of St. Peter and St. Paul in an embrace painted next to the original iconostasis. Another painter from the same group who painted the altar is considerably less talented. During the architectural conservation works carried out in 1962 the ruined church got the dome and the two-guttered roof covered by stone blocks.

17. Mušnikovo, Church of Saint Nicholas

At the village cemetery, there is an old church considerably surpassed, in size, by the subsequently built narthex which is wider and higher than the small church on whose western façade it is leaning. The original temple is one-nave, with undivided space, semi-ovally vaulted and with three semi-circular niches in the altar area. Lateral niches are built in the wall, while the altar niche is three-sided from outside. The church was built with trimmed stone and its façades have one niche each. There are three narrow and high windows on the southern wall, while a window on the eastern side casts light on the holy throne. *Pomenik* (requiem book) inscribed beside the prothesis niche cannot help in determining when the church was built, so that, on the basis of the stylistic characteristics of the preserved wall paintings, it is considered that the church dates back to the second half of the 16th century. The usual contents, which summarizes the cycles of Great Feasts and Passion of Christ, is also characteristic for that time, while in the context of iconography the attention is primarily drawn by the representation of St. Sava Nemanjić, characteristic for the cap adorned with crosses. As to the style, the frescos of this church are of a considerably poorer quality in comparison with the works of an unknown group which painted the nearby church of the Holy Apostles.

18. Sredska, Church of the Mother of God

At the hamlet of Pejčići, today north of the highway, there is the biggest but also the youngest church in the group of churches of the Sredska district, dedicated to the Mother of God. One-nave, semi-ovally vaulted temple, with the altar apse which is shallow and three-sided from outside and in the shape of niche in its interior, had been probably built several years before it was painted, i.e. in 1646/1647. It was built thanks to the contributions of a great number of villagers whose names are mentioned in the founders' fresco inscription. The well preserved paintings include the zones of standing figures, saints' busts in medallions, com-

Monastery of Saint Uroš, 14th century, Gornje Nerodmilje

positions of the cycles of the Passion of Christ and Great Feasts arranged in two separate columns and the standard decoration of the altar and vault areas. With the gamut reduced to color and the prominent drawing, the paintings of this church are rather illustrative than having artistic value. In the second half of the 19th century, a square storeyed narthex and a light wooden belfry above it were built in front of the church.

19. Sredska, Church of Saint George

In the middle of the village of Sredska, by the village road, there is a miniature church for which the villagers say that it was a family chapel and which is certainly the oldest and the most interesting monument of this district. This status of the church is ensured because of its simple architecture (one-nave foundation with the apse hardly rounded from outside, semi-oval vault and exterior dimensions of little over 5 m of length and 3 m of width) and the exceptionally high quality of its frescos. An unknown painter did not pay any attention to the dimensions of the building and, already in the first zone below the painted arcades, he painted monumental and exceptionally modelled figures of holy doctors and holy warriors clad in lively aristocratic garments. He painted the Liturgy of Archpriests and Virgin's bust with angels in the small altar niche and archdeacon Stephen in the prothesis niche. The light translucent colors and the inclination toward decorativeness contribute to the fact that, out of the previously offered years in the literature, we accept the year of 1530 as the most acceptable. Finally, it should be added that these frescos attract attention also because of the painting technology since they were painted on the mud mortar with coarse chaff.

20. Velika Hoča

21. Velika Hoča, Church of Saint John

22. Velika Hoča, Church of Saint Nicholas

23. Mušutište, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria

24. Rečane, Church of Saint George

In the village of Rečane, east of Suva Reka, there is a small church dedicated to St. George, the endowment of an unknown Serbian duke who was buried there on 23 December 1370. The tomb with the carved, partially damaged, inscription points to the period of the construction and painting of temple as the seventh decade of the 14th century. The building has unusually harmonious proportions and the foundation in the shape of the cross-in-square with the dome on pilasters. It was built with stone; only the dome is built with alternate layers of limestone and brick. Modest ceramoplastic decoration is represented primarily on the southern façade. The interesting iconographic contents of the Rečane paintings includes, besides the usual subjects, the cycle dedicated to the patron of the temple numbering about ten compositions based on the Slav interpretation of the legend about St. George. The stylistic characteristics of these paintings, severely damaged by fire and the temple's partial falling in mid-19th century, point to local painters, members of a local workshop, most probably from Prizren. Inspired by the achievements from the first half of the 14th century, they show some archaic characteristics but, at the same time, certain features characteristic for the contemporary trends and for the art of that time. The first protection works were carried out already in 1926, while the complete conservation works on the architecture and paintings were carried out in the 1956–1960 period.

The church was destroyed in 1999.

25. Koriša, Monastery and Hermitage of Saint Peter of Koriša

26. Nerodimlje, Complex of Monuments

The toponymy dates back to the middle age and is connected with two villages of different age primarily known by a great number of church monuments. The oldest protected architectural remains in this area belong to a Byzantine palace from the time before of the Serbian conquest of this territory. An older settlement, Gornje (Upper) Nerodimlje, at the foot of Nerodimska Mount 6 km west of Uroševac, was mentioned for the first time in the Gračanica Charter of King Milutin (1311/1316) under the name of Rodimlja. It was also named as Porodimlja, the place where the Dečani chrysobull (charter) was written in 1330 in the palace of Stefan Dečanski, as well as Nerodimlja where Emperor Dušan and his son Uroš had their palaces. This place gained great historical importance since Serbian rulers from the Nemanjić dynasty lived in the palaces they built there, beginning with King Milutin who died in Nerodimlje. There are several churches in the village: monastery of Holy Archangels, church of the Assumption or monastery of St. Uroš where, according to the folk tradition, King Uroš died. Above the settlement, there are the ruins of the Veliki (Big) and Mali (Little) Petrič fortifications. Donje (Lower) Nerodimlje is not far away from Gornje (Upper) Nerodimlje. It is younger that the latter judging by the first preserved mention in the Ottoman census of 1455. In the village, there are also the foundations of the church of St. Stephen, ruins of the church dedicated to the Mother of God completely renewed in 1925 and the remains of the church of St. Nicholas "Letnji" on which a new building was built in 1938.

27. Nerodimlje, Remains of a Byzantine Palace

A Byzantine basilica is located on the cemetery between Gornje and Donje Nerodimlje, about 10 m north of the church of St. Nicholas. Until archeological excavations in 1988, it was thought that the remains of the palace of King Milutin lay there so that the monument is protected under that name. The excavations uncovered parts of a monumental edifice from the 6th century whose floor is decorated with mosaic and walls with paintings. In the center of the biggest room there is a round pool in the axis of entrance and staircase leading to the corridor. Mosaic covered the entire floor, outside and inner surface of the pool and the entire staircase. Birds and floral motives are illustrated along the edge of the floor, while the greatest part of the surface has geometrical ornaments. On the western part of the floor there is an arcade with figures of seven Greek wise men whose names and thoughts by which they were known were written in Latin. The mosaic was made with multicolored cubes of marble and marl and the faces of wise men with glass paste. The edifice was built in the late classical period while the mosaic floor was made in the time of Justinian. Due to its representative appearance it was also used in subsequent epochs, so that the possibility that it was a palace of Serbian rulers in the 14th century cannot be ruled out. Some walls were built in the 17th century and the site was last used in the 19th century as a cemetery. The mosaic floor was moved to the Museum of Kosovo in Priština where preservation works were carried out.

28. Veliki and Mali Petrič Fortifications

The remains of medieval towns of Veliki Petrič and Mali Petrič (Petrič, Petrč, Velika and Mala Kaleja) are located near the village of Gornja Nerodimlja, west of Uroševac. Both towns were built on the tops of hardly accessible hills above the mouth of the Golema (Big) and Mala (Little) Rivers. The purpose of the fortifications was to protect the roads and the palace of Serbian rulers at Nerodimlje. Petrič is mentioned in the biography of King Stefan Dečanski in connection with his conflict with his son, King Stefan Dušan, which took place in 1331. It is not known in which of the two towns the old king was captured. The basis of Veliki Petrič is oval; it has two towers on the western and southern ramparts and one big round tower within the fortification. Some ramparts are preserved even up to 4 m of height. Mali Petrič is completely in ruins. Not many remains of the southern rampart and traces of a possible gate can be seen in the dense vegetation. Veliki and Mali Petrič have not been explored and no preservation works have been carried out.

Sredska, Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God

Sredska, Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God

29. Nerodimlje, Church of the Holy Archangels

The monastery church of Holy Archangels from the 14th century was renewed in 1700. This is an one-nave building with narthex which was painted and repainted. On the western façade, there are two large rectangular windows. Under the younger layer of frescos from the beginning of the 18th century and the painted surfaces there are still uncovered paintings from the 14th and the 15th centuries. There are several icons from the 17th and the 18th centuries in the church. There used to be a black pine tree above the church which, according to the folk tradition, had been planted by Emperor Dušan and which lasted until 1975.

30. Nerodimlje, Church of the Assumption (Monastery of Saint Uroš)

The church is located on the slopes of the Neredice hill, west of the village of Gornja Nerodimlja, near the village of Šajkovac (formerly Šarenik). Most probably, the church was built at the end of the 14th century and, according to the folk tradition, it was built by Empress Jelena, mother of Emperor Uroš, above her son's grave after his death in 1371. The monastic life died in 1584 and Patriarch Pajsije mentioned in the hagiography of Emperor Uroš the making of a new kivot (sarcophagus for saints' relics) and the renewal of his church. In the 17th century it was mentioned as the church of St. Uroš. To protect the relics from the Ottomans, a monk named Hristifor moved them in 1705 to the monastery of Jazak on Fruška Gora where they lay until

1945 when they were moved to the Cathedral Church in Belgrade. The church was destroyed in the first half of the 19th century and Hilferding described it as a ruin in 1858. The renewal of the church began at the end of the 19th century but, because of the Turkish and Albanian obstruction, it was renewed up to the vaults.

Nerodimlje, Holy Archangels Church

Nerodimlje, Saint Nicholas Church, destroyed by the Albanian extremists

RECOGNIZED CULTURAL MONUMENTS

MUNICIPALITY OF ORAHOVAC

1. Bela Crkva—Zrze—archeological site Pozig, 2nd–4th century, 6th century, 12th century

2. Brnjača—church of St. Kyriake, 14th century

3. Velika Hoča—the house of the Spasić family, 19th century; residential tower of Lazar Kujundžić, 19th century; metochion of the Dečani Monastery (monastic residential building erected in 1851)

4. Gedje—Gradiš hill, south of the village, near Švanjski most—archeological site from the early Iron Age and early Midddle Ages, 8th century B.C. and 9th–10th century A.D.

5. Zočište—church of the Holy Anargyroi, 14th–16th century

6. Opteruša—church of St. George, 16th–17th century

MUNICIPALITY OF SUVA REKA

1. Kostrce, Gradište—fortified town, 14th century

2. Lešane—old Orthodox cemetery; Jashar Pasha's residential tower, 19th century

3. Mušutište—necropolis from the early Middle Ages; locality Široko—Illyrian ruins, 10th–8th century B.C; Matoš hermitages, 13th-14th century; Rusinica hermitage, 13th century; Holy Trinity Monastery, 14th–19th century

4. Pećane—church of the Presentation of the Mother of God, 1451/1452

5. Popovljane—church of St. Nicholas, 1626

6. Suva Reka—church of the Mother of God, 14th century; Holy Trinity Monastery, 14th–19th century; church erected in 1938

Zočište, ruins of the Monastery of Holy Healers Cosmas and Damian

MUNICIPALITY OF UROŠEVAC

1. Gornja Nerodimlja—remains of the medieval town of Svrčin with the foundations of the small church of St. John, 14th century

MUNICIPALITY OF PRIZREN

1. Višegrad—fortress, 14th century; "Dušan's bridge" in the gorge of Prizrenska Bistrica, 14th–15th century

2. Jablanica—hydroelectric power station "Prizrenka" 1926–1928

3. Kabaš, Čukalj hill—remains of the medieval tower, 12th–13th century; remains of the church in Luka-mahala, 14th century; cemetery church near the school, 14th century

4. Koriša, Gradište hill—remains of the fortified site, 2nd–6th century; Sukalje—remains of the tower, 13th century; Gradište—remains of the fortified town, 13th century; remains of the church of St. Nicholas, 14th century; remains of the church of Sts. Peter and Paul, 14th century; remains of the church of Sveta "Prečista" (Holy Mother of God), so-called "Church of the sister of St. Peter of Koriša," 14th century; old Orthodox cemetery; church of St. George, 14th century; St. Mark Monastery, 14th century; church of "The Most Holy Mother of God," near Vrelo, 17th century

Martyrdome of Saint George, fresco in the Church of Saint George in Rečane before destruction in 1999

Rečane, Church of Saint George, after 1999

5. Landovica—monument of the War of National Liberation (Second World War)

6. Lokvica—church of the Prophet Elijah, 19th century

7. Ljubižda—church of St. Nicholas, 16th century; remains of the church of St. Kyriake, 16th–17th century

8. Našec—site of a former church, 14th century

9. Novake—old house, 19th century

10. Planjane—church of the Mother of God, 19th century

11. Prizren—hermitage of Saint Nicholas, 14th century; Prince Mark's church of the Presentation of the Mother of God, 14th century; stone bridge, 14th–15th century; church of St. Nicholas (Rajkova), 14th–19th century; icon of the Virgin Pelagonitissa, in the Cathedral, 14th century; Clock tower, 15th and 16th century; Kirik Mosque "Namazdzali," 1455; church of St. George (Runović), 16th century; Mehmed-pasha's Turkish bath, 16th century; Mehmed-pasha's library, 16th–19th century; Mehmed-pasha's Mosque, 16th century; Suzi Ćelebi's tombstone, 16th century; old Turkish vakufname (endowment charters) in Vakufski odbor (Muslim Endowment Council), 18th–19th century; Tekija (dervish's building) Halveti, 19th century; Kadri Tekija (dervish's building), 19th century; Clock tower, 19th century; Seh-Zade's house, 19th century; complex of Maraš-mahala (Maraš-quarter), 19th century; Emin pasha's tombstone, 19th century; collection of the Pacarizi family's old books, 19th century; complex of The Albanian League, 19th century; old city center on the right bank of Bistrica, 19th–20th century; complex of "Potkaljaja," "Pantelija" and "Potok Mahala" (city quarters), 19th century; Tabahana (tanning workshop), 19th century; building of the Ruždija secondary school in 82 Lenjin street; Šedrvan (water fountain), Papaz-čaršija and Terzi-mahala (city quarters); fountain next to the Sinan-pasha's Mosque; Binbasi stone fountain; fountain "Studenac Kosovo"; old Orthodox cemetery; Tas fountain in the courtyard of the Clock tower, 20th century; Destan Kabaši fountain in 5 Save Kovačevića street, 20th century; stone fountain Beledija on the 17 Novembre Square, 20th century; complex of the gymnasium "Jovanka Radivojević—Kića," 20th century; cemetery of the Serbian soldiers from the First World War, 20th century; Petar Kostić Monument, 20th century; Sima Igumanov Monument, 20th century; building of The Orthodox Seminary, 20th century; building of the Elementary school "Mladen Ugarević," 20th century

Rečane, Church of Saint George

12. Romaja—Dardanian necropolis—tumuluses, 8th–5th century B.C.

13. Sredska—church of Saint Nicholas, 19th century

MUNICIPALITY OF ŠTRPCE

1. Gotovuša—church of the Mother of God, 16th–19th century

2. Brezovica, Gradište—Čajlije—remains of the fortress, 13th century

3. Sevce—church of St. Nicholas, 1861; church of Saint Athanasius, 1921

III DISTRICT OF PRIŠTINA

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

* Municipalities of Priština, Kosovo Polje, Lipljan, Gnjilane, Novo Brdo, Kosovska Kamenica

Kmetovce, remnants of Saint Barbara Church (Saint Demetrius), 14th century

* Kosovo and Metohija
* Southern Serbia

DESCRIPTION

The region of Kosovo between the upper stretches of the Sitnica, Binačka Morava and Kriva Reka rivers, was an active province of the Roman Empire which got its episcopal seat (Ulpiana) in the 4th century. Numerous archaeological localities show that this area was densely populated during Antiquity while at the time of the expansion of the Serbian state in the 14th century, it became the venue of important historic events which were to shape the destiny of not only the Serbian people but of the entire Balkan peninsula as well. It was here that one of the most beautiful examples of late Byzantine architecture was created, namely the magnificent church of the Gračanica monastery with its wall paintings which are the last works of the master fresco painters of the Renaissance during the rule of the Palaeologus dynasty, Michael and Eutychius. At the same time, many noblemen erected votive churches in the territory of Kosovo (Kmetovce, Vaganeš, Ajnovce, Lipljan) and the largest mining center in Serbia of that time and a mint (Novo Brdo) were established. They attest to the cultural and economic power of the Serbian medieval state during the century which was to see its highest ascent but also its greatest defeat at the hands of the Turks in 1389 (Gazimestan). After the last barrier was dismantled, the Ottoman Empire came to threaten even Vienna, while artistic pursuit in the region of Kosovo, which had for over a thousand years been a lively juncture of trade routes and cultures practically died down until a century ago when the urban center of Priština started developing and new centers started cropping up. However, their artistic reaches fell short of the medieval masters who erected upon the foundations of earlier cultures the most impressive monuments of medieval architecture and fresco painting.

Justinian's golden solidus

COMPARISON WITH OTHER SIMILAR PROPERTIES:

The region of Kosovo is a juncture at which intersect and cross-fertilise the main artistic and historic paths in the Serbian medieval state. It mirrors the major aspects of the material and spiritual life blossoming in the Orthodox East prior to its decline and fall under Ottoman rule. Based on traditions of Antiquity which embedded its roots deep in the soil of Kosovo, it is here that one of the most representative examples of late Byzantine art was created, the

Ulpiana, remnants of Roman and early Byzantine edifice, Lipljan

Church of Gračanica Monastery (on the preliminary World Heritage List).

1. Ulpiana

The remnants of the Roman and early Byzantine Ulpiana occupy the area of 35 ha and are located on the Gradina site near the present-day Gračanica. The cultural layer of 4 m was discovered on this multi-layer site. The ramparts of the Roman town had irregular quadrangle foundation. Necropoles were located on the north and west of the town, while the fortress with square foundation was on the northern-eastern side. The birth of the town is connected with Trajan's rule (98–118). The original small mining settlement became a town with the status of Roman municipality. Ulpiana became the bishopric center early; the synod at Serdica in 343 was also attended by its Bishop Macedonius. After the renewal of the town undertaken by Iustinian in mid-6th century the town was called Iustiniana Secunda. The town was completely destroyed in the attacks by the Avars and Slavs at the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th century. The sondage archeological excavations begun in 1953 (followed by conservation works) discovered the following parts of the classical Ulpiana: one-nave basilica with a crypt in the northern-western part of the settlement; the remains of two spas; parts of the mosaic floor of a building; part of stylobate of a classical temple; town gate with towers and the beginning of the main street (cardo). In the northern necropolis, built tombs, memory with a big marble sarcophagus and the remains of mosaic floor with donor's inscription were discovered.

2. Gračanica Monastery

3. Kmetovce Monastery

In the vicinity of Gnjilane, 1 km south-east of the village of Kmetovce, there are the remains of the church of the old monastery of St. Demetrius, today more known as dedicated to St. Barbara. Written sources do not mention this cult place, while the folk (oral) tradition links the birth of the monastery with the time of Emperor Dušan. The preserved remains of church indicate the transitional type of building between the developed and shortened cross-in-square which points to the similarity with the shrine of St. Nicholas in the Holy Archangels' Monastery near Prizren. One-nave vaulted building with the dome over the central bay was leaning on the wall between narthex and naos on the western side, while on the eastern side it was supported by two columns. As to the altar space, the apse, three-sided from outside, and the niche which marked prothesis are preserved. The church was built with stone with the modest use of brick. The remains of fresco decorations—fragments of ornaments and the busts of saints on red background—are visible in the northeast corner of the shrine. Stylistic characteristics, both artistic and architectural, lead to the conclusion that it was the endowment of a landlord, most probably from the sixth decade of the 14th century. The church was partially ruined after the Kosovo Battle and completely demolished in the 18th century. Conservation works were carried out between 1966 and 1968.

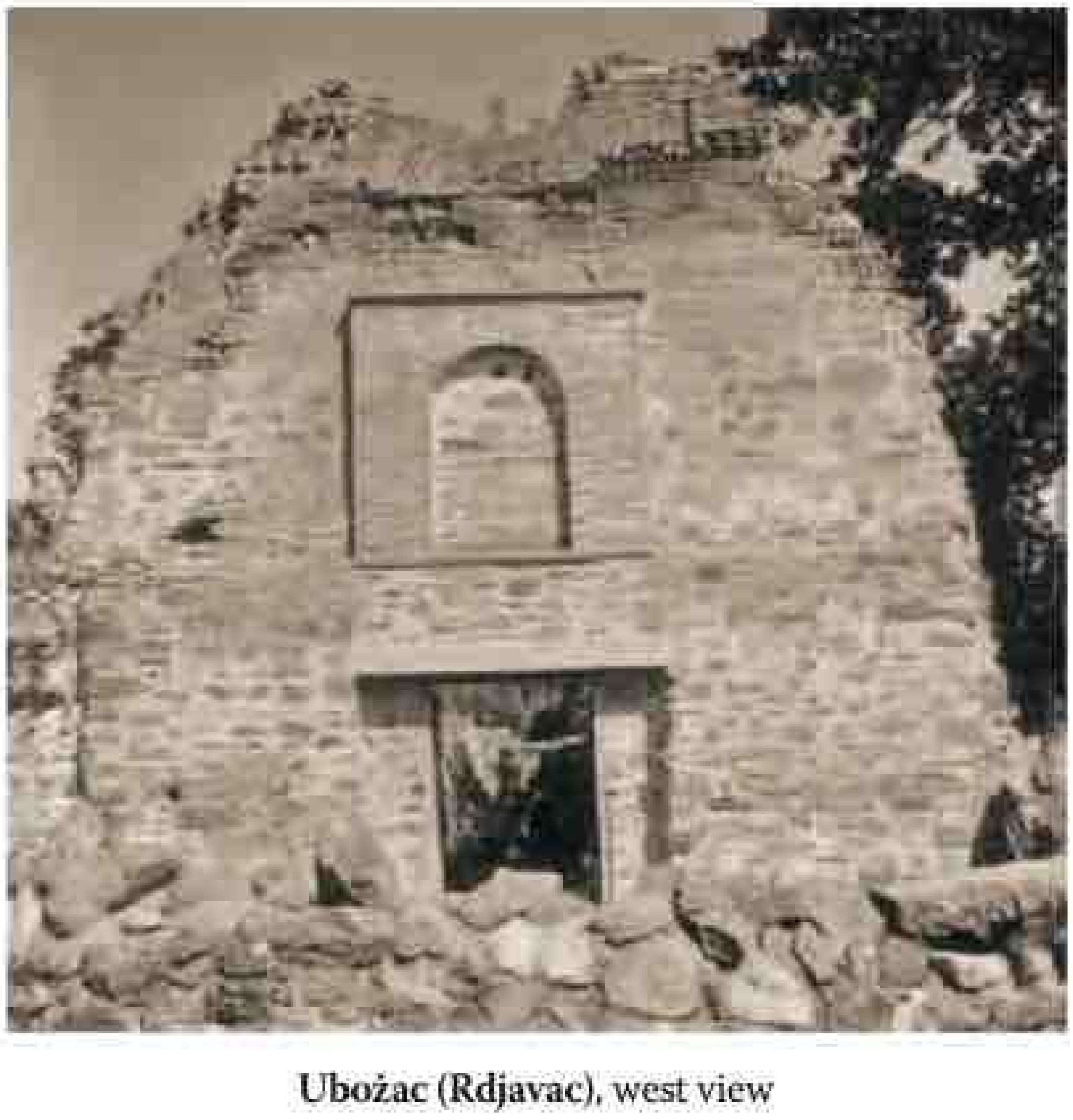
4. Vaganeš, Church of the Mother of God

The church is located 15 km east of Novo Brdo. It was built and painted in 1354–1355 and its founder was Serbian landowner Dabiživ with his brothers and parents. Even three inscriptions are preserved (two carved in stone and one in fresco technique) which provide basic information about this endowment of modest dimensions. Naos is one-nave, vaulted, with semi-circular altar apse and niches marking prothesis and diaconicon. A high narthex was built next to the western wall for which it is supposed that ended as a tower or a belfry. The church was in ruins for a long time, so that the paintings are severely damaged. In naos, only the fragments of the Liturgy of Archpriests, several standing figures and the composition from the cycle of Passion of Christ are preserved. Standing figures are recognizable on the southern wall of narthex, busts of martyrs are painted in the medallions in the second zone and above them there is the scene of St. George saving the Emperor's daughter and most probably the portraits of founders. The compositions from the cycle of Virgin's life are presented in the highest zone of wall paintings. Certain interventions were carried out on frescos in the 16th century, while the Virgin's temple in Vaganeš was almost completely razed to the ground in mid-19th century. Conservation works, carried out in 1963, restored its original appearance only partially.

5. Lipljan, Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God

6. Ubožac (Rdjavac) Monastery

Do the impressive remains of the triconchal monastery church and the complex around it herald the birth of the Morava style and date back to mid-14th century or are they one of representative examples of architecture in the peri-



Ubožac (Rdjavac), west view

od of Ottoman rule in the Balkans. The literature of a recent date is trying to solve this problem using the arguments of similar weight, but the problem has not been solved yet. On the basis of historical sources the only thing known for sure is that Patriarch Pajsije, born in the vicinity, returned, intended to give and endowed manuscript books to this monastery in mid-17th century. The remains of the monastery are surrounded by the pleasant landscape beside the village of Močare, north-east of Kosovska Kamenica. Partially explored, the complex consists of the monumental church dedicated to The Presentation of the Mother of God, refectory with cellar west of it, two several-storeyed angled towers and buildings with porches which probably served as monks' cells and which stretch to the north and south along the churchyard. The covering of walls with the neatly cut stones, decorative use of brick (like cells with the use of stone on dormitories of the monks or in the shape of fishbone on the western façade of the church) and the interwoven stone relief ornament are the characteristics of this architecture. The church itself, without narthex and with narrow west bay and regular conches, had originally the dome leaning on free columns. Partial excavation and conservation works took place in the 1963–1966 period.

7. Novo Brdo Fortress

8. Priština, Gazimestan—Memorial Complex

9. Priština, Imperial Mosque

The mosque of Sultan Mehmed Fatih or the Imperial Mosque is located in the town center. The inscription above the portal says that it was built in 865 according to the Hegira Islamic system of measuring time, i.e. in 1460–1461, eight years after the fall of Constantinople, i.e. the year when the typology elements were taken from Aya Sofia which determined the most frequent (Osmanli-Brus) type of the mosque building on our soil—one-storey edifice with a dome. By its sharp and peaceful proportions, with little decoration both outside and inside, with the dome with diameter of 13.5 m, slender minaret, porch with three refracted arches and three cupolas—it has all the values of monumental objects created in the early period of the Islamic architecture in Serbia. It is built with stone blocks. The simplicity of plastic works was fully expressed in the shaping of the portal and windows and in the decoration of mihrab, mahvil and other elements in its interior.

RECOGNIZED CULTURAL MONUMENTS
MUNICIPALITY OF PRIŠTINA

1. Badovac—remains of the Vojsilovica Monastery, 14th century; Novo Selo—remains of the cemetery church, 16th century

2. Veletin—old town, 14th century

3. Gornja Brnjica—old cemetery with the church, 19th–20th century

4. Gračanica, section Bašće, locality Gladnice—settlements from the neolithic, aeneolithic and Iron Age, 6th–3rd milenijum B.C; late classical settlement, 3rd–4th century; Slavic necropolis, 6th–8th century; Monument to the Old Serbian Warriors 1914–1918

5. Donja Brnjica—archeological site "Polje Urni," necropoles from the Bronze Age, 15th–9th century B.C.

6. Donje Matičane—Slavic necropolis, 10th–11th century

7. Laplje Selo—Caca's water mill, 19th century; church of St. Paraskeve, between two World Wars

8. Mazgit—Murat's turbeh, 14th–20th century; Miloš Obilić Commemorative Monument, 20th century

9. Pomazatin—church of the Prophet Elijah, 1937

10. Priština—neolithic settlement "Predionica"; Čarši-Mosque, 15th century; Pirinaz Mosque, 16th century; old Turkish bath, 16th century; library of the Islamic religious community, 17th–20th century; Mitropolija (Archbishop's residence) and the building of The First Serbian School, 2 Valjevska street, 19th century; church of St. Nicholas, 19th century; old Jewish cemetery, 19th century; city fountain, 19th century; complex of the "Divizija" building with the park and the fountain, 19th century; old city center, 19th-20th century; Clock tower, 19th–20th century; Šedrvan (fountain) in Miladina Popovića street, 19th century; Jashar-Pasha's Mosque, 19th century; Emindžiku complex, 30 Alekse Šantića street, 20th century; old Officers' Center, 2 Hajduk Veljkova street, 20th century; City Library, 8 Kralja Milutina street, 20th century; Boxing Club building, 2–6 Marka Isaka street, 20th century; Municipal House, 14–16 Marka Isaka street, 20th century; Tuberculosis Clinic, 18 Beogradska street, 20th century; building of the Post-Office, 2 Zanatska street, 20th century; Lumber Camp building, 6 Zanatska street, 20th century; Municipal Archive, 25 Zanatska street, 20th century; Social Security building, 1 Kralja Milutina street, 20th century; building of the Omladina cinema, 1 Njegoševa street, 20th century; building of the Provincial District, 2 Vidovdanska street, 20th century; "Union" building, 13 Vidovdanska street, 20th century; National Theater, 15 Vidovdanska street, 20th century; Hotel "Božur," 29 Vidovdanska street, 20th century; Geodesy Office building, 3 G. Principa street, 20th century; Parliament building of the city of Priština, 2 Kralja Milutina street, 20th century; Commemorative church—mausoleum, Dušana Bulajića street, 20th century

11. Sofalija—settlements from the aeneolithic period and Iron Age, middle of the 3rd millennium B.C. and 8th–3rd century B.C; late classical settlements, 3rd–4th century A.D.

THE SUFFERING OF DEVIČ MONASTERY

Dušan Kašić

THIS MONASTERY represents one of the greatest sanctuaries in the Serbian Orthodox Church. It is located on Kosovo not far from the village of Srbica, in a region known as Drenica, on a spot known from the days of old as Devič. The monastery was born sometime in the first half of the 15th century, and its beginning is associated with the name of the great ascetic St. Joanikije of Devič (*Sv. Joanikije Devički*) and with the Serbian ruler despot George Branković.

Monastery of Devič, 15th century, Drenica area, areal photo from inter-war period

St. Joanikije of Devič was by birth from Metohija (Diocletia of Hvosno) which during the time of his youth was extremely developed ecclesiastically, with many churches and monasteries. As a youth he took a liking to the monastic life and went into the wilderness of his birthplace where he led an ascetic life. However, his monastic life caused his friends and relatives to become cynical so he left Hvosno on the Ibar River, and went to the wilderness of Crna Reka (Black River). There he was free to lead an ascetic existence. Being the holy person he was, soon became renowned and he gathered together a monastic brotherhood and built a church. He attained great love and respect from the neighboring people, who began to praise him. Because this praise did not suit his monastic humbleness he decided to return to his birthplace. He moved to the Devič wilderness near Drenica and lived in a hollow beach tree above a stream. His isolation was his delight through which he attained power over demons.

When news of this holy man came to Drenica many came to him for instruction, blessings and healing from illnesses. They brought many mentally ill and possessed persons to the Saint whom he healed. The reputation of this man of God grew and many wished to live near him so that here also a monastic brotherhood was formed.

The Serbian prince, despot George Branković (1427–1456), whose daughter was extremely ill, heard about this miracle working man of God. He brought her to Devič and Saint Joanikije healed her. To express his gratitude to God and the Saint for the grace given, the Despot of Serbia gave money for the building of the Church of the Presentation of the Holy Virgin Mary. Saint Joanikije himself directed the building of the church and in one record is referred to as the "First founder."

Shortly after the building of Monastery Devič and the death of St. Joanikije (between 1430–1450), Ottoman occupation and long enslavement came. For the first one hundred years of this difficult period we know next to nothing about the life of Monastery Devič. Following the restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć (1557), the Serbian Church gained partially regulated organizational status and the

Monastery of Saint Joanikije of Devič, dedicated to the Presentation of the Mother of God.

On a fresco of the small chapel where the relics of St. Joanikije, the founder of this holy shrine, are preserved, the scroll has the following text: "Brethren, in the days of piety [i.e., of Serbian pious kings] I built this Church of the Presentation of the Most-Pure, to the Panagia's joy, to enlightenment of the monks, to the healing of the sick." The second founder was Despot Djuradj Branković (1427–1456), who had built a great multiplex temple, out of gratitude to God and St. Joanikije who healed his daughter Mara. According to a folk poem, she suffered a curse that her grandfather St. Lazar put on Vuk Branković, who betrayed on Kosovo at St. Vitus' day, 1389. The Monastery was put on fire during World War II, restored in 1956 and, despite the presence of France KFOR, burnt again on March 17th, 2004.

ability to restore old, and build new churches, manly where they were located during the time of Serbian Medieval kingdom. It is during this period that we find the Church of Devič restored and the chapel on the grave of Saint Joanikije built into the church after the Saint's death, both of which were frescoed in 1578. The surviving inscription testifies that it was done by Abbot Pahomije and hieromonk Longin with the brothers. In the monastery during this period and later until the 19th century, ecclesiastical books were copied, bound and covered with priceless jackets. And all this time the people came to the grave of Saint Joanikije to be healed. Orthodox Christians and Moslems came, many of whom returned healed. It is still like this today. The small monastery church has been renovated and extended many times. Inside, there are three layers of frescos, the oldest, then the one done in 1578 and the newest one done in 1863, which in 1966 was removed to reveal the older and more valuable frescos.

The entire history of this monastery has been a battle for survival and the execution of its sublime mission. The blows were consistent, the struggle constant. The greatest suffering which the Monastery of Devič experienced was at the beginning of the World War II. In the tragic year of 1941, the Muslim Albanians burnt and razed the monastery to the ground and murdered the Abbot Damaskin Bošković. The Italians pilfered the church bells. The monastery remained as a heap of rocks which covered the chapel and the grave of St. Joanikije, in that way protecting it. The war passed and ended, restoration of the country began, but the monastery remained in ruins. However, God's will was to be seen.

In 1947, Monastery Devič underwent its own resurrection. On the 17th of March, sister Paraskeva Simeunović, novice Stoya, who later became sister Thecla and priestmonk Makarije Popović, who later became abbot of Monastery Dečani, came to the monastery. "We went on foot that day, remembers Mother Paraskeva." "We spoke little

Inscription of restoration of the dormitory of the Monastery of Devič in 1956

Monastery of Devič, 15th century, Drenica area, destroyed by Muslim Albanians in 1941

on the way. As we got nearer the monastery, each step became more difficult. A chill filled our souls—in what state would we find the monastery? When we finally reached the peak of the hill, at the base of which the monastery is located, a sad picture came into view. It was as if God Himself wept at the sight of the rubble... In the desire to serve God with all one's being and soul, for man it is most difficult to understand His will, His plans for us. How did He in His pre-eternity decide where I am to be at this particular moment. On that day on the hill above the monastery we knew surely that God through our work and the work of other who would join us, would renovate the monastery and re-establish normal life there. That is what He asked of us, and it came to be so. Our little sisterhood began to grow and the Serbians from neighboring villages began to come to our huge workground. That is how restoration of the monastery began."

The sisters could not immediately settle in these ruins. At first they lived in the basement of a house in the village of Ludović, "having nothing to eat, or a seat," as Mother Paraskeva says. However this did not discourage them. Firstly they began to clear away the rubble covering the chapel and in the chapel with their spiritual father: they prayed to God and St. Joanikije to give them the strength to endure all. And they lasted out. In 1947, the chapel became functional; by the end of 1953, the church was erected, and consecrated by Bishop Vladimir on the Dormition of the Mother of God. In 1956, a new refectory was erected next to the church, following which a tall fence was put up around the monastery in 1959. A new refectory with a chapel was begun in 1963 and completed shortly after. In 1968, a chapel was built on the miracle working spring in the stream below the monastery where the beech tree is located in which St. Joanikije underwent spiritual perfecting. A new bell tower was erected in 1970 at the expense of the Devič sisters Varvara and Eufemia, whilst a new common dining room was built in 1973. Another building with a 'garage was begun in 1976 and the church was enriched with a 'new iconostasis in 1977. The wood carving was done by

Monastery of Devič fresco and inscription on the fondation of the church

Miloje Milošević from Preljina and the icons by Sister Antonina from Monastery Ćelije.

It is indeed a wonder where these sisters gained their strength, zeal and wisdom to execute such a colossal restoration under the most difficult circumstances. For years they hauled water from the deep ravine for their own use and for building purposes, and they assisted the tradesmen. They tilled the soil, waited on their guests, and above all, they prayed to God. With their spiritual fathers they maintained the monastic ecclesiastical rule and always had time to greet the faithful who would come there with their troubles looking for comfort and healing. Their first spiritual father was Makarije Popović (1947), following him abbot Dimitrije Bodrob, a Russian (1948–1967) who died in the monastery and left the sisters mourning after him as they would their own father. After him came priestmonk Dionisije, then Sava…

From the beginning of its restoration in 1947, Mother Paraskeva has been Abbess. Born in 1912, she took her vows in 1941 in Monastery Ljubostinja which she entered in 1934, with Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović tonsuring her. During the war, in 1943 she moved to Monastery Sukovo near Bela Palanka and then four years later she came to Devič where, with the sisterhood and the God-loving folk, she made a city of ruins. It is city which prepares people for the "Heavenly City," for the "Heavenly Jerusalem." Here through the person of the great Saint, God's mercy pours out on many who come in faith. In one report of our time on Monastery Devič we read about these miraculous healings.

In the time of the restoration of the monastery, parents brought along their insane daughter who was miraculously cured. She is now the mother of a mischievous little boy with whom she regularly visits the monastery.

In 1947, a 17 year old shepherd who sat by the holy grave was miraculously cured overnight. Following the blessing of the oil a young boy was cured who was brought to the monastery in chains.

A girl was cured of paralysis, a boy from epilepsy, a woman from migraines.

Many miracles occurred amidst the Muslim Slav and Muslim Albanian population of Kosovo, so that St. Joanikije is also highly respected amongst them.

In 1983 Monastery Devič had eleven nuns. Four who died earlier still live in their prayers and in the memory of God. Death is only a sleep. And after 34 years, still today their Abbess is Mother Paraskeva. This great woman gave all to the monastery as did her sisters. By offering her physical strength and health, she was giving her undying love to God and people, to those who search for God and find him, who come to Devič for God's help and who attain it through the prayers of God's holy elect, St. Joanikije. Mother Paraskeva and her exemplary sisters came to Monastery Devič in sacrifice. They undertook much suffering, had many pain-filled days and nights, they endured much, but they know that only he who "endures to the end will be saved."

When one has seen or heard of Devič he must, even if inadvertently, say to this honourable group of Christ-bearing nuns, the truthful words of their bridegroom Christ: "Rejoice and be glad for great is your reward in Heaven."

The Serbian Orthodox Church: Its Past and Present, Belgrade 1983, pp. 53–58.

St. Joanikije's repose, Monastery of Devič

Monastery of Devič, fresco

Monastery of Devič in 2002,
two years before the new destruction

Monastery of Devič, tomb of St. Joanikije of Devič (Devički)
before destruction in 2004

Monastery of Devič in 2008, after renovation

From Novi Pazar to Peć

Alexander F. Hilferding

I suppose that readers are already weary of descriptions of ruins, churches and monasteries. But, for the traveler there is nowhere else to go. If they are ready to follow me on my way through Old Serbia, as they followed me through Herzegovina and Bosnia, let them patiently listen to the descriptions of old monuments and ruins. Today, there is nothing but ruins in Old Serbia. Here, the Slav life has almost gone. It has been pushed out by an Albanian torrent, and in this area, flooded by Moslem barbarism, only the church monuments—endowments of the Nemanjić—stand as witnesses of the Christian and Slav life, which, at one time, flourished here. Among Bosnia, Old Serbia and Herzegovina—the three provinces about which I must give information to our readers, there are queer differences. In Bosnia, the Slav and Orthodox element is still powerful and alive, but without a past and a tradition. The whole ancient history of Bosnia, expressed its hostility toward Orthodoxy. Bogomilism and Roman Catholicism carried the stamp of that hostility. That is why that history did not leave any mark in the recollections and life of the Bosnian Orthodox inhabitants.

All the antiquity, monuments and tradition are concentrated in Old Serbia. But, as I told you, there is nothing that is contemporary and alive, only brutal Moslem Albanians. In that sense, Herzegovina is in a better position than Bosnia and Old Serbia. There, the Orthodox inhabitants are very firm in nourishing the tradition, and very stable in their contemporary life.

Peć (Albanian and Turkish: Ipek), is quite a big city. It has been estimated that around 4,000 Moslem and 800 Christian families live there. From the latter, a few households belong to the Roman-Catholic church. The Moslems and Catholics are Albanians, and the Orthodox are Serbs. The majority of the Serbs can speak the Albanian language. The Moslems move about armed constantly, while the Christians are forbidden to wear arms in the city. They are usually exposed to various insults and oppressions. The Peć monks go in the bazaar unwillingly during the day time, especially on a bazaar day, and when there are a lot of people. If on those days monks have to go through the city, they avoid crowded streets, and sometimes they take a road round a settlement. Christian women wear white kerchiefs, the same as the Turkish women do. If they didn't do so, they would be exposed to humiliation and insults in the streets. It was really unusual to see a group of ostensibly Turkish women, with kerchiefs on their heads, enter a church and cross themselves. But, the Albanian women in villages do not cover their heads, and they walk bareheaded, like the Moslem women.

Muslim women in Prizren,
photo from the end of the 19th century

The church has a quadrilateral shape with small cross-shaped bulges, and consists of four buildings: a large narthex or—as the Serbs call it—*priprata*, to the Central church—the Holy Ascension, a separate South chapel The Ascension of the Mother of God and the separate Northern chapel of St. Demetrius. Above the altar of the big church and above both separate chapels, there is a wide dome, covered by lead. All these three domes, built one next to the other without the necessary distance between them, give, when looked at from the outside, an impression of something heavy and clumsy. However, looked at from the inside, they produce and extraordinary effect, the slits of their eight big windows, lighting the building, which take up almost all the space at the sides of the pedestals. There is a cross on each of the domes. The big Central church was renovated in 1634. Its length from the Western door to the iconostasis is 72 paces, the altar length is 20 paces, and the building width is 41 paces. Its appearance is massive and dark. The big iconostasis is completely decorated by icons. On the right side of the imperial doorway, lies a coffin with the heads of the holy five martyrs (from early Christian times): Eustathius, Auxentius, Mardarius, Eugenius and Orest. According to the legend, Arsenije, a pupil of St. Sava, brought their heads from the Bulgarian capital Trnova into Serbia. On the left side, there is a coffin with the relics of St. Nikodimus, a Serbian archbishop, who lived at the beginning of 14th century. On the right side, close to a column, the throne of the former Serbian patriarchs, made out of gray marble, is placed. Further, to the right side, you can se a sarcophagus of white marble, where St. Arsenius, the founder of Peć monastery, had been buried. A little further, lies St. Sava II, Serbian archbishop and son of the King Stefan the First-crowned /St. Simon/. The body of Archbishop St. Eustathius, also lies in the coffin. Finally, by the doorway, on the right side, St. Ioanikius II, a Serbian patriarch, rests. There is an inscription on the altar wall, which, it seems to me,

Old Peć during the Ottoman period

was written when St. Arsenius built the first building.

The importance of the patriarchal monastery is quite great, although there is no patriarch, and that is why it is classified as an ordinary monastery. A Prizren archbishop, who is a Greek sent from Constantinople, runs this old monastery of Slav-Serbian patriarchs. He nominates, on his own decision, a prior, who may be anyone from the monks in the monastery. The Peć patriarch heir lives far away in Austria, having the title of "eines wirklichen Geheimraths seiner k.k. apostolischen Majestat", and is under a constant surveillance of the government. At the same time, the name of the Greek bishop, is included in the prayers of the patriarchal monastery.

The Serbian people have experienced much more sorrow than happiness. Their history is full of suffering. But after the Kosovo battle, there was no bigger catastrophe than the movement of 37,000 Serbian families into Austria, led by Arsenije III Crnojević, in 1690. It is true that we cannot blame Arsenije for it. His congregation had been suffering slavery which could not be endured further. The Serbs were promised a new country across the Danube, which ought to have been the center of renaissance for all the Serbian territories. In that new country, freedom and religion protection were promised, as well as autonomy in internal government under the rule of a duke, who would be elected by the people, and finally, exemption from all taxes, under the condition that men joined the army. All these promises were given and confirmed by word of honour and by a solemn Charter of the Viennese ruler! But, something that Arsenije could not predict, happened. The new country, which the Serbs got on the Northern bank of the Danube, the fertile plains of Banat, Bačka and Southern Hungary, became, very soon, bait for Vlach, Hungarian and German colonists. The Serbian element started to withdraw in the face of a foreign assault. In many settlements the Serbian inhabitants completely disappeared. However, in other areas, the Serbs could barely resist the majority of foreign element, and so, little by little, they would have to die out. Instead of freedom and religious protection, religion was wiped out from the beginning, by violence /it is quite well known that a hundred thousand Serbs left Austria in 1751 and moved to Russia/. The whole of Old Serbia became deserted, as the settlements round the Patriarchate of Peć moved. And, then, the Albanians, who came from the poor and cold hills of Dukadjin and Malesa, occupied the surroundings of Prizren, Djakovica, Peć, Kosovo Polje, Novo Brdo, Novi Pazar, Sjenica and all this wonderful region—the heart of Old Serbia, along with the fertile and warm plains left by the Slavs. It could be said, that from those days precisely, the Turkish management and Islam consolidated their position in the Serb territories. What did the numerous renegades in Bosnia represent, when they were surrounded by a huge homogenous mass of Christians, which divided them from the other parts of the Empire, inhabited by a Moslem element? But, after the movement of the Orthodox inhabitants from Old Serbia into Austria, this division disappeared. The Albanians, who at the time they came down from the mountains were of the Roman-Catholic religion, could not, in the plains, resist the Turkish influence. Additionally, it must be mentioned that the Albanians are very indifferent toward religion, and that they car not be easily threatened by God. A German writer, a very good Albanian expert, said that the people who were under the Turkish rule, the "Slavs, Greeks and Wallachians prefer religion to freedom. But, and Albanian, prefers his freedom to anything, even to religion." During 18th century all the Albanian inhabitants who had moved into Old Serbia, easily accepted Islam.

Street in Peć, 1913

I've already described the difficult position of Christians in Peć. Daily, they suffer various insults and oppression by unrestrained and hot-tempered Albanians. I give credit to the new Peć governor Hurshi-aga /a fat, merry fellow, who joined the army long ago, and is very similar to some of our army majors, an experienced old soldier and bon vivant, who is doing his best to restrain and punish Albanian willfulness, and who deserves to be praised by Christians. But, what can be done by just one man, even with the best intentions, in the middle of and armed mass which knows nothing about the law and the courts, and which is accustomed to unlimited self-determination and tyranny, in one word, which is—according to the local proverb—afraid "a little of God, not at all of the Czar"? The situation would be quite different if the Peć leader could have at least one detachment of soldiers. But, in the whole of Old Serbia, the Turks do not have a single soldier, and all the executive power of the Peć governor consists of two or three dozen of guards, recruited from among those same Albanians who need to be constantly restrained.

In the late 1850s, Alexander Hilferding was a Russian diplomatic agent in Bosnia and Herzegovina; he published several books about the country and its folklore. Hilferding was a traveller who left to us precious records of the life of Christians under the Ottoman rule in the middle of the 19th century.

THE INHABITANTS OF KOSOVO (EXPULSION OF THE SERBS)

Branislav Nušić

THE 14TH CENTURY brought Turks to the Balkans, while the victory of the Battle of Marica brought them to Kosovo.

Their rule disrupted the relations among the population they found there to quite an extent. The state of internal affairs, which occurs under the rule of an uncultured nation, cause an inevitable diminishing of the subjugated nation, especially that section of the latter nation—the Serbian nation, in this case, which, after once having led a rich life in a state of its own, could not easily learn to accept the unnatural law, that, as a culturally superior nation, larger in number and conscious of its nationality, would have to bow to the cruel religious fanaticism of its conqueror wishing to assimilate it into its own with the use of force.

The migrations of the Serbs began immediately after the conquest, traces of which are visible even today on the squares near many a mining *palanka*—small town of our own day—on which the business of trading was conducted not only by merchants from Dubrovnik but by Serbs as well. However, a mass emigration, which left behind a mark on the physiognomy of settlements within the valley of Kosovo, occurred under Arsenije III Crnojević and under Arsenije IV Jovanović, which not only included the area near the patriarchate but also a large part of Kosovo. It is then that the Serbs left their beautiful villages and fertile soil, their houses and lands, while the Arnauts—[Muslim] Albanians came down from their barren and wasted mountains, and settled down in the deserted Serbian villages.

Since then, small-scale migrations were an everyday thing, while after the Serbo-Turkish War, especially in the years 1881,1882 and 1883, they became relatively intense, lasting even to this day. The emigrants were not only the homeless, they were not only the poor who sought their daily bread, but, in most cases, they were folk with households of their own, trying to save their endangered property.

After the Serbo-Turkish War, a large scale emigration took place. It had two causes. The Albanians living in Kosovo, because of the war, took up vengeance on the Serbs, who were common folk to them, their reaya. Going to and returning from the war, the Ottomans burned their homes, stole their cattle and dishonored their women, so, in order to same themselves, the Serbs fled to Serbia, over the border which was now closer, thus enabling better escape. On the other hand, though, the Albanians driven outside the newly formed borders of Serbia, started settling down in Kosovo in great number, Kosovo being the closest to the lands they had left in Serbia. These "new settlers," known as the *muhajeri*, flooded Kosovo, pushing back the Serbs by force to make room for themselves. It is true that the Sultan had given them lands upon which to build, and upon which they did build, their new villages, but these lands, for being wastelands in fact, had been deserted even before

Branislav Nušić, Kosovo,
a Description of the Land and People, Novi Sad, 1902

their arrival. Thus, for example, these newcomers settled, in large numbers, around the marshlands of Sazlijska and Robovačka rivers, where they had to dry out the waters, clear away the reeds, and turn the swamps into meadows, in order to make usable land for themselves to settle and live on. Consequently, instead of using the land given them by the tzar, these newcomers preferred to build their homes next to Serbian villages and did everything in their power to make the Serbs emigrate, so as to come into possession of their property, in the process of which they succeeded to a great extent. Thus the Albanians simultaneously penetrated into the Serbian villages from two sides: some came from the mountains, nearing the Sitnica river more and more, while the others came from the borders of Serbia. Today, villages without any Albanian inhabitants are practically non-existant, while villages in which there are no Serbs, though they had once been there, are countless. Those-ex-Serbian—villages have still retained their Serbian names, but no Serbian home exists in them. Among these are those which are purely historic, as is Svrčin and Pauni, in which there isn't even one Serbian home, and in which there exists the legendary common belief, among Albanians as well, that the Serbs who had once inhabited that village, went to foreign lands with their patriarchs. Even in the Albanian villages of Bandulić, Konjsko, Gadimnja, Glavica, Lugovo, Crnilo, Prelez, Batusi, etc., which have Serbian names, the time of their migration is still remembered.

Along with these *muhajirs*, the Circassians (*Čerkezi*), whom the Turkish Ottoman government had had settled here after the Crimean War, came to Kosovo, from 1858 till 1862, while most recent settlements are inhabited by Bosnian *muhajirs* (Muslim emigrants) which there are many of in Mitrovica and Ferizović (Uroševac), and who, likewise, have their own village (Mazgit) which they built by themselves.

King Milutin built the Gračanica monastery on the foundations of, or at least the same site of some old unknown monastery. The scat of the Metroplitan has been in it ever since Milutin's time. The Monastery of Gračanica was completed in the month of September, in the year 1321. Praising the glory and grace of God over its many years, then, 249 years afterwards, that is, in 1570, the monastery still flourishes, expands, and builds a large parvis. Almost all the way up until those trying times, at the end of the 17th century, which began after the emigration of the patriarch and Serbian population, the Gračanica temple was a vigilant keeper of the faith, and a consolation to the people of Kosovo.

At the very beginning of the 17th century (1620), the Patriarch Pajsije from Peć, had Gračanica coated with lead, at the same time and in the same year as the Monastery of Patriarchate of Peć. According to one inscription on the southwest side of the parvis, the Bishop Sofronije is noted to have come to Gračanica in 1639. Another inscription from 1649 can be found on the same side of the parvis, which states that this patriarch Pajsije of Peć died that year and wishes to be forever remembered. However, as early as the second half of the same century, the invasion and oppression by the Albanians, which had been the cause of the Serbs' flight into foreign lands in search of a homeland, chased off the inhabitants of Gračanica as well, and devastated the Monastery itself. And so, that is how the Albanians settled in the village of Gračanica.

Branislav Nušić (1864–1938), one of the greatest playwrights of the Serbian theater, was also a noted novelist, story writer and essayist. As a diplomat, he served as consul at the Consulate of the Kingdom of Serbia in Priština in 1894–1895. Those were the last years of the Ottoman rule on the territory of today's Kosovo and Metohija and the letters of Mr. Nušić give a very clear picture what was the position and life of the Orthodox Serb population. Several years later, in 1913, after the Balkan Wars, Old Serbia, comprising today's Province of Kosovo and the Slavic Macedonia, were liberated from Ottoman rule, after almost five centuries of occupation and oppression. These ancestral lands after a long period thus became the integral part of the Kingdom of Serbia. Branislav Nušić's travel book her presented in short excerpts, *Kosovo, a Description of the Land and People* (1902–1903) contains among other things fifty lyrical folk poems. When serving as the Serbian Consul in Priština (at the close of the last century), Nušić managed to open first Serbian Bookshop in Priština and to persuade the Ottoman authorities to permit Stevan Mokranjac, famous Serbian composer and compiler of folk tradition, freedom of movement and give him authorization to transcribe Serbian folk songs in Kosovo.

Prizren

Grigorije Božović

W*HEN A MAN ENTERS* Prizren today, who knew it until the war and immediately afterwards, he feels as if it is somehow very similar to Bitolj [Monastir]. It is also a great city, clean and lovely like an elderly man of beautiful, old age, but deaf, empty and numb of these things as if by magic cast in a deep dream. Those two large nineteenth century *vilayets* [administrative unit in the Ottoman Empire] cities, one for Pelagonia [a geographic region in Macedonia] and the other for Kosovo, suffered a similar fate. A border advanced both of them separating them from their major agricultural backgrounds, and their market places quieted down and town square grew stronger and the life reduced to merun, which these cities were not accustomed to, nor did they increase or blossom as before.

They became, as if to say silenced regions, truly deadened magnanimous people who will hardly ever resurrect to that form which they had prior to the wars. It was not in vain that people counted Prizren as the most beautiful city, calling it royal, through epic songs, folk tradition and popular stories and not only because Emperor Dušan resided there. That City was of regal beauty for his eyes. Once and today as well. And the City. Everything else was a town center or casbah (*kasaba*), while Prizren was always a city for both Serb and Ottoman Turk. It was surrounded in the region of the fields of Prizren beside the very colorful branches on both banks of the Bistrica river dignified, as a capital, imperial. Full of light, fresh mountain air like no other place in the province. The Bistrica cuts its environment in the woods and countless water supplies, old and Turkish, not only on every corner, but almost at every turn provides many Ottoman fountains and drinking fountains. On three sides of the undulating fertile field, and hills on the fourth, where else in open rubble but mostly under vineyards, fruit and chestnuts.

Wherever you turn are tempting resorts, a *teferič* [a celebration that occurs in fields and wooded areas, on state owned property] everywhere and divine beauty of the blessed, fruitful fields to gigantic boulders up the Bistrica , the eagle cliffs, caves, visible deep valleys old and old remains of fortress churches. And everywhere the water, clear and cold water of Šar mountain, which erupts and what cracks or medieval clay pipes…

Prizren was great and bright. Our story about its origin is interesting and the violent Turkish interpretation of the Greek word "Prizren." According to the Turks, Prizren would be a shining city, gold or golden, foreseen according to the story, Prizren is the beauty of the place, where the city of

Grigorije Božović (1880–1945), the most famous among Kosovo Serb writers covering in his short stories various aspects of everyday life and tradition among the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija. For his royalist and democratic convictions he was shot by the communist in 1945.

Nemanjić's throne was founded. It was great as far as we can remember. And when merchants from Dubrovnik disappeared in it, trade continued.

This trading was accepted mainly by Serbs who used it to create not only the unique image of the Prizrenite merchant, but also particular Serbian city life, which radiated from there to other cities in Kosovo and beyond. The Prizren merchant was famous both in Thessaloniki and Sarajevo, and he was seen in Constantinople, Trieste, Venice, Marseilles, London and Vienna. The Prizren merchant did not forget Scutari and Alexandria either. That contributed that Prizren raises the people's consciousness that the wealthier Prizren citizens rightly appears before the Ottoman Turk as Serb and popular leader. Since the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć (1776) it was Prizren who took on the role of the homesteads of the Prizren Serbs, as well as national leadership up until 1912.

Undoubtedly, more combative, wiser and wider patriotism has not been made in any of the towns in Old Serbia as it had been in Prizren. This Prizren's main mark and its greatest spiritual beauty. That is Prizren's main characteristic and its greatest spiritual beauty; that is Prizren's merit in the last two hundred years. The Prizren was the best and most beautiful city Serb that lived in all of Old Serbia…

I'm walking through the deadened great city. I encounter people of pure blood, beautiful faces and a little confused by their troubles. Generally they are attractive. Both Serbs, and Ottoman Turks, and ethnic Albanians (who here

are mainly Catholics). Their mutual relations are good and close: and nowhere could one live more peacefully and calmly. Catholics are cheerful, they do not separate themselves and, among other things, no one needs to fear for their souls in a Christian country. In this respect, the Orthodox are in their place. Since the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć, the throne of Raška and Prizren and Skenderia Metropolitanate is in Prizren and the carrier of old Serbian orthodoxy. The Prizren Serb was an Christian Orthodox as no one else, tough and firm, but in no way a clerical or narrow-minded Christian believer. Always a man of the people, social and humane.

The Prizren Seminary (Prizrenska Bogoslovija) of the Saint Cyril and Methodius of the Serbian Orthodox Church

The Prizren Seminary
(Prizrenska Bogoslovija)

The monastic brotherhood from the Patriarchate monastery contacted the deans from Serbia in 1870 with the request that a seminary (Theological school) be opened by the monastery in Peć. On the other hand teacher Nikola Musulin suggested in 1857 that a Serbian Orthodox Seminary be opened in Prizren. After much consideration the educational committee decided to open a Seminary in Prizren for many reasons; firstly, because this city was the center of Serbian cultural life for this region and because a Russian consul there promised them protection. Metropolitan Meletije of Raška and Prizren gave his consent and so the Prizren Seminary opened on October 1, 1871. The school began with fifteen students for whom a curriculum was prepared in Belgrade. Studies lasted three years and all students who finished four years of elementary school had the right to enroll.

The first generations of Prizren seminarians were either from Prizren or surrounding areas. Still, they studied under difficult conditions. Students didn't even have textbooks nor a school inventory but living in the dormitory and schooling were free. The Seminary and library were founded thanks to the great financial assistance of Sima Andrejević Igumanov. Petar Kostić noted that the library was very rich, with works primarily by Russian writers. According to incomplete records from 1871 to 1911 approximately 380 students completed their studies. The Seminary gradually assumed the role as the educational center in Kosovo and Metohija which was significant for the future development of Serbian schools in these regions. A report of the success and progress of the school was sent to the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Foreign Affair in Belgrade. The Russian consul, Ivan Jastrebov in particular, offered much help to the school. Also credited for much of the school's success is the Rector of the Seminary, priest Stevan Dimitrijević. Through its teachers and clergy the Prizren Seminary instilled confidence and safety in the coming liberation from Ottomans and indicated the path toward a brighter and clearer future.

Prizren in the 1930s

Prizren in the inter-war period, watercolors by Todor Švrakić

On Gračanica Monastery and the Fresco of the Dormition

Rebecca West

It happens that there stands on the plain of Kosovo, some miles south of the actual battlefield, a building which demonstrates what sort of civilization fell with the Serbs. It proves it as no nationalist rhetoric could hope to do, it leaves no room for differences of opinion, for it is a chunk of the Nemanyan [Nemanjić] Empire, irrefutable testimony to its quality. We drove along the straight road, through low-spirited villages, past herds and flocks, all of them ornery, plain ornery, and slouching peasants, so few that the Land was almost empty as the sky; and we turned into a lane leading towards the hills, through fields whose crops were smothered by those aromatic flowers which are half-way to being scrub. I would fear to say that it was not rich ground, but it is being reclaimed after centuries of avid and ignorant farming, and the effect is destitution. There was no sufficiency anywhere save in the scented handsome sprawl of honeysuckle in the hedges. Then, across a field grey-green with the young maize, we saw a settlement of smallish farms lying among low trees, and in the midst of them a rose-red dome upheld by four lesser domes of the same warm and transparent color. These made, as the dominant shape of a religious building should do, a reference to the reality which lies above the world of appearances, to the order which transcends the disorder of events. Even from this distance it could be seen that Gračanica was as religious a building as Chartres Cathedral; though it made a simpler and smaller statement, the thought and feeling behind it were as complex, and the sublime subject matter was the same. But it was as if Chartres Cathedral should stand alone on a Land that has been shorn of all that was France when it was built and has been France since then; with no Paris, no Sorbonne, no Academie Francaise, in fact not a single modern representation of the culture that built the cathedral, and not a single trace within miles of the well-being that affords a physical basis for this culture, not a plump chicken, nor a pound of butter, nor a bottle of good wine, nor a comfortable mattress. Such spectacles are commonplace in Africa or Asia or America, which have their Pyramids and Angkor Wat and Inca memorials, but in Europe we are not accustomed to them. Our forms of historic tragedy have blotted a paragraph here and there, but they have rarely torn out the leaves of a whole volume, letting only a colored frontispiece remain to tease us. Of Gračanica, however, catastrophe has left us nothing but Gračanica…

…This was King Milutin. In the twelfth century the Nemanyas [Nemanjić], a family of chieftains who lived in a petty fortress on the Montenegrin border near the Adriatic coastline, produced a genius in the person of St. Sava and a man of great talent in his brother, King Stephen the First-crowned, who together founded a stable Christian Serbian state, which their descendants expanded north towards the Danube, east towards the Vardar river, and south into Byzantine territory. When the dynasty had been under way about a hundred and fifty years Milutin came to the throne, and in himself and his royal functions his likeness to Henry VIII was very strong.

He worked marvels for his country, but was untender to many of his subjects. He hungered hotly for women, but was cold as ice when he discarded them or used them as political instruments. He was ardently devout, but used his religion as a counter in his international relationships without showing a sign of scruple. There is a robustness in him that charms from the yonder side of the grave, but without doubt his vitals were eaten by the worm of melancholy. His picture is among the frescos here. He stands, deeply bearded, in the costume worn by Serbian royalty, which is clearly imitated from the Byzantine mode: a stiff tunic of rich material studded with jewels, which disregards the frailty of the enclosed flesh and constrains it to magnificence.

That costume power—fully recalls the later Tudor portraits, the gorgeous robes that held together the grossness of Henry VIII and the brain-raddled emaciation of Elizabeth and presented them as massive monarchs. Such vestments speak of a world founded on the idea of status, which regarded a king as the beloved deputy of God, not because he was any particular sort of man, but because it was considered obvious that if he were crowned a king he would try to act like a beloved deputy of God, since society had agreed that was how a king should act…

…Across one of the walls of Gračanica is shown the Falling Asleep of the Virgin Mary, the state which preceded her Assumption, a subject often treated by the Byzantines. There is no man living today who, exploring his mind in the light of that idea, could draw out so much.

In the foreground of the fresco is the Virgin lying on her bier. By the lax yet immutable line is rendered the marvel of death, the death which is more than the mere perishing of consciousness, which can strike where there is no consciousness and annul a tree, a flower, an ear of corn. Above her bier there shines a star of light; within it stands Christ, taking into his arms his mother's soul in the likeness of a swaddled child. Their haloes make a peaceful pattern, the stamp of a super-imperial power, within the angles of the star. About them throngs a crowd of apostles and disciples, come hastily from the next world or from distant lands to attend the Virgin's death, wearing their haloes as bubbling yet serene spheres. On the edge of the crowd stand some bishops in their cross-covered mantles, rock-like with the endurance of the Church, which cannot be perturbed by the most lacerating grief, and still others, also in flowing garments but with bodies liquid with grief, and others, also in flowing garments but with bodies tautened by effort, low under the weight of the bier. The background is full of angels as the Eastern Church loved to conceive them, ethereal messengers who are perpetually irradiated by the divine beauty and communicate its laws to flesh-bound man, a dream of perfect vision and unfrustrated will.

The huge imaginative space occupied by this small fresco is washed by two swinging tides. There is a wave of such sincere and childish grief as children feel when their mothers die, that breaks and falls and ebbs; there is a rising sea of exaltation in the Son who can work all magic and cancel this death or any other, making glory and movement where stillness and the end seem to be ineluctable. The sides of the fresco are filled in with buildings, distorted with the most superb audacity in order to comply with the general pattern, yet solid and realistic in effect; we are amazed, as we all so often are during our lives, that our most prodigious experiences take place in the setting of the everyday world, that the same scenery should be used for the pantomime and the tragedy. Behind these buildings there is a firmament which evokes another recurrent amazement. It is the most astonishing of all the things which happen to us that anything should happen at all. It is incredible that there should be men and women, mothers and sons, biers and buildings, grief and joy; it would seem so much more probable that the universe should have as its sole packing empty nothingness. Existence in itself, taken at its least miraculous, is a miracle.

But this fresco, though it is inspired by these ideas and communicates them, is pure painting; it essays no task proper to another art. These ideas manifest themselves because they were part of the intellectual and spiritual wealth which the painter had inherited from Byzantium, and he could engage in only the most superficial activities without being reminded of them. But he was wholly loyal to his art. He restricted himself to dealing with certain problems of form and colour, but such was his command over his technique that these restrictions gave him as much liberty as most men's talents and allotment of time are likely to need. He knew how to put circle by straight line and straight line by circle, and pattern by pattern within an enfolding pattern, in a design which by a certain angularity never consented to renounce its nature, always refused to pretend to be a plain copy of material objects; he knew how to exploit the Near Eastern palette of strong colours which have had their strength eroded by stronger sunlight to pale virile essences, or obscured in the labyrinths of Byzantine palaces and only half revived by the glow from torches and candelabra. It is a convention of form and colour which we of the West know through its use by El Greco, and which we are tempted to mistake for his self-made fortune, if we do not know the treasure house of tradition where he found it. In Gračanica, where the painting of these frescos and the architecture of the church illustrate two arts proceeding from the same late Byzantine culture, we can see how inexhaustible were the treasures of this tradition. Here artists knew the supremest wealth their kind can know; they were rich in creation and they worked for an audience rich in perception. These people were born into a kingdom which was as kingdoms of earth should be, yielding good grain and good meat and good wine; and they had had enough of everything for long enough to forget starvation and outgrow excess. Before their eyes was a kingdom of the mind, founded by another people, which, like all kingdoms of the mind, had never been completed, but was unique in beauty. Well nourished and full of power, the Serbs went forth to know the new pleasures of art and thought, and to complete this culture with a richness that should match the richness of its first intention.

Rebecca West, *The Black Lamb and the Grey Falcon*, 1941

This book made the Random House Modern Library list of the best 100 non-fiction books of the 20th century. American writer Larry McMurtry says in an essay that "there are only a few great travel books. Rebecca West's *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* is one." The most brilliantly objective travel book.

Archbishop Danilo II, detail of the composition Mother of God *the Life Giving Fountain*, nartex, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1331

Abbot of Dećani Monastery, Danilo (1335–1350), fresco in the Chapel of Saint Nicholas

Patriarch Spiridon—4th Patriarch of the Serbian Church (1379–1389), north wall of the narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1565

Patriarch Danilo III—5th Patriarch of the Serbian Church (1391–1398), north wall of the narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1565

Kosovo and Metohija: History, Memory, Identity

Dušan T. Bataković

Kosovo Today: Embattled Province of Serbia

Serbia's troublesome province of Kosovo (officially Kosovo and Metohija), was first established as a distinct autonomous region within Serbia in 1945 by the Soviet-installed communist regime of J.B. Tito of the post-Second World War Yugoslav federation. Present-day Kosovo and Metohija is a rather small (10,887 sq km) but densely populated, fertile and mineral-rich area. An autonomous province within Serbia inhabited by Albanians and Serbs as the two main ethnic groups, the region has had a long and turbulent past. The Province consists of two distinct areas: Kosovo proper with Priština as its centre and Metohija, with Peć as its hub. A valley between Kosovska Mitrovica and Uroševac, Kosovo proper is eighty-four kilometers long and roughly fourteen kilometers wide. Since medieval times the Kosovo valley has been a densely populated area, an important crossroad of vital transport routes in the Western Balkans, linking the Adriatic Sea with the central and lower Danube basin. Kosovo is rich with both agricultural and mineral resources. The minerals found in Kosovo are approximately seventy percent of all mineral wealth of Serbia, whilst the coal mines (comprising mostly lignite) in northern and central Kosovo are even more important. These reserves of coal are worth dozens of billions of US dollars and they represent almost ninety percent of the overall coal reserves of Serbia.[1]

The other area geographically separated from Kosovo by the hills of Drenica has been known for centuries as Metohija (4,684 sq km in area), renowned by splendid endowments of Serbian rulers and landlords. Known as Hvosno in the late medieval period, Metohija probably earned this name during the four centuries of Ottoman domination after 1459. Bordering northern Albania in the west, Metohija is a fertile agrarian flatland that stretches from the town of Istok and Peć to Djakovica and Velika Hoča, all the way to Prizren (the area known as *Prizrenski Podgor*) and its hinterland towards Albania and Macedonia known as Gora and Opolje. Within the larger area that encompasses parts of neighboring northern Albania, Metohija is known to the Albanians as Dukagjin (or "Western Kosovo"). Metohija is about eighty kilometers long and over forty kilometers wide.[2] In 1968, supported by J. B. Tito, the lifetime dictator of communist Yugoslavia (1945–1980) within the context of further decentralization of the communist federation, the Albanian communist leadership of Kosovo succeeded in banning the name *Metohija*, perceived as excessively Serb and excessively for the desired political image of the Albanian-dominated Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo. In 1990, the term Metohija was reintroduced, as the official part of the name of the Province after its autonomy was limited and the province returned under the jurisdiction of Serbia. The Term Metohija, was eventually re-erased by the UN administration in June 1999. Thus, the whole area today is officially referred to as Kosovo.

Presently, Kosovo covers 10,887 square kilometers that is 12.3 percent of the total area of Serbia. The estimate of the Kosovo population in 1991 was as high as 1,954,747 inhabitants or 20.5 percent of the total population of Serbia.[3] Legally a southern province of Serbia, since 1999 war and NATO bombing campaign Kosovo was placed under UN administration by 1244 UN Security Council Resolution. According to the international law Kosovo is a constituent part of Serbia, a successor of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, Kosovo was additionally torn apart by the unilateral proclamation of independence on 17 February 2008, orchestrated solely by the Albanian-dominated *Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG)* Kosovo. This unilateral proclamation of independence was firmly rejected as illegal and void by the Kosovo

[1] Atanasije Urošević, *Kosovo*, Serbian Ethnographic Collection, Monographs, vol. LXXVIII (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1965); Milovan Radovanović, *Kosovo and Metohija. Serbian and Regional Context* (Belgrade: Mnemosyne, 2005).

[2] Milisav Lutovac, *La Metohija : étude de géographie humaine* Institut d'études Slaves, (Paris : Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion 1935).

[3] The number of ethnic Albanians is only demographic projections, after they boycotted the census of 1991 (Branislav Krstić, *Kosovo izmedju istorijskog i etničkog prava* (Belgrade: Kuća Vid, 1994, 11–20). The real number of Kosovo Albanians living in the province throught the 1990 was 1.3 to 1.5 million, i. e. 70 to 75 percent of the population, as estimated by demographic expert Milovan Radovanović.

THE SERBIAN EMPIRE IN THE MID-14TH CENTURY (TODAY'S KOSOVO-METOHIJA IN GRAY)

Serbs, the most of Kosovo non-Albanian ethnic groups as well as by the Serbian government and the National Assembly of Serbia in Belgrade.

Imagining Kosovo: Opposing Historical Views Serbian Jerusalem vs. Ancient Albanian Land

The notion of "Kosovo" carries different, indeed opposing, meanings for the different national communities of Kosovo and Metohija. For the Serbs, Kosovo above all signifies an ancient Serbian territory, a Serbian "Holy Land", the impressive cultural and economic rise of which was in the late medieval period brutally brought to a halt by the Ottoman conquest and cut off from its European and Christian background. The Serb popular and Romantic traditions both highlight the "suffering of Kosovo", presaged by the famous battle of Kosovo in 1389.[4] Surrender to the Ottomans became a reality for the majority of Christian Orthodox Serbs by the middle of the fifteenth century, as several Serb realms in the southern Balkans and in Bosnia fell one after another: the Despotate of Serbia (covering today's central Serbia including Kosovo), and a number of remaining independent or semi-independent Serb-inhabited princedoms (1459–1481) including Herzegovina and Montenegro.[5]

The word Kosovo is considered to be symbolically the most important word in the Serbian historical dictionary. After the name of Savior, and Saint Sava (the founder of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the early thirteenth century), the word Kosovo dominates the political and cultural discourse of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Serbia, while in popular culture the Kosovo legacy, through epic tradition in the rural areas of Dalmatia, Herzegovina, Western Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo itself, remains to be a prevailing historical narrative.

In the Serbian language, the word Kosovo (*kos* meaning the blackbird, and *Kosovo*, a field of blackbirds) combined with another historical name, Metohija (derived from the Greek word *metochion*, pl. *metochia*, meaning monastic possessions), is the official name of the southern province of Serbia with its 1,300 churches and monasteries scattered all over the area. Although its majority population is now Albanian, Kosovo is seen as epitomizing both the national and cultural identity of the whole Serbian nation. As the political and cultural core of medieval Serbia, Kosovo gave two of Serbia's three most important medieval dynasties, the House of Hrebeljanović-Lazarević (1371–1427) and the House of Branković (1427–1459). They ruled Serbia during the decisive ninety years between the Battle of Marica (1371) and the final Ottoman conquest in the middle of the fifteenth century (1459).

The Kosovo tradition became established as a popular legend under the auspices of the Patriarchate of Peć (1557–1766), the restored Serbian Orthodox Church in the first century of Ottoman domination. The Legend of Kosovo gradually merged with popular tradition, taking on almost mythic proportions, and emerged as a cornerstone of modern Serb identity in the age of nationalism. For the average Serb of today, the word Kosovo still stands for an ancient and sacred Serbian land, where the Serbs have been systematically persecuted and expelled from, for being Slavic and Christian Orthodox, over the last three centuries, with the exception of recent periods of occasional repression against the Albanians.

Within this frame of perception, not only were the conquerors—the Ottoman Turks—seen as persecutors, but also their local allies, above all Muslim Albanians—legal

[4] Thomas A. Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha: Kosovo 1389, East European Monographs,* (New York: New York University Press 1991); idem, "The Kosovo Legacy", in *Kosovo*, ed. William Dorich (Alhambra, California: Kosovo Charity Found, Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Western America, 1992). For more, see Rade Mihaljčić, *The Battle of Kosovo in History and the Popular Tradition* (Belgrade: Beogradski izdavački grafički zavod, 1989); *Kosovska bitka u istoriografiji*, Sima M. Ćirković ed. (Belgrade, Istorijski institut 1990); Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić, "Patterns of Martyrial Sanctity in the Royal Ideology of Medieval Serbia. Continuity and Change", *Balcanica* XXXVII/2006 (2007).

[5] Nada Milošević-Djordjević, *Kosovska epika* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 1990); Thomas A. Emmert, "The Kosovo Legacy", in *Kosovo*, ed. William Dorich (Alhambra, California: Kosovo Charity Found, Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Western America, 1992).

and illegal immigrants descending from the highlands of northern and central Albania and settling in the plains of Metohija and Kosovo at various times during Ottoman rule (1455–1912), under the Italian Fascist and German Nazi occupation (1941–1945), and under Tito's communist regime (1945–1990). In 1968, supported by the lifetime dictator of communist Yugoslavia J. B. Tito and in the context of further decentralization of the communist federation, the Albanian communist leadership of Kosovo succeeded in banning the name *Metohija*, seen as too much Christian Orthodox and Serbian for the desired political image of the Albanian-dominated Province of Kosovo. In 1990, the term Metohija was reintroduced, as the official part of the name of the Province after its autonomy was limited and the province returned under the jurisdiction of Serbia.

Waves of spiralling violence continued, remaining the main characteristic of Kosovo and Metohija history. As a phenomenon of *longue durée*, the Serbian-Albanian rivalry in Kosovo–Metohija has been marked by the combined effects of social discontent and religious and ethnic strife, producing several waves of mass migrations during the last three hundred years. Muslim Albanians from the highlands of northern and central Albania, the poorest region of Turkey-in-Europe, were steadily settled in the fertile plains of Metohija and Kosovo by the Ottoman authorities, and their main rivals there were Christian Orthodox Serb peasants, as they occupied most of the arable land.[6]

Occasional instances of interethnic and inter-religious cooperation, as well as rare attempts of mutual communal assistance—usually short-lived and only superficially tolerant—were not the prevailing political practice. In spite of certain efforts during the last two centuries, for the two main Kosovo communities, Albanian and Serb, as well as for the other non-Albanians in the area (Goranies, i.e. the Muslim Slav, Serbian-speaking community of the Gora region bordering present-day FYROM and Albania; Roma with several names and denominations; ethnic Turks, mostly urban population; other Muslim Slavs in Metohija, renamed Bosniaks since 1999; ethnic Croats in Letnica), interethnic communication remained very limited. Furthermore, interethnic communication failed to survive the mounting Serbian–Albanian conflict at the end of the twentieth century.[7] Interethnic distance in Kosovo and Metohija has remained highest within the whole of Serbia, with no tangible improvements after the 1999 savage NATO bombing campaign (38,000 combat sorties between 24 March and 10 June 1999) and the resulting establishment of the UN administration (UNMIK) over this southern province of Serbia in June 1999.

For the average Albanian of today, on the other hand, the word Kosovo (or *Kosova* in Albanian) symbolizes an "ancient Albanian land" directly linking the ancient Illyrians of Dardania with the modern Albanian community in this territory. The common self-perception of the Kosovo Albanians is that of the greatest victims of Balkan history—in particular prior to and after the Balkan Wars (1912–1913)—deprived of the right to form a single state with the rest of their fellow Albanians, all proud descendants of ancient Illyrians.

Although interpretable as a Balkan instance of "inventing tradition" and having little to do with the established and verifiable historical facts, the myth of the Illyrian origin of modern Albanians was a powerful ideology that effectively bound together very different religious groups and clans together in the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century.[8] In more recent times, for the Albanians, Kosovo has become the symbol of Diaspora nationalism nurtured by their constant demographic growth as a form of ethnic legitimization over the disputed territory. In the case of Kosovo, the Diaspora type of nationalism is almost synonymous with the desire for complete and unrestricted ethnic control over a disputed area.[9] This

[6] See more in the selected Western sources on various periods of Kosovo–Metohija's history: Simpliziano Bizozeri, *La Sacra Lega contro la Potenza Ottomana. Sucessi delle Armi imperiali, Polacche, Venete e Moscovite, Rotte, e disfatte di Eserciti de Turchi, Tartari, e Ribelli*, vol. II. (Milano: M.A.P. Malatesta, 1700; Ami Boué, *La Turquie d'Europe : observations sur la géographie, la géologie, l'histoire naturelle, la statistique, les mœurs, les coutumes, l'archéologie, l'agriculture, l'industrie, le commerce, les gouvernements divers, le clergé, l'histoire et l'état politique de cet empire*, vol. I–III, (Paris: A. Bertrand 1840); Ami Boué, *Recueil d'itinéraires dans la Turquie d'Europe*, vol. I–II (Vienne: W. Braumüller, 1854); Abdolonyme Ubicini, *Les Serbes de Turquie, études historiques, statistiques et politiques sur la principauté de Serbie, le Monténégro et les pays serbes adjacents* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1865); G. Muir Mackenzie & A. P. Irby, *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey-in-Europe* (London: Daldy, Isbister and Co. 1877); Victor Bérard, *La Macédoine* (Paris: Calman Lévy, 1900); Henry N. Brailsford, *Macedonia. Its Races and their Future* (London: Methuen, 1906); Frederick Moore, *The Balkan Trail* (New York: Smith, Elder & Co 1906); Gaston Gravier, "La Vieille Serbie et les Albanais," *Revue de Paris*, 1er novembre 1911; Georges Gaulis, *La ruine d'un empire. Abdul-Hamid ses amis et ses peuples* (Paris: A. Colin 1913); Maximilian Braun, *Kosovo. Die Schlacht auf dem Amsfelde in feschichtlicher und epischer Uberlieferung*, (Leipzig: Markert und Petter : Druck von C. Schulze, 1937), Rebecca West, *The Black Lamb and Grey Falcon. The record of a journey through Yugoslavia in 1937* (London: MacMillan & Co., 1941).

[7] *Cf.* Ger Duijzings, *Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo* (London: Hurst & Co, 2000). Another sympathetic, useful but incomplete survey highlighting mostly the positive aspect of interethnic relations, in particular between Serbs and Albanians, is available in the journalistic narrative of Petrit Imami, *Srbi i Albanci kroz vekove* (Belgrade: Radio B92, 1998).

[8] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions" in Eric Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1–2.

[9] *Cf.* standard works in English and French: Alex N. Dragnich & Slavko Todorovich, *The Saga of Kosovo. Focus on Serbian–Albanian Relations* (Boulder: East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, 1984); Arshi Pipa & Sami Repishti, eds., *Studies on Kosova* (East European Monographs, Boulder: Columbia University Press,

practice has its roots in the nineteenth century, in the Romantic period of "national awakening". Both Kosovo and Metohija (in Albanian known as *Rafshte e Dukadjinit*) were from the mid–nineteenth century widely known as *Arnavutluk*, a term synonymous with lawless territory on the periphery of the crumbling Ottoman Empire, thus linking the notion of a Muslim Albanian with constant rebellion against Ottoman central authority.[10]

Furthermore, the ethnic Albanians are fond of Kosovo as the stronghold of their main national movement, "Albanian League", founded in Prizren in 1878 on the eve of the Congress of Berlin. All Albanians, including the Kosovo Albanians, see Kosovo as symbolizing an "ancient Albanian land", a space of ancient Dardania, which directly, in ethnic terms, links the ancient Illyrians with the modern-day Albanian community in the province of Kosovo and Metohija. This romantic historical notion of amateur-historians (Johan Georg von Hahn) and Albanian patriots (Pashko Vassa, Sami Frashëri) before and during the Eastern Crisis in 1878, originally concocted as a scholarly theory in Austria-Hungary in the late nineteenth century for the political purpose of finding a common denominator uniting the divided Albanian clans,[11] was additionally elaborated between the two world wars, and eventually the Illyrian theory was fully embraced by Albanian historians, becoming an official ideology under the post-1945 communist dictator Enver Hoxha.[12] Thus, the Illyrian theory views Albanians as direct descendants of the pre-Roman Illyrian tribes and labels Serbs as "Slavic intruders" who did not begin to settle in this ancient Albanian land until the seventh century AD.[13] Due to this ideological pattern imposed on Albanian historiography both by national romanticism and the Stalinist-type communist regime of Enver Hoxha, Kosovo came to be perceived in the twentieth century by the whole Albanian nation scattered in various states bordering Albania, as an "occupied ethnic territory".[14]

Nevertheless, there is no reliable evidence for ethnic continuity between ancient Illyrians and present-day Albanians. The huge gap in the historical record between the sixth and eleventh centuries, however, has produced little effect on Albanian national mythology, or on the inclusion of the Illyrian myth as an ingredient of modern Albanian national identity. As regards to Kosovo—as an alleged Illyrian–Albanian territory—a two-stepped approach has been applied. First, the missing link in the alleged Illyrian–Albanian continuity was found in the ancient tribe of Dardanians. The second step was to multiply efforts aimed at "unmasking Serbian myths" about Kosovo through the rapid growth of ostensibly scholarly publications.[15]

1984); *Le Kosovo–Metohija dans l'histoire serbe* Radovan Samardžić, ed. (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1990); *Kosovo, Past and Present* (Belgrade: Institute for International Affairs, 1989); Dušan T. Bataković, *The Kosovo Chronicles* (Belgrade: Plato, 1992); Idem, *Kosovo. La spirale de la haine* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1993; 2nd ed. 1998); Branislav Krstić, *Kosovo. Facing the Court of History* (New York: Humanity Books, 2004); Dušan T. Bataković, *Kosovo. Un conflit sans fin?* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 2008); Idem, *Serbia's Kosovo Drama. A Historical Perspective* (Belgrade : Čigoja Štampa 2012).

Cf. also in Serbian: Djoko Slijepčević, *Srpsko-arbanaški odnosi kroz vekove s posebnim osvrtom na novije vreme* (Himelstir: Eparhija zapadnoevropska, 1983); Dimitrije Bogdanović, *Knjiga o Kosovu* (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1985); Atanasije Jevtić & Živorad Stojković, eds., *Zadužbine Kosova. Spomenici i znamenja srpskog naroda* (Prizren–Belgrade: Eparhija Raško–prizrenska, 1987); D. T. Bataković, *Kosovo i Metohija. Istorija i ideologija* (Belgrade–Valjevo: Hrišćanska misao, 1998); *Kosovo i Metohija u velikoalbanskim planovima 1878–2000* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2001).

The papers by Serbian, Albanian and Western scholars reflecting different views of the problem are available in the following collection: *Kosovo/a. Confrontation or Coexistence*, eds. Ger Duijzings, Dušan Janjić & Shkelzen Maliqi (Peace Research Centre: University of Nijmegen & Political Cultural Centre 042, 1996). Quite useful for the recent developments is also Thanos Veremis & Evangelos Kofos, eds., *Kosovo. Avoiding another Balkan War* (Athens: ELIAMEP, 1994); William Joseph Buckley, ed., *Kosovo. Contending Voices on Balkan Interventions* (Grand Rapids, Michigan-Cambridge UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2000); also useful is "Kosovo. Six siècles de mémoires croisées", *Les Annales de l'autre Islam* 7, Actes du colloque tenue en 1999 (Paris: INALCO, 2000). The standard German/Austrian approach available in Jens Reuter, *Die Albaner in Jugoslawien* (Munich, 1980); Wolfgang Petritch, Karl Kaser & Robert Pichler, eds., *Kosovo/Kosova. Mythen, Daten, Fakten* (Klagenfurt & Vienna: Wieser Verlag, 1999). Among the recent monographs, balanced and accurate is Jean–Arnauld Dérens, *Kosovo. Année zéro*, preface Marek-Antony Nowicki (Paris: Paris–Méditerranée, 2004). See also a very useful book with particular chapters on the Kosovo case: Alexis Troude, *Géopolitique de la Serbie* (Paris: Elipses, 2006).

10 Nathalie Clayer, "Kosovo: le berceau du nationalisme albanais au XIXème siècle?", *Les Annales de l'autre Islam* 7 (2000), 169–182.

11 Stavro Skendi, *Albanian National Awakening, 1878–1912* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).

12 Nathalie Clayer, *Religion et nation chez les Albanais aux XIXe–XXe siècles* (Istanbul: Les Éditions ISIS, 2002), Idem, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais. La naissance d'une nation majoritairement musulmane en Europe* (Paris : Karthala 2007).

13 *Studime Ilire. Kuvendi I i Studimeve Ilire*, (Prishtine: Rilindja 1978); *The Truth on Kosova* ed. K. Prifti (Tirana: Institute of History, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Albania, Encyclopaedia Publishing House, 1993); Ali Jakupi, "Origins and Motives of Serbian Myths in Kosovo" *Eurobalkans*, no. 34–35, spring/summer Athens 1999, 21–27. In French: Rexhep Qosja, *La Question albanaise*, Paris: Fayard,1995). For a recent, more scholarly analysis see *Albania and the Albanian identities*, ed. Antonina Zhelyazkova (Sofia: International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations, 2000); *Albanian Identities: Myth & History*, eds. Stephanie Schwandner–Sievers and Bernd J. Fischer (London: Hurst & Co, 2002).

14 *Cf.* more in the standard Enver Hoxha-sponsored, Stalinist-type version of the ancient Illyrian origin of Albanians: Alex Buda, ed., *Albanians and Their Territories* (Tirana: 8 Nëntori: Academy of Science of PR of Albania, 1985).

15 *Cf.* a typical example: Ali Jakupi, "Origins and Motives of Serbian Myths in Kosovo", *Eurobalkans* 34–35 (Spring/Summer, Athens, 1999), 21–27. Notoriously pro-Albanian as regards the Kosovo issue is Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo. A Short History* (London: Macmillan, 1998). *Cf.* the review of Malcolm's book by Aleksa Djilas, "Imagining Kosovo: A Biased New Account Fans Western Confusion", *Foreign Affairs* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Inc., vol. 77, № 5,

The Serbian monasteries and churches in Kosovo and Metohija—include today four UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Serbia situated in Kosovo:

"The Monastery of Visoki Dečani was the first that was listed as a World Heritage site (2004), and the extension in 2006 included the Patriarchate of Peć, the Monastery of Gračanica, and the Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša in Prizren (Serbia: Date of Inscription: 2004; Extension: 2006, Criteria: (ii)(iii)(iv); Property: 2.8802 ha; Buffer zone: 115.3879 ha Autonomous province of Kosovo; N42 39 40 E20 15 56; Ref: 724bis). UNESCO describes them as follows: "The four edifices of the site reflect the high points of the Byzantine–Romanesque ecclesiastical culture, with its distinct style of wall painting, which developed in the Balkans between the 13th and 17th centuries. The Dečani Monastery was built in the mid-14th century for the Serbian king Stefan Dečanski and is also his mausoleum. The Patriarchate of Peć Monastery is a group of four domed churches featuring series of wall paintings. The 13th-century frescos of the Church of Holy Apostles are painted in a unique, monumental style. Early 14th-century frescos in the church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša represent the appearance of the new so-called Palaelogan Renaissance style, combining the influences of the eastern Orthodox Byzantine and the Western Romanesque traditions. The style played a decisive role in subsequent Balkan art."[16]

These and many other Serbian monasteries and churches, built in unusually large numbers between the early thirteenth and late fifteenth centuries, were, according to Albanian propagandists, constructed on the foundations of earlier "Illyrian churches". Some of them indeed were built on earlier foundations, but those were the remnants of Byzantine–era churches, which is a phenomenon typical of the whole of the "Byzantine Commonwealth", as well as elsewhere in southern Europe and in wider Mediterranean area.[17]

The Serbian position is, however, most often supported by tangible evidence. Apart from written historical sources, foreign and domestic, attesting to Serbian presence in the area since the medieval period, there still are in Kosovo thirteen hundred Serb Orthodox Christian churches, monasteries, monuments, and archaeological sites.[18] The process of ethnic change unfolding from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, by which Albanians gradually replaced Serbs as Kosovo's majority population, is well documented as well. Among its causes, the primary one was foreign oppression, which often obtained Albanian support It was for the first international Peace Conference at The Hague that Kingdom of Serbia, as one of founding states, prepared a volume of diplomatic documents exchanged between Belgrade and Constantinople concerning Albanian-organized violence and persecution of Kosovo Serbs in Old Serbia at the close of the nineteenth century, under the following title: *Documents diplomatiques. Correspondance concernant les actes de violence et de brigandage des Albanais dans la Vieille Serbie (Vilayet de Kosovo) 1898–1899.*[19] Nevertheless its official presentation at The Hague was prevented in the last moment after the strongest pressure of Vienna through Austro–Hungarian diplomats in Belgrade on Serbian King Aleksanda I Obrenović and his government to withdraw this document.

The contrasting versions of the historical past of Kosovo and Metohija became a significant factor causing the profound political and cultural distrust between Serbs and Albanians. Nevertheless, the usual approach, often lacking reliable scholarly background, is to compare the Serbian historical account, overwhelmingly based on verifiable data, with Albanian romantic–historical theses that have significantly less backing in sources, in order to offer a kind of "balanced" version of history. However, such attempts to find a middle ground usually produce a distorted and misguided view of the region's past.

The Rise and Fall of Medieval Serbia

Until the early Middle Ages it was successively included into different Roman and Byzantine provinces and inhabited by different ethnic groups. Its pre-Roman population of varied origin (Illyrian in the west and Thracian in the east and south) was gradually Romanized during the long rule of both Rome and Constantinople.[20]

With the mass settlement of Slavs during the seventh century most of the central Balkans became a fief of different Slavic tribes under stronger or weaker control of Byzantium. A former Bulgarian and Byzantine possession, the region that has come to be known as Kosovo–Metohija was integrated between the early twelfth century and the middle of the fifteenth century into the medieval Serbian state: the Kingdom (1217–1346), Empire (1346–1371), various princedoms (1371–1402) and the Despotate of Serbia (1402–1459). As a predominantly Serb-inhabited area Kosovo–Metohija became the prestigious centre of the

September 1998). More balanced, but still incomplete is Miranda Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian. A History of Kosovo* (London: Hurst & Co., 1988). In the French-speaking countries, an ardent supporter of the most prolific pro-Albanian positions is a geography professor at the University of Toulouse, Michel Roux, *Les Albanais en Yougoslavie. Minorité nationale, territoire et développement* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1992).

16 http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/724/

17 For more see Gojko Subotić, *Art of Kosovo: The Sacred Land* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1998).

18 Comprehensive documentation available in : *Zadužbine Kosova. Spomenici i znamenja*, passim.

19 Belgrade, Ministère des Affaires Êtrangeères 1899., 149. P.

20 *Illyriens et Albanais*, ed. Milutin Garašanin (Belgrade: Académie serbe des sciences et des Arts, 1990), bilingual Serbian and French edition.

main Serbian political and cultural institutions.[21] As an area rich in natural resources it was suitable for cultivation, for exploiting silver and gold mines around which thrived mining towns, for building fortresses, palaces, churches and monasteries.[22]

Three important bishoprics (Hvosno, Prizren, Lipljan) were founded in Kosovo and Metohija in the early thirteenth century under the first Serbian Archbishop, Sava Nemanjić, the future St. Sava: "Serbia was never to fall under strong Catholic influence [...] Sava's first task was to place all Serbian territory under the jurisdiction of its new archbishop. This necessitated the ousting in 1220 of Greek bishops from the recently acquired towns of Prizren and Lipljan. Sava then proceeded to construct Serbia's Church administration, dividing all Serbia's territory (including Zeta and Hum) up into about ten bishoprics".[23]

Furthermore, Kosovo–Metohija was an important political and commercial crossroads for the major Balkan roads leading from Bosnia and Rascia (Raška) to Macedonia, and central Serbia to Dioclea (Duklja, later called Zeta, present–day Montenegro) and other ports in the south of the eastern Adriatic coast.

Within a century, Kosovo, the northern part of Kosovo–and–Metohija, became covered by fortresses and palaces of the Serbian rulers and their prospering nobility. The cities of Priština, Prizren and especially the prosperous mining town of Novo Brdo were among the richest in the western Balkans in the fourteenth and first half of the fifteenth century. The Plain of Kosovo (*Kosovska ravnica*)—stretching from Mitrovica to Kačanik—was dotted with more than 130 churches built by Serbian rulers, church dignitaries and local noblemen. The Serbian Archbishopric, founded and initially seated in Rascia (1219), was relocated to Peć in the Hvosno area (later termed Metohija) and, under Emperor Stefan Dušan, elevated to a Patriarchate in 1346.

Hvosno or Metohija, the western part of the present-day province of Kosovo and Metohija (4,684 sq km in area), was covered with a network of large and rich monasteries built by the Serbian kings, such as Dečani and the Patriarchate of Peć, and a significant number of late medieval churches erected by local Serbian noblemen (e.g. Orahovac, Velika Hoča, Crkolez, Vaganeš, Zočište, Ubožac, Dolac, Prizren etc). Most of Metohija's densely populated villages were granted to the major royal foundations (monasteries) erected between the late twelfth and mid-fourteenth centuries; hence its name *Metohija*.[24] The monastery of Dečani alone had more than 2,500 sq km of estates, including villages, forests and vineyards. The monastery of Holy Archangels was granted an even larger estate, not only in Metohija itself but also in the neighbouring areas of today's Macedonia and Albania, stretching from Šar Mountain to Allessio on the Albanian coast. Huge estates were donated to the Serbian monastery of Chilandar [*Hilandar*] on Mount Athos.[25] The prospering Serbian economy, especially the exploitation of mines, rich in silver and gold, and large estates that the rulers granted to the Church, made the medieval Serbian monasteries prestigious centers of sophisticated culture and civilization. In the fourteenth century, there were more than 200 churches and monasteries throughout Metohija, and many others were built in the following decades.[26]

Among the most important royal endowments are: The Mother of God of Ljeviša (*Bogorodica Ljeviška*), a bishopric seat in Prizren built on the foundations of an earlier Byzantine church by King Uroš I Nemanjić (1243–1276) and his powerful successor King Stefan Uroš II Milutin (1281–1321). King Milutin, the main patron of the revitalized mining industry in Serbia, also built two large monasteries in Kosovo: the monastery of St. Stefan at Banjska near Zvečan in northern Kosovo, and the monastery of Gračanica near Priština in central Kosovo. Comparing Salisbury Cathedral with Gračanica, Steven Runciman said that "the former may soar gracefully heavenward; the latter with the simplicity of its design, the comprehensive economy of its balance and its interior, is the work of a people no less spiritual but far more sophisticated and cultured."[27]

The Jerusalem-type complex of three churches known as the Patriarchate of Peć (Holy Apostles, the Mother of God, and St. Demetrius) began to be built in the mid-thirteenth century and was eventually completed in the 1320s by Archbishop Danilo II.[28] The monastery of Dečani near Peć, with its church dedicated to the Pantocrator, was intended as the funerary church of King Stefan Uroš III Dečanski (1321–1331). The monumental monastic complex of Dečani was eventually completed by his son and heir King Stefan Uroš IV—future Emperor Stefan Dušan.[29] The

21 For more, see Bariša Krekić, "Medieval Serbia: The Nemanyids and Byzantium" in Speros Vryonis Jr., ed., *Byzantine Studies. Essays on the Slavic World and the Eleventh Century* (New Rochelle, New York: Aristide D. Caratzas Publisher, 1985), 43–52; Sima M. Ćirković, *La Serbie au Moyen Age* (Paris: Zodiaque, 1992).

22 Desanka Kovačević, "Dans la Serbie et la Bosnie medievales: Les mines d'or et d'argent", *Annales, Economies, Civilisations*, vol. 2 (Paris: Armand Colin, 1960), 248–258.

23 John V. A. Fine Jr., *The Late Medieval Balkans. A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth to the Ottoman Conquest* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press), 117.

24 Milisav Lutovac, *La Metohija – étude de géographie humaine* (Paris: Institut d'études Slaves et Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion, 1935).

25 Miloš Blagojević, *The Estates of Chilandar Monastery in Kosovo and Metohija, 12th–15th Centuries* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2006), 31–45 (multilingual edition).

26 The comprehensive survey: Gojko Subotić, *The Art of Kosovo. The Sacred Land* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1998).

27 Steven Runciman, *The Byzantine Civilization* (London: Methuen & Co, 1975), 285.

28 Vojislav J. Djurić, Sima M. Ćirković & Vojislav Korać, *Pećka Patrijaršija* (Belgrade & Priština: Jugoslovenska knjiga & Jedinstvo, 1990).

Holy Archangels near Prizren, by far the largest medieval Serbian monastery, was the endowment of Stefan Dušan, erected shortly after his coronation in Skoplje as "Emperor of Serbs and Greeks" in 1346. The cathedral of the Holy Archangels was the most monumental church built in the Byzantine Commonwealth in the fourteenth century.[30]

The Serbian monasteries in Kosovo-and-Metohija held in their libraries, in medieval times alone, at least 7,500 manuscripts, with Peć and Dečani as the most important centres. Several thousand new manuscripts and printed books were produced during the following two centuries of the Church's organized activity under Ottoman rule

[29] *Cf.* comprehensive study by Branislav Todić & Milka Čanak-Medić, *The Monastery of Dečany* (Belgrade: Muzej u Prištini, Mnemosyne & Manastir Visoki Dečani, 2013), 534 p. *Cf.* also: *The Monastery of Visoki Dečani*, by the brotherhood of Visoki Dečani (Belgrade: Knjiga Komerc, 2014). See also a bilingual edition: Milica Grković, *The First Charter of the Dečani Monastery* (Belgrade; Mnemosayne, 2004).

[30] For more, see Dimitri Obolensky, *Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500–1438* (New York: Praeger, 1971).

(1557–1776). The most prolific genres of Serbian medieval literature were hagiography, biographies of the sainted rulers and church dignitaries (bishops, archbishops and patriarchs), and *memoria*, *eulogies*, *hymns*, and other forms of devotional literature, written in or translated into Old Church Slavonic.[31]

In the process of rapid disintegration of Stefan Dušan's Empire under his weak heir Emperor Uroš I (1355–1371)—the last ruler of the Nemanjić dynasty—Kosovo–and–Metohija came under the control of powerful regional lords belonging to the highest ranks of Emperor Dušan's nobility which subsequently emerged as independent local rulers. After the defeat of Serbian armies in Macedonia at the Battle of Maritsa in September 1371, it was Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović (1371–1389) of Kosovo, the most distinguished among Dušan's nobles, who emerged as the strongest regional lord capable of bringing together the rivalling feudal princes of the former Empire. Having established control over the rich mining areas of the former Serbian Empire in Kosovo, Prince Lazar formed a reliable matrimonial alliance of regional lords for the defence of Serbia against the Ottoman invasion.[32]

Although the initial Ottoman raids into Serbia were successfully repulsed (1381, 1385/86, 1388), in 1389 the Ottoman threat became imminent. The decisive battle between the Serbian (supported by their allies from the Bosnian kingdom) and Ottoman armies (supported by many of the Sultan's Slav vassals) took place on The Field of Blackbirds (*Kosovo Polje*), on St. Vitus Day (*Vidovdan*) or 15 (28) June 1389. Both rulers, Prince Lazar and Sultan Murad I, perished in the battle. Prince Lazar's son-in-law, Vuk Branković—most likely unjustly remembered in epic tradition as a traitor who slid out of the battle during its crucial phase—remained the sole independent regional ruler until 1392, when he accepted vassalage to the Ottomans.[33]

The immediate outcome of the battle, which engaged some 30,000 troops on both sides, was not perceived as an Ottoman victory. The first reports claimed the victory of the Christian Serbian armies, and various sources confirmed heavy losses on both sides. Most of those contemporary sources that did not perceive the outcome of the battle as a triumph of the Christian forces emphasized that none of the armies emerged victorious. It was only later, as the legend surrounding the 1389 Battle of Kosovo grew, that the Ottomans began to claim their victory, while the Serbs, deeply affected by the post-Kosovo political situation marked by unsettled internal strife eventually leading to the final Ottoman conquest, began to describe the battle as a tragic defeat.[34]

Be that as it may, the Battle of Kosovo had far-reaching political consequences for the future of Serbia. Only a year after the Battle, Serbia became a vassal of the Ottoman Empire.[35] Nonetheless, present-day Kosovo-and-Metohija with its rich mining centre of Novo Brdo (seized by the Ottomans only in 1455) remained a border region of exceptional economic and spiritual importance until the very end of the Serbian medieval state—under the first Despot Stefan Lazarević (1389–1427), and his less successful successors of the Branković dynasty (1427–1459).[36]

A second battle of Kosovo, with János Hunyady at the head of a Hungarian–Wallachian alliance, took place on 17–20 October 1448 and ended in disaster for the crusading Christian troops, deprived of support of the ailing Despot Djuradj Branković, reluctant to venture into another risky war. Despite frequent raids and pillaging, Kosovo–and–Metohija remained an important region, in particular for the economy and cultural development, until 1455, when Serbia, on top of major setbacks suffered in previous decades, lost Novo Brdo and Prizren. What had remained of the Despotate of Serbia eventually yielded under the overwhelming Ottoman onslaught on its new capital Smederevo, built on Danube in 1459.[37]

The rural population of medieval Kosovo and Metohija can be identified due to the charters issued by the Serbian rulers, containing detailed data on taxes, peasant households, family names, origin, etc. The personal names and most place-names are predominantly Serbian. Feudal obligations of serfs were known as the "Serbian Law", while the nomadic rural population was covered by the "Vlach Law". Albanians are occasionally referred to as nomads living in the borderland between Metohija and Albania (upper and lower Pilot area). The 1455 Ottoman cen-

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[31] In the early 1980s the Christian Orthodox Serbian monasteries in Kosovo and Metohija had only 359 Serbian manuscripts dating from the medieval and Ottoman periods; 140 of the most precious medieval manuscripts were burnt together with the entire National Library in Belgrade during the indiscriminative Nazi carpet bombing on 6 April 1941. *Cf.* Dimitrije Bogdanović, "Rukopisno nasledje Kosova" in *Zbornik okruglog stola o naučnom istraživanju Kosova,* Scientific Conferences, vol. XLII (Belgrade: Serbian academy of Sciences and Arts, 1988), 73–79.

[32] Sima M. Ćirković, "Serbia on the Eve of the Battle of Kosovo" in: Wayne S. Vuchinich & Thomas A. Emmert, eds., *Kosovo. Legacy of a Medieval Battle* (A Modern Greek Studies Yearbook Supplement vol. 1) (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1991), 1–17.

[33] Thomas A. Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha. Kosovo 1389* (Boulder: East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, 1990).

[34] Nicholas J. C. Pappas & L. Brigance Pappas, "The Ottoman View of the Battle of Kosovo" in Vuchinich & Emmert, eds., *Kosovo*, 41–59; *Cf.* also in the same book Stephen W. Reinart, "A Greek View on the Battle of Kosovo", 61–88.

[35] T. A. Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha*, 42–60. *Kosovska bitka u istoriografiji,*S . M. Ćirković, ed. (Belgrade: Istorijski institut, 1990), passim; *Kosovska bitka 1389. i njene posledice (Die Schlaht auf dem Amselfeld 1389 und ihre Folgen)* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1991), Nikola Tasić, ed. (bilingual Serbian and German edition).

[36] *Cf.* Vojislav Jovanović, Sima M. Ćirković, Emina Zečević, Vujadnin Ivanišević & Vesna Radić, *Novo Brdo* (Belgrade: Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia, 2004). Bilingual Serbian and English edition.

[37] More in: Momčilo Spremić, *Despot Djuradj Branković i njegovo doba* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1994).

sus shows that only 80 of 600 villages had household heads bearing typical Albanian names.[38]

Urban centres in Kosovo and Metohija, as elsewhere in late medieval Serbia, were more multicultural than rural areas. Under Byzantine rule, the towns of present-day Kosovo–and–Metohija had a significant Greek population, including administrative and church officials, while Slav or Serb merchants from the Adriatic coast, mostly Roman Catholics from Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and Cattaro (Kotor), were continuously engaged in trade and business in the area. Following the activation of the rich mines of Trepča, Novo Brdo and Janjevo in the early fourteenth century, their number, along with that of Saxon miners, considerably increased.[39] Under Despot Stefan Lazarević, the northernmost city, Belgrade, became Serbia's capital and cultural hub, whilst the southern town of Novo Brdo in Kosovo remained the main economic center, as testified by the "Law on Mines" (*Rudarski zakonik*) issued there in 1412.[40]

The presence of a certain number of Albanian miners of the Roman Catholic rite was recorded in Novo Brdo in the 1430s, but the whole area, both rural and urban, remained predominantly inhabited by Christian Orthodox Serbs. Besides Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries, the urban centers of Kosovo and Metohija disposed with several Roman Catholic parishes, for Saxons, Venetians, Ragusans and other foreign traders.[41]

Ottoman Rule: Conquest and Decline

From the middle of the fifteenth to the early twentieth century, the whole of Kosovo and Metohija was part of the Ottoman Empire. Conquered in 1459, the Despotate of Serbia, Kosovo and Metohija included, was organized into several Ottoman administrative units (*sanjaks*), while most of the nobility that had not perished in the wars emigrated to neighbouring Hungary, where they kept resisting the Ottomans until the 1526 Battle of Mohács. In Ottoman-held Serbia a certain number of former Serb feudal lords entered into the Ottoman *sipahi* system and were eventually Islamized. Being Christian Orthodox, the majority of Serbs, both urban and rural, as well as all other non-Muslim ethnic groups ("people of the book"), became *reaya*, second-class citizens under the Ottoman Islamic order. Apart from legalized religious discrimination, discrimination became evident in all spheres of everyday life.

The lowered status of the Christian population also implied social dependence, as most of the Christian Orthodox Serbs were reduced to landless peasants liable to paying feudal taxes. They were, like other Christians, not only obliged to dress differently, to pay additional tax in lieu of military service, but they were deprived of such rights as riding a horse, possessing or carrying arms, and so on. Nor had the Christians the right to repair their churches or ring church bells without permission of the Ottoman authorities. It was, however, possible to rebuild some ruined churches, but only with the authorization of the Ottoman administration.

Prizren Cathedral, dedicated to the Mother of God of Ljeviša, was converted to a mosque probably immediately after the Ottoman conquest; the same destiny befell the monastery of St. Stefan at Banjska, one of the most impressive foundations of King Stefan Uroš II Milutin (1281–1321). Stefan Dušan's main endowment, the monumental Church of the Holy Archangels near Prizren, where he had been solemnly buried in 1355, was abandoned as early as 1519 and turned into ruins by the end of the century. Marble blocks from the ruined Holy Archangels were reused for the remarkable Sinan Pasha Mosque in Prizren in 1615. Most of the Serbian monasteries and churches were devastated and left in ruins, while many village churches were completely abandoned. Not many were restored until after the liberation of Kosovo and Metohija in 1912. The monasteries of Dečani, Gračanica and Patriarchate of Peć were permitted to perform religious services and their medieval estates, although severely reduced, were reconfirmed by Ottoman *firmans*.

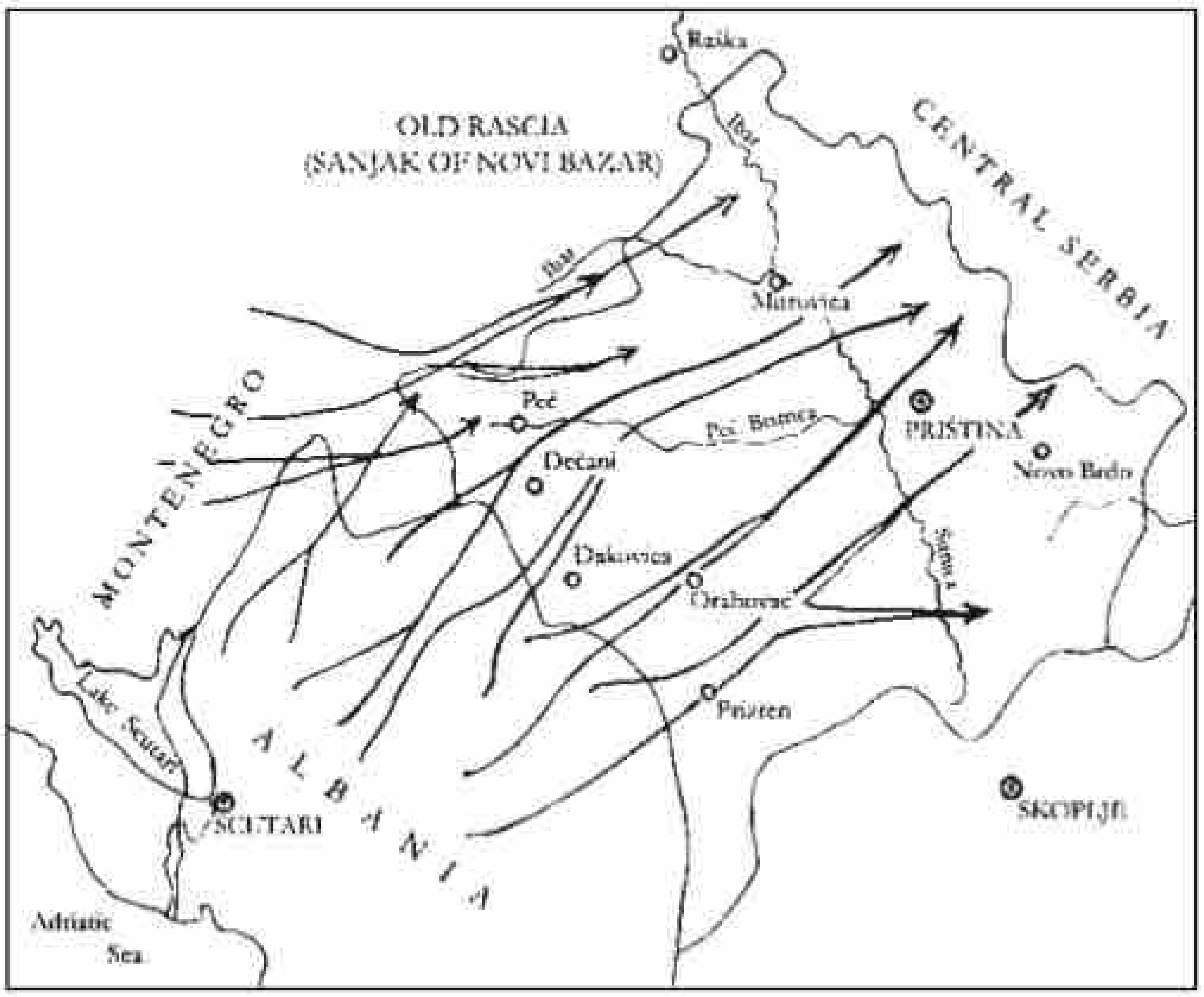
Thorough archaeological surveys have shown that most of the approximately 1,300 monasteries, churches, hermitages and other monuments the Serbs built, or rebuilt on the foundations of earlier Byzantine churches in the area of Kosovo and Metohija, date from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. The magnitude of the havoc wrought by the conquest can be seen from the earliest Ottoman registers combined with censuses (*defters*): in 1455 Ottoman register, apart from the Monastery of Devič in the Drenica area, there were only ten to fourteen active Christian Orthodox churches out of probably hundreds active prior to the conquest. After the consolidation of Ottoman rule in the middle of the sixteenth century, their number significantly increased—fifty-three churches, including eleven monasteries. The large monasteries such as Dečani, the Patriarchate of Peć and Gračanica to a lesser extent were spared from destruction. Nevertheless, their previously wealthy land possessions were reduced to a handful of land estates in the surrounding villages. The *firmans* the Ottoman sultans granted to these three main monastic communities comprised, apart from paying taxes, the obligation to perform different services, including

[38] Olga Zirojević, "Les premiers siècles de la domination étrangère" in *Kosovo–Metohija dans l'histoire*, 41–46; D. T. Bataković, *Kosovo Chronicles*, 45.

[39] See Desanka Kovačević, "Dans la Serbie et la Bosnie médiévales: Les mines d'or et d'argent", *Annales, Economies, Civilisations*, vol. 2 (1960), 253–258.

[40] S. M. Ćirković, "Le Kosovo Metohija au Moyen Age" in *Kosovo–Metohija dans l'histoire serbe*, 23–27.

[41] S. M. Ćirković, "The Cradle of Serbia" in *Kosovo. Past and Present*, ed. Ranko Petković (Belgrade: Review of International Affairs, 1989), 24–27.



Migration of Albanian Tribes to Kosovo, 17th–18th century

the service of falconry as well.[42] In the *Sanjak* of Prizren, according to the 1571 Ottoman census, there were thirty-one Christian Orthodox churches and monasteries, dependencies of the Sultan or the local *sanjak-bey*.[43] In the area of Mount Čičavica, remembered as the "Serbian Holy Mountain" in popular tradition, there were, according to the Ottoman censuses of 1525–26 and 1544–45, "a total of fifty-two monasteries and churches".[44]

The re-establishment of the Serbian Orthodox Church under as the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557 marked the beginning of a vigorous religious renaissance of the Serbian *millet*. The reassembling of the Christian Orthodox into one religious community (*millet*) under the central authority of the patriarchs of Peć brought about a tremendous change in their general position within the rigid theocratic structure of the powerful Ottoman Empire. Sokollu Mehmed-Pasha (Mehmed-paša Sokolović), the Ottoman vizier of Serbian descent, installed his first cousin Makarije Sokolović (1557–1571) on the Serb patriarchal throne and granted him the same privileges as those enjoyed by the Ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople.[45]

The Serbian patriarchs had the right to dispose with church property, to collect church tax, to decide on heirless property, to confirm all guild regulations, and to preside over civil and criminal cases, all within a self-governing Serbian community. As the head of the Serbian *millet*, the patriarch of Peć became a real *etnarch* of all Christian Orthodox Serbs that were under the jurisdiction of the restored Serbian Patriarchate. Patriarch Makarije was succeeded by other members of the Sokolović family—Antonije (1571–1575), and, alternating with one another, Gerasim and Savatije (1575–1586/7).[46]

The Patriarchate of Peć organized a proficient and full-scale revival of medieval Serbian cults and, in parallel, obtained the Sublime Porte's permission to restore fully or partially many demolished or damaged churches and monasteries. Based on the tradition of medieval Serbia, the Patriarchate of Peć was largely perceived, especially by the Christian Orthodox Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, as a structural continuation of medieval Serbia that through its chancery, financial and judicial functions became instrumental in preserving both religious and ethnic identity.

The self-governing church communities (*crkvene opštine*), under the auspices of local bishops, became the pillar of the everyday life of both rural and urban members of the Serbian *millet*. The patriarchs had legal authority over certain trade guilds in towns, and disputes within the Serbian *millet* were usually settled through the combined implementation of common law, patriarchal decrees and the Code of Emperor Stefan Dušan (*Dušanov zakonik*), the most enduring legal document of medieval Serbia, used by various Serbian communities until the late eighteenth century.

Epic poetry, spread widely over the centuries by gifted bards playing the *gusle* (one-stringed violin), sent a powerful emotional and political message. The epic ballads, with the Kosovo covenant as their central theme, immortalized national heroes and rulers, both medieval and premodern, thus cultivating the spirit of defiance and nurturing the hope of forthcoming liberation from Ottoman domination. Epic poems about the Battle of Kosovo and its heroes described the tragic destiny of the last Nemanjić, the heroism of Prince Lazar and his valiant knight Miloš Obilić, the assassin of the Ottoman Sultan Murad at the Battle of Kosovo. The treachery of Vuk Branković, Prince Lazar's son-in-law, became a symbolic justification for the tragic consequences of the Battle of Kosovo.[47]

According to the epic legend, on the eve of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, Prince Lazar chose the heavenly kingdom over the earthly one, freedom over slavery. It was described in the epic song the *Downfall of the Serbian Em-*

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42 Olga Zirojević, "Les premiers siècles", 40–46.

43 Olga Zirojević, "Crkve i manastiri u Prizrenskom sandžaku", *Kosovsko–metohijski zbornik*, vol. 1 (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1990), 133–141.

44 So far thirty-six sites of former churches have been found while "there is a traditional belief among the Serbian and Albanian people that on Čičavica there are seventy-seven spring wells, seventy-seven streams and seventy-seven churches".

45 Radovan Samardjitch (Radovan Samardžić), *Mehmed–Pacha Sokolovitch* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1994); also available is a Turkish translation of this important historical biography.

46 The list of patriarchs of Peć with precise dates of their rule in D. T. Bataković, ed., *Histoire du peuple serbe* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 2005), 112 (list established by A. Fotić).

47 Ivan Božić, "Neverstvo Vuka Brankovića" in Ivan Božić & Vojislav J. Djurić, eds., *Le Prince Lazare* (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet, 1975).

pire, considered as "perhaps the best-known summing up of the whole Kosovo myth; and Lazar's choice is, of course, 'a repetition and the periphrasis of similar points made in Serbian historical literature in the Middle Ages.'"[48] Transcending their real historical context, many of these ballads, highly popular among the rural population, were sung, as testified by foreign travellers, throughout Serb-inhabited lands, from Montenegro, Herzegovina, Bosnia and Slavonia to Croatia and Dalmatia, and from southern Hungary to Slavic Macedonia.

Demographic Profiles: Urban and Rural Society

The urban landscape of Kosovo and Metohija under the Ottomans was mainly shaped by Islam and its culture. Most of the Orthodox churches in the towns were converted to mosques, and many new mosques were erected soon after the establishment of the Ottoman administration, from Priština and Vučitrn to Zvečan and Prizren. Even several of about a dozen Roman Catholic churches, built under the Nemanjić mostly for the colonies of Saxon miners and Ragusan merchants in Novo Brdo, Stari Trg, Trepča and Janjevo, were gradually converted to mosques. Nevertheless, the Roman Catholic communities headed by local chaplains remained in the area and were additionally strengthened by Roman Catholic Albanians newly settled in some urban centres.[49]

Analysis of the earliest Ottoman registers shows that the demographic composition of Kosovo and Metohija did not alter much during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The small-in-number Muslim population consisted largely of members of the Ottoman administration and military, essential in maintaining order, whereas Eastern Orthodox Christians continued to predominate in rural areas. Kosovo and parts of Metohija were registered in 1455 under the name *Vilayeti Vlk*, after Vuk Branković who once ruled this vast area. Some 75,000 inhabitants lived in 590 registered villages.[50] A place-names analysis of some 8,500 personal names shows that Slav and Christian names were heavily predominant.[51]

However, Christian Orthodox Serb tenant farmers who paid taxes and fulfilled additional obligations towards the Empire enjoyed legal protection, while other Serb-inhabited areas that provided auxiliary troops for the Ottoman army (*voynuk, martolos*) or secured bridges, forests and mountain passes, enjoyed partial or complete tax exemption as well as a certain degree of local self-government. Many dues paid in money, labour and kind set aside, the hardest for the Christian Serbs was the form of taxation known as *devşirme*—healthy teenage male children were taken away from their parents, converted to Islam and trained to serve in the janissary corps of the Ottoman army or assigned to various kinds of services in the administration.[52]

A renewal of patriarchal forms of life within the new political and social framework was characteristic of the Christian Orthodox Serbs in the rural areas of Kosovo–Metohija. Many Serbs accepted the so-called *Vlach* (cattle-breeding) status to avoid that of tenant farmers, while the Christian Albanians, being cattle-breeding nomads during previous centuries, continued to live almost autonomously in the mountain areas bordering on Albania. Settlements with population bearing Albanian names were registered mostly beyond the boundaries of what today is Metohija, i.e. west of Djakovica. An analysis of the names in the Sanjak of Scutari in the sixteenth century shows that those of Slav origin predominated among the Christians. In Peć, sixty-eight percent of the population had Slav names, in the Suho Grlo area—fifty-two percent, in the Donja Klina area—fifty percent, and around the monastery of Dečani—sixty-four percent, while other names were common Christian ones frequent among Serbs as well.[53]

From the mid-sixteenth century the process of Islamization of the Albanians became very intense in the regions adjacent to Kosovo–Metohija, among the powerful tribes of northern and central Albania. Having converted to Islam, a process which probably acquired larger proportions only in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (especially in the north of today's Albania), the Albanians gradually became part of the influential ruling class in the Ottoman Empire enjoying distinct social and political privileges. The increasing number of Islamized Albanians holding highest or high-ranking positions at the Sublime Porte generated a similar process on the local level in Kosovo–Metohija: Albanians increasingly replaced Islamized Slavs, ethnic Turks or ethnic Arabs in the provincial administration. Christian Serbs and Muslim Albanians, now divided by religion and religion-based privileges, gradually grew into two opposed social and political groups.[54]

48 Svetozar Koljević, "The Battle of Kosovo in its Epic Mosaic" in *Kosovo. Legacy of a Medieval Battle*, 128. Additional comprehensive analysis is available in Svetozar Koljević, *The Epic in the Making* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).

49 O. Zirojević, "Les premiers siècles", 53–57.

50 Miloš Macura, *Naselja i stanovništvo. Oblasti Brankovića 1455* (Belgrade: Serbian academy of Sciences and Arts, 2001).

51 *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. II (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1982), 260–265; D. Bogdanović, *Knjiga o Kosovu*, 72.

52 Hasan Kaleshi, "Kosovo pod turskom vlašću" in M. Maletić, ed., *Kosovo nekad i sad (Kosova dikur e sot)* (Belgrade: Književne novine, 1973), 145–176.

53 O. Zirojević, "Les premiers siècles", 70–71; D. T. Bataković, *Kosovo Chronicles*, 41–42.

54 *Cf.* Georg Stadtmüller, "Die Islamisierung bei der Albanern", *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Osteuropas* (Munich: Osteuropa–Institut München, 1955), 404–429; Hasan Kaleshi, "Das Türkische Vordringen auf dem Balkan und die Islamisierung: Faktoren für die Erhaltung de etnischen und nationalen Existenz des albanischen Volkes" in : Peter Bartl & Hans Glassl, eds., *Südosteuropa unter dem Halbmon* (Munich: Oldenburg, 1975), 127–138.

The Ottoman sources show that between 1520 and 1535 only 700 of 19,614 households in the Vučitrn district were Muslim (about 3.5 percent), with 359 (2.0 percent) in the Prizren district. In areas beyond the geographic borders of Kosovo and Metohija, in the Scutari and Dukagjin districts, Muslims accounted for 4.6 percent of the population. According to an analysis of names registered by the census of the Dukagjin district, Albanian settlements did not become predominant until south of Djakovica, whilst the ethnic composition of Prizren and its area remained basically unchanged during the sixteenth century.[55] The Christian Orthodox Serbs, as recorded both by later Ottoman censuses and Western travellers, remained the predominant ethnic group until the late seventeenth century. The Roman Catholic archbishop of Bar, Marino Bizzi, reported in 1610 that Kosovo is full of "schismatic", i.e. Serb Christian Orthodox, villages.[56]

It was only after the wars and resettlements in the late seventeenth century that members of different northern Albanian clans (Krasniqi, Berisha, Gashi, Shala, Sopi, Krieziu, Thaçi, Bitiqi) began to settle on the abandoned estates of Metohija in more significant numbers, advancing towards Kosovo, while small numbers of settlers came from other Albanian clans (Kastrati, Mertura, Klimenti, Mzi, Drushtina, Hoti, Mertura, Shkrelia). According to an estimate, 704 clans and extended families, with about 4,446 households, settled in Kosovo proper.[57]

The Great Serb Migration of 1690: Generator of Demographic Change

A Serb–Albanian conflict broke out during the Holy League's war against the Ottoman Empire (1683–1690). The Christian Orthodox Serbs joined the Habsburg troops in their military campaign in Serbia as a separate Christian militia (*Militia Rasciana, Razische Feld–Miliz, Irregulëre Trupen*). With the exception of the brave Kelmendi tribe of Christian, Roman Catholic faith, the majority of Albanians—as newly-converted Muslims—took the side of the Sultan's army against the military coalition of Orthodox and Roman Catholic Christians. Both Habsburg troops and Serbian militia, led by local guerrilla leaders, were defeated by the freshly recruited Ottoman troops in the decisive battle that took place at Kačanik in 1690, closing the strategic pass between Kosovo and Skoplje area.[58]

After the defeat of the Christian forces, tens of thousands of Serb families, headed by the Patriarch of Peć, Arsenije III Crnojević, withdrew from Kosovo and Metohija and adjacent districts to the northern areas, neighbouring Habsburg Empire, in fear of Ottoman reprisals. A local church chronicler recorded the following:

"In the spring of 1690 the [Serbian] patriarch—Arsenije Crnojević of Peć—summoned a vast number of Serbs, 37,000 families [10 to 30 members on average], and they all set off to join the Imperial [Habsburg] army. In the same war there was large-scale looting and dislocation of Christians and plundering of all the Serbian lands. Monasteries, towns, and villages were abandoned, and some were burned down."[59]

The accounts of Serbian learned monks on the 1690 Great Serb Migration were additionally confirmed by the contemporary Italian historian, don Simpliziano Bizozeri, who had access to various first-hand sources and testimonies:

"Finding no further obstacles to their bestiality, the Muhammadans [Ottoman Muslims] forced the Serbs, who had nested in Novi Pazar, to seek shelter in the monastery of Studenica; during that time, both the Turks from Bosnia and Tartars from the Kosovo plains hurried to hasten their ruin. The Christians were similarly expelled from Prizren, Peć, Vranje, Vučitrn, Mitrovica and so many other places, even those far away from Kosovo. A spectacle of misfortune ensued, for the barbarian non-believers who arrived were merciless toward these innocent habitants whom they all massacred without any regard for their age and sex; also slaughtered were those who, enticed by promises, abandoned their shelters in the forests where they had fled to save their lives. After all the habitants were butchered, their humble huts were also torched reduced to ashes; spared from flames were only the cities of Priština, Peć and Prizren for the Albanians had settled in them for the winter. […] There was a horrible scene with Mahmud-Pasha of Peć […] who set out with the Albanians to destroy those villages he knew had accepted the protection of the [Austrian] emperor, cutting any inhabitants he found in them to pieces, despite the fact that Serbia was their common homeland."[60]

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55 O. Zirojević, "Les premiers siècles", 66–73; Olga Zirojević, "Prizren u defteru iz 1571. godine", *Istorijski časopis* XXXVIII (Belgrade 1991), 243–254. *Cf.* also Selami Pulaha, *Populsia Shqiptare e Kosoves gjate shek. XV–XVI* (Tirana 1984). On economic aspects, see Hasan Kaleshi, "Jedna prizrenska i dve vučitrnske kanunname", *Glasnik Muzeja Kosova i Metohije* II (Priština 1957), 292–293.

56 Franjo Rački, "Izvještaj barskog nadbiskupa Marina Bizzija o svojem putovanju god. 1610. po Arbanaškoj i Staroj Srbiji", *Starine JAZU* XX (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1880), 50–156, quotation on p. 121. *Cf.* also Marko Jačov, *Le missioni cattoliche nei Balcani durantela guerra di Candia (1645–1669)*, vols. I–II (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1991).

57 Atanasije Urošević, *Etnički procesi na Kosovu tokom turske vladavine*, Monographs, vol. DLXXVII, Department of Social Sceinces, vol. 94 (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1987), 19.

58 *Cf.* detailed accounts in Rajko L. Veselinović, *Arsenije III Crnojević u istoriji i književnosti*, Monographs, vol. CLI (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Science, 1949); Dušan J. Popović, *Velika seoba Srba* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1954); Gligor Stanojević, *Srbija u vreme Bečkog rata* (Belgrade: Nolit, 1976).

59 Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi* (Belgrade: Serbian Royal Academy, 1905), vol. III, Nos. 5283 and 5302.

60 Simpliziano Bizozeri, *La Sagra Lega contro la potenza Ottomana*, vol. II (Milano: M.A.P. Malatesta 1700), 5–6, 8, *cf. Zadužbine Kosova*, 608.

Serbian troops enter Gračanica in 1878

After the Christian defeat, tens of thousands of Serb families, headed by the Patriarch of Peć Arsenije III Crnojević, withdrew from Kosovo and Metohija and neighbouring areas in fear of reprisals. A local church chronicler recorded that "in the spring of 1690 the patriarch—Arsenije Crnojević of Peć—summoned a vast number of Serbs, 37,000 families [10 to 30 members on average], and they all set off to join the Imperial [Habsburg] army. In the same war there was large-scale looting and dislocation of Christians and plundering of all the Serbian lands. Monasteries, towns, and villages were abandoned, and some were burned down."[61]

Fearing large-scale vengeance and reprisals similar to those organized against the Kosovo Serbs, many other Christian Serbs—from central and eastern Serbia—fled northward to cross the Danube and the Sava rivers into the neighbouring Habsburg Empire. In Metohija and Kosovo, many previously Serb-inhabited villages around the towns of Peć, Djakovica, Vučitrn, Trepča and Priština were destroyed in systematic reprisals carried out by the Ottoman force composed of Tatars and Muslim Albanians. At least 300 villages, as recorded by Habsburg sources, ceased to exist. Nevertheless, a certain percentage of Kosovo Serbs, having fled into the mountains, survived the reprisals and, after the Sultan proclaimed amnesty, resettled the surviving households, mostly in Kosovo proper.

The Great Migration of Christian Orthodox Serbs in 1690 was a turning point in their history. In Kosovo and Metohija alone, several towns and a number of previously Serbian villages were completely abandoned. The Christian Serb population was additionally decimated by plague, and whatever had remained after that by the reprisals carried out by Ottoman irregular troops. The Serbs that emigrated north of the Danube were resettled in the fertile Habsburg region bordering Serbia—in southern Hungary (today's Vojvodina). The new churches they built along the Danube in Habsburg Empire were named after those left behind in the old Kosovo homeland. The presence of Kosovo Serbs was recorded in the Buda area of Hungary subsequent to 1700.[62]

The two wars that followed were just as detrimental to Christians in Kosovo and Metohija. The Habsburg–Ottoman war (1737–1739) caused another wave of forced migration. Namely, a large-scale uprising broke out again in

[61] Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi* (Belgrade: Serbian Royal academy, 1905), vol. III, Nos. 5283 and 5302.

[62] Radmila Tričković, "La Grande migration des Serbes" in *Kosovo–Metohija dans l'histoire serbe*, 97–107.

Kosovo and Metohija, engaging at least 10,000 Serbs. They were joined by Montenegrin tribes, and Habsburg envoys even stirred up the Climenti (Kelmendi), a Roman Catholic tribe from northern Albania, to join forces against the Ottomans. In the wake of the Habsburg defeat in 1739, thousands of Serbs, led by the new patriarch of Peć Arsenije IV Jovanović–Šakabenta, fled to southern Hungary followed by their Christian Albanian allies.

Oh, in the year of Our Lord 1737 there was great unrest when the Germans took [the city of] Niš [...] After came the pasha called by the name Köpörilu Oglu [...] and took Niš again [...] At that time Serbian Patriarch Arsenije the Fourth fled. O, is there any way in which the Christian faithful did not suffer then and any torture by which they were not tortured? It is not possible at this time to write of this for fear of the Turks. Then Kosovo was plundered, as well. What else can I say: it was not in the days of Diocletian (when the Christians were horribly persecuted) as it is now, for God has unleashed it because of our sins.[63]

Some of the landed property abandoned by Christian Orthodox Serbs was gradually settled by Muslim Albanian nomadic tribes, whose obligations towards the Ottoman Porte were rather different from those of Christian Serbs.

Islamization, New Settlement, Albanization

Settlement of Muslim Albanians first in Metohija and then in Kosovo proceeded at a slow pace. The number of Christian Orthodox Serbs in the region was still considerable while the refugees began to return to their homes after the large-scale Ottoman reprisals had lost momentum. This new Albanian settlement in Kosovo and Metohija usually took place in waves of varied scale and intensity: once the abandoned land or rich estate was seized from its previous Slav owner, fellow Albanian tribesmen were brought in to protect the vast expanses needed for their large herds and for potential settlement of their large extended families. In this population shift the social aspect played an important role: as everywhere else in the Ottoman Empire, cattle-breeders were constantly in conflict with peasant tenant framers.

The emerging conflict was additionally fuelled by a social and religious dimension: due only to the fact that he was Muslim by religion, an Albanian cattle-breeder was allowed to carry a gun and could, without fear of punishment, persecute and rob an Orthodox Christian, in most cases a Serbian peasant, deprived of any means of self-protection. The series of Ottoman wars against the Habsburgs during the eighteenth century weakened the central authority in Constantinople, inevitably giving rise to anarchy on both the central and peripheral levels of Ottoman power and administration. Prior to the nineteenth century tribal-controlled and Muslim-inspired anarchy acquired large proportions, spreading all over Turkey-in-Europe, including Kosovo–Metohija.[64]

Conversion of Christian Serbs to Islam took place in the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries, when Muslim Albanians began to exert a stronger influence on political events in the region. Many Christian Serbs accepted Islam in order to survive, waiting in vain for the right moment to re-embrace the faith of their ancestors. The Islamized Serbs preserved their language and observed their old customs (especially *slava*—the family patron-saint day—and Easter) through several generations. However, several generations later, the strong Albanian environment pressed them into adopting Albanian dress and into using the Albanian language outside their narrow family circle for safety reasons. Thus a kind of social mimicry developed which enabled the converts to survive, i.e. to avoid further discrimination for not being in conformity with the prevailing social framework.

The enduring process of religious conversion also led to Albanization, which, however, did not begin until after the Islamized Serbs, gradually divested of their previous ethnic identity, began to marry girls from Albanian clans and eventually became absorbed by the Albanian-speaking Muslim community. Christian Orthodox Serbs used to call their freshly Albanized compatriots *Arnautaši* until the memory of their Serbian origin waned completely, though old customs and legends about their ancestors continued to be passed down from generation to generation.[65]

For a long time the Albanized Muslim Serbs (*Arnautaši*) felt themselves as being neither Turk nor Albanian, because their customs and traditions set them apart, and yet, they did not feel themselves as being Serb either, the Serbs considering the Christian Orthodox faith as their foremost national attribute. Even so, many *Arnautaši* retained their old surnames until the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The district of Drenica and the area of Prekoruplje (stretching from Klina to Lapušnik and Mališevo) as well as the Medjuvodje area in Metohija, converted to Islam in the course of the eighteenth century, but continued to be bilingual into the early twentieth century. In the Drenica area, set between the plains of Metohija and Kosovo, the *Arnautaši* bore surnames pointing to their Serbian origin, such as Dokić, Velić, Marušić, Zonić, Račić, Gecić. The situation was similar in Peć and its surroundings, where many Islamized and Alban-

[63] *Recorded by Petar Andrejić* (Lj. Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi* (Belgrade & Novi Sad: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Narodna biblioteka Srbije & Matica srpska, 1987), vol. V, Nos. 7734 and 7737.

[64] *Kosovo–Metohija dans l'histoire serbe*, 113–139.

[65] Jovan Cvijić, *La péninsule balkanique. Géographie humaine* (Paris: A. Colin, 1918), 343–355.

ized Serbs carried characteristically Serbian surnames: Stepanović, Bojković, Dekić, Lekić, Stojković, etc.[66]

The eminent geographer and anthropologist Jovan Cvijić, who traveled across Kosovo–Metohija during the last decades of Ottoman rule, was witness to social mimicry among the Serbs: "When a stranger comes to a Serbian home in Metohija, the host will speak Albanian so as not to reveal his origin. But a person familiar with this practice will have no trouble seeing whether the house he came to is Serbian or not, at least from some old and well-kept national costume of a Serb woman. Some Serbs of Metohija were welcomed and stayed overnight in an Albanian house, and their Albanian host had no idea that he was having Serbs in his home. Through this mimicry of appearance the people avoided persecution and violence. But this led directly to conversion to Islam and Albanization. There are families that are only half-Islamized (in the vicinity of Peć, as well as in Gora region near Prizren), where only men accepted Islam while women kept the [Christian Orthodox religion]".[67]

The eastern parts of Kosovo and Metohija, with their compact Serbian settlements, were the last to undergo Islamization. Earlier Islamization in the Upper Morava Valley and the Izmornik area is identified in the early eighteenth century, while the last wave took place in the 1870s. Slav toponyms of many presently Albanian villages in Kosovo indicated that the Serbs had lived there in the previous centuries, while in some places Christian Orthodox Serbian cemeteries were shielded against desecrators by local Muslim Albanians aware that those were the graves of their own ancestors.[68]

In geographical terms, Kosovo–and–Metohija was considered an integral part of Serbia as recorded by both domestic and foreign sources during the first three centuries of Ottoman domination. In 1830 the Principality of Serbia was established as an autonomous state under Ottoman suzerainty. The Principality covered the northern part of the medieval Kingdom of Serbia, while its southern part remained under full Ottoman control. The name Old Serbia for this southern portion of medieval Serbia first appeared shortly before 1830. Old Serbia encompassed not only Kosovo–Metohija, but also the area of medieval Raška (Rascia) including the former *Sanjak* of Novi Bazar, the Skoplje (Uskub) area and today's north-western Slav-inhabited Macedonia. The name Old Serbia was also used by both Serbian and European scholars and travel writers to describe the heartland of medieval Serbia. It was only after 1877, when the *Vilayet* of Kosovo was formed, that the term Old Serbia began to be associated with this Ottoman administrative unit of similar extent.

Growing Tribal Privileges vs. Decaying Ottoman System

Prior to the Serbian Revolution (1804–1813) which led to the establishment of autonomous Serbia (1830), the Kosovo–Metohija area was governed by local Ottoman governors, mostly outlawed Albanian pashas. General conditions under which the Empire's Christian subjects lived deteriorated apace with the deterioration of Ottoman central authority. Already assigned by the Ottoman theocratic system to a lower social class (*reaya*) than Muslims, they were now exposed to a re-feudalization as a result of the Ottoman administrative and economic decline. The *timar* (*sipahi*) system was turning into a *çiftlik* system, especially harmful to the Christian Orthodox population, predominantly having the status of tenant farmers. Local Muslim Albanian governors in the districts and provinces covering Kosovo–Metohija became hereditary feudal lords as early as the eighteenth century. Albanians of Muslim faith were tolerated by the Sublime Porte as feudal lords or as scofflaw regents because they were seen as promoting the Ottoman order based on *Shari'ah* and tribal privileges. Their pro-Ottoman culture made them useful even though they corrupted the Ottoman administration. In the early nineteenth century they ruled as semi-independent provincial governors, virtually uncontrolled by the central government in Constantinople.[69]

Several notable Albanian families succeeded in imposing themselves as hereditary pashas (Djinolli or Djinić in the Priština area, Begolli or Mahmutbegović in the Peć area, Rotulli or Rotulović in Prizren etc.). Ruled by renegade Albanian pashas who, similarly to the conservative Muslim beys in Bosnia, wanted to preserve the status quo which would guarantee their privileges in Turkey-in-Europe, the Kosovo–Metohija Serbs were stuck between local outlaws relentlessly persecuting them and frequent Albanian revolts against the central authorities' attempts at modernization. In that situation, plundering and violence became the prevailing social and political conditions in the area.[70]

Serb cultural activity was limited to church-cultural communities which, supported by the Serbian Principality, made additional efforts to organize a school system for the Serbian children. At several monasteries and church-

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66 Todor P. Stanković, *Putne beleške po Staroj Srbiji 1871–1898* (Belgrade: Štamparija Dj. Munca i M. Karića, 1910), 111–140.

67 Jovan Cvijić, *Osnove za geografiju geologiju Makedonije i Stare Srbije*, vol. III (Belgrade: Serbian Royal Academy, 1911), 1162–1165.

68 Atanasije Urošević, *Kosovo*. Serbian Ethnographic Collection, vol. LXXVII, Department of Social Science. Vol. 39 (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, & Naučno delo 1965); Dj. Slijepčević, *Srpsko–arbanaški odnosi*, 95–127.

69 *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, Robert Mantran, ed. (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 250–264; Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Empire 1700–1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 46–53.

70 For more, see Vladimir Stojančević, *Južnoslovenski narodi u Osmanskom Carstvu od Jedrenskog mira 1829. do Pariskog kongresa 1856. godine* (Belgrade: PTT, 1971).

es (Gračanica, Visoki Dečani, Devič, Duboki Potok, Vračevo, Draganac), additional buildings were constructed to accommodate the growing number of students of monastic and, subsequently, secular schools. Religious schools were established in all major towns (Priština, Peć, Mitrovica, Vučitrn, Gnjilane and Djakovica), while the best private schools, funded by church communities and guilds, were located at Prizren, Vučitrn, Mitrovica, and the villages of Donja Jasenovo and Kovači.[71]

After the Patriarchate of Peć was abolished in 1776, all the Serb bishoprics came under the jurisdiction of the Greek-controlled Patriarchate of Constantinople. Nevertheless, several Serb bishops remained in office. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the establishment of new Serb schools was urged by the dynamic Serb metropolitans Janićije and Hadži Zaharije of the Raška–Prizren Diocese. When in 1830 the Prizren bishopric chair was taken over by Greek bishops, efforts were made, in particular under Greek Metropolitan Ignatius (1840–1849), to open Tzintzar (Hellenized Vlach) schools in different urban centres, where lessons in Greek would also be attended by Serbian children.[72] According to the available data, in the 1860s several dozen primary schools in Metohija and Kosovo were attended by at least 1,300 Serbian students. A number of talented students from Kosovo and Metohija were trained as teachers in Serbia from the early 1860s, owing to generous scholarships granted by the wealthy Prizren Serb merchant Sima Andrejević Igumanov (1804–1882), the founder of the Theological School (Seminary or *Bogoslovija*) in Prizren in 1871.[73]

According to reliable Serbian sources, the first half of the nineteenth century in Kosovo–Metohija was marked by spiralling violence mostly directed against the Christian Orthodox Serb population, resulting in their occasional conversion to Islam and increasing emigration to the Principality of Serbia.[74] Appalling Serb testimonies of both religious and social discrimination against them, perpetrated mostly by Muslim Albanian outlaws, were additionally confirmed by both Western and Russian travelers.[75]

The Serbian ruler Prince Mihailo Obrenović's (1860–1868) and his Prime Minister Ilija Garašanin's ambitious plans for an all-Christian uprising in Turkey-in-Europe in the late 1860s paved the way for future cooperation with powerful Muslim and Roman Catholic clans from northern Albania. Nevertheless, the Belgrade government's friendly relations with the clans of northern Albania had no tangible effect on either the Kosovo renegade pashas and their lawless clans or on the improvement of the difficult position of the persecuted Christian Serb population.[76]

The decrease of Serb population caused by tribal anarchy and forced migration was partially compensated by a high birth rate in the rural areas. In rural areas, the Christian Serbs, as well as the Muslim Albanians, lived in extended families (*zadruga*) comprising several generations and with up to as many as eighty members, but twenty to forty on average. The demographic structure was different in the urban population. According to the renowned Russian scholar A. F. Hilferding who conducted extensive, highly reliable research on his voyage to the region in 1858, the composition of the main towns was as follows: Peć—4,000 Muslim and 800 Christian Orthodox families; Priština—1,200 Muslim and 300 Christian Orthodox families; Prizren—3,000 Muslim, 900 Christian Orthodox and 100 Roman Catholic families.[77]

In the 1860s the British travellers M. McKenzie and A. P. Irby recorded that Serb villages were not the only target of Albanian outlawed raiders. During their visit to Vučitrn, a Serb priest explained, in the presence of an Ottoman official (*mudir*), the position of urban Christians: "There, said he, the mudir sits—one man with half a dozen *zaptis* [policemen]—what can he effect? There are here but 200 Christian houses, and from 400 to 500 Mussulman [Muslim], so the Arnaouts [Albanians] have it all their own way. They rob the Christians whenever and of whatever they please; sometimes walking into a shop, calling for what they want, and carrying it off on promise of payment, sometimes seizing it without further ado. Worse than this, their thoroughly savage, ignorant, and lawless way of living keeps the whole community in a state of barbarism, and as the Christians receive no support against them, no enlightenment nor hope from Constantinople, they naturally look for everything to Serbia;—to the Serbia of the past for inspiring memories, to the Principality [of Serbia] for encouragement, counsel, and instructions."[78]

The demographic structure of Old Serbia (Kosovo, Metohija, the former Sanjak of Novi Bazar and present-day north-western Macedonia) prior to the Eastern Cri-

71 Jagoš K. Djilas, *Srpske škole na Kosovu od 1856. do 1912. godine* (Priština: J. Djilas, 1969).

72 *Cf.* the most important studies: Petar Kostić, *Crkveni život pravoslavnih Srba u Prizrenu i njegovoj okolini u XIX veku* (Belgrade: Grafički institut "Narodna misao" A. D., 1928); Idem, *Prosvetno–kulturni život pravoslavnih Srba u Prizrenu i njegovoj okolini u XIX veku i početkom XX veka (sa uspomenama pisca)* (Skoplje: Grafičko–industrijsko preduzeće Krajničanac a. d., 1933).

73 Vladimir Bovan, *Sima A. Igumanov. Život i delo* (Priština & Prizren: Narodna i Univerzitetska biblioteka "Ivo Andrić" & Srpska Pravoslavna Bogoslovija Svetog Kirila i Metodija, 2004).

74 For more, see Dušan T. Bataković, ed., *Savremenici o Kosovu i Metohiji 1852–1912* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1988).

75 *Ibid.*

76 Sadulla Brestovci, *Marrëdhëniet shqiptare–serbo–malazeze 1830–1878* (Prishtina: Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës, 1983).

77 Aleksandar F. Giljferding, *Putovanje po Hercegovini, Bosni i Staroj Srbiji* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1972), 154–165 (Serbian translation from the Russian original of 1859).

78 G. Muir Mackenzie and A.P. Irby, *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey–in–Europe*, vol. I (2nd rev. ed., London: Dadly, Isbiter & Co, 1877), 246.

sis (1875–1878), according to Austro-Hungarian military intelligence sources in 1871, was as follows: 318,000 Serbs, 161,000 Albanians, 2,000 Osmanlis (ethnic Turks), 10,000 Vlachs, 9,000 Circassians and Gypsies. Of them, 250,000 were Christian Orthodox, 239,000 Muslims and 11,000 Roman Catholics.[79]

Two wars that Serbia and Montenegro, supported by the Russian Empire, waged against the Ottomans (1876, 1877–1878) resulted in the defeat of the pro-Ottoman Muslim Albanian troops and the migration, both voluntary and forced, of at least 30,000 Muslim Albanians from the liberated territories of present-day southeast Serbia, the former *sanjak* of Niš. Conversely, dozens of thousands of Serbs fled from various parts of Old Serbia, mostly Kosovo (Lab and other areas of eastern and northern Kosovo), into the newly-liberated territory. Their exact number, however, has never been determined. Prior to the Second Serbo-Ottoman War (1877–78), Albanians were the majority population in some areas of *sanjak* of Niš (Toplica region), while from the Serb majority district of Vranje Albanian-inhabited villages were emptied after the 1877–78 war.[80] Reluctant to accept the loss of feudal privileges in a Christian-ruled European-type state, most Muslim Albanians emigrated to Metohija and Kosovo, taking out their frustration on the local Serbs.[81]

Religious Affiliation, Tribal Society and Rise of Nationalism

The *Vilayet* of Kosovo (1877–1912), an administrative unit of 24,000 sq km extending from Novi Pazar and Taslidje (Pljevlja) to Priština, Skoplje and Tetovo, was synonymous with Old Serbia during the last decades of Ottoman rule; it was a large political unit subdivided into *sanjaks*, *kazas* and *nahis*. In addition to Christian Orthodox Serbs and Muslim Albanians as the two major ethnic groups, its population included significant numbers of Muslim Slavs, Bulgarians, ethnic Turks, Hellenized Vlachs and Greeks. According to diverse data, in the Vilayet of Kosovo, with Priština (until 1888) and Skoplje (1888–1912) as its successive seats, Albanians accounted for less than one half of the population until the late 1870s.[82]

The number of Serbs declined during the following decades. Prior to the First Balkan War (1912) Albanians were already a majority in most of Metohija (Prizren, Djakovica and Peć), while Serbs remained a relative majority in the rural areas of Kosovo (Mitrovica, Priština, Gnjilane, Zvečan, Ibarski Kolašin, Novo Brdo area), and in the region of Rascia (former Sanjak of Novi Bazar). In total, there were 390,000 ethnic Albanians and 207,000 Christian Orthodox Serbs in the whole of Old Serbia.[83]

Until the Eastern Crisis (1875–1878), the Muslim Albanians were wavering between being generally loyal to the Ottoman Empire and defending their own local interests which required opposition to the measures implemented by the central authorities. Defending their old privileges, the Muslim Albanians became, just as the Muslim Slavs in Bosnia, a serious obstacle to the modernization of the Ottoman Empire during its declining period.[84] Their national movement took an organized form at the very end of the Eastern Crisis. The Albanian League (1878–1881) was formed on the eve of the Congress of Berlin and based in Prizren. The Albanian League called for a solution to the Albanian national question within the borders of the Ottoman Empire: it was conservative Muslim groups that prevailed in the League's leadership and commanded 16,000 men-strong paramilitary forces operating in several Ottoman vilayets.

The main cause of their discontent was the territorial enlargement of Serbia and Montenegro, two new independent states recognized by the Congress of Berlin in July 1878, while the main victims of their combined religious and national frustration were the Christian Serbs that remained under Ottoman rule, seen as the decisive pillar of support for the aspirations of the neighbouring Balkan states. Dissatisfied with the Porte's concessions to major European Powers, the Albanian League tried to sever all ties with Constantinople. In order to prevent further international complications, the new Sultan, Abdülhamid II (1876–1909), ordered military action and brutally destroyed the Albanian movement.[85]

The real nature of the Albanian League and its attitude towards other ethnic communities was described in detail in a confidential report sent to the Serbian government in Belgrade by Ilija Stavrić, Dean of the Serbian

[79] Peter Kukulj, Major im Generalstabe, *Das Fürstentum Serbien und Türkish–Serbien (Stara Srbia, Alt–Serbien). Eine Militärisch–geographische Skizze (Im Manuskript gedräkt).* Wien. Aus der kaiserlich–königlich Hof– und Staatdrükerei 1871, 147–149.

[80] For example, prior to 1878 the Prokuplje area in the region of Toplica had 2,031 Serbian, 3,054 Albanian and 74 Turkish households. After 1878, only a few Albanian villages remained, while 64 were completely deserted (for more, see Djordje Mikić, "Social and Economic Conditions in Kosovo and Metohija from 1878 until 1912" in Vladimir Stojančević, ed., *Serbia and the Albanians in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries*, Academic Conferences, vol. LIII, Department of Historical Sciences, No 15 (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1990), 241–242).

[81] Radoslav Pavlović, "Seobe Srba i Arbanasa u ratovima 1876. i 1877–1878. godine", *Glasnik Etnografskog instituta* 4–6 (Belgrade: Ethnographic institute, 1955–57), 53–104.

[82] Prior to the First Balkan War (1912) the Vilayet of Kosovo covered an area of 24,000 sq km and consisted of six *sanjaks*: Skoplje (Uskub), Priština, Peć, Sjenica, Taslidja (Pljevlja), with the Sanjak of Prizren, previously part of the Vilayet of Monastir (Bitolj, Bitola), included into it of 1897. As in previous administrative reorganizations, present-day Kosovo and Metohija encompassed mostly the areas of the *sanjaks* of Peć, Priština and Prizren.

[83] D.T. Bataković, *Kosovo Chronicles*, 134–137.

[84] *Ibid.*, 83–88.

[85] Stavro Skendi, *The Albanian National Awakening 1878–1912* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), 31–53.

Theological School (*Bogoslovija*) in Prizren. A first-hand account of the Albanian League meetings, it reported that Albanians were determined to "expel the Serbs and Montenegrins back to the former borders [...] and if they return, to put these infidels [Kosovo–Metohija Serbs] to the sword".[86] Well-informed and Albanian-speaking, Stavrić added that the Serbian community in Prizren was forced by a member of Albanian League "on the 13th of this month [...] to cable a statement of our loyalty as subjects and our satisfaction with the present situation to the Porte; moreover, [we were forced] to declare that we do not wish to be governed by Bulgarians or Serbia or Montenegro. We had to do as they wished. Alas, if Europe does not know what it is like to be a Christian in the Ottoman Empire?"[87]

Nevertheless, a revived loyalty to the Sublime Porte emerged among the Albanian Muslims only a few years later as an ecstatic response to the Sultan's proclaimed pan-Islamic policy. Lacking the component of Islamic fanaticism, the new policy of the Sultan, who assumed the title of religious leader (*caliph*), meant to Muslim Albanians in particular the renewal of their tribal privileges and autonomy as well as both political and social predominance over their immediate neighbours, the Christian Slavs. Thus the Muslim Albanians in the western Balkans were encouraged by the Sultan and Caliph Abdülhamid II to relentlessly suppress all Christian-led unrest as a potential threat to the internal security of the Empire's European provinces.[88]

Furthermore, modern Albanian nationalism, stemming from its tribal roots, gave priority to tribal rather than any other loyalties. Although defined in ethnic terms, the Albanian national movement was still dominated by a Muslim majority and burdened by conservative Islamic traditions additionally reinforced both by the Pan-Islamic policy and by fears of European-style reforms. During the Greek-Ottoman War in 1897, according to confidential Austro-Hungarian reports, the Kosovo–Metohija Muslim Albanian volunteers demonstrated absolute solidarity with the Ottomans, while their patriotism, directed against Christians, was easily transformed into religious fanaticism.[89]

The slow progress of Albanian national integration gave the Dual Monarchy the opportunity for broad political action: in this early process of nation-building the Albanian elites were divided into three religious communities, and so was the whole nation. Its members were of different social statuses, of mutually opposed political traditions, spoke different dialects and used different alphabets. In order to minimize the differences, Vienna launched important cultural initiatives: books about Albanian history were printed and distributed, the national coat-of-arms invented, and various grammars written in order to promote a uniform Albanian language.

The Latin script, supplemented with new letters for non-resounding sounds, was intended to become a common script for Albanians of all three confessions: until the early twentieth century, a variety of scripts was in use for texts in Albanian, including Greek, Cyrillic, and Arabic characters. Special histories were written—such as *Populare Geschichte der Albanesen* by Ludwig von Thalloczy—and distributed among the wider public in order to awaken national consciousness and create a unified national identity of the Albanians of all three confessions. The most important element in Austria–Hungary's political and cultural initiative was the theory of the Illyrian origin of Albanians. This was a deliberate choice intended to "establish continuity with a suitable historical past", a case of "invented tradition", but with an important difference from the similar pattern applied elsewhere in Europe: the "inventors" and propagators of the "invented tradition" were not members of the national elite but their foreign protectors.[90]

Similarly to other belated nations (*verspätete Nation*), when confronted with rival nationalisms Albanians sought foreign support and advocated radical solutions. The growing social stagnation and political disorder produced anarchy that reigned almost uninterrupted during the last century of Ottoman rule: there the Christians, mostly Serbs, were the principal victims of political discrimination and the Muslims, in Kosovo–Metohija mostly Albanians, were their persecutors.[91]

False rumours that the Serbs were going to rise to arms in Kosovo on the very day Serbia was proclaimed a kingdom in March 1882 resulted in the establishment of a court-martial in Priština. For the five years of its uninterrupted activity, based on suspicion rather than hard evidence, roughly 7,000 Kosovo Serbs were sentenced for "sedition", while another 300 were sentenced to between six and hundred-and-one years' hard labour. The prominent Serb urban elders were imprisoned, along with teachers and merchants, priests and some prosperous farmers. The sentenced were sent to prisons in Salonika or exiled to Anatolia. Only in 1888, due to the joint mediation of Russian and British diplomacies, were some

[86] Arhiv Srbije, Ministarstvo inostranih dela, Političko odeljenje [Archives of Serbia, Belgrade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Political Department], 1878, fasc. IV, No 478, a confidential letter of the dean of Prizren Seminary (Prizrenska Bogoslovija) Ilija Stavrić of 26 June (8 July) 1878 from Prizren.

[87] *Ibid*.

[88] *Cf.* Peter Bartl, *Die albanischen Muslime zur Zeit der nationalen Unabhängigkeitsbewegung (1878–1912)* (Wiesbaden: O. Harassowitz, 1968).

[89] Haus, Hoff und Staatsarchiv, Wien, Politisches Archiv, vol. XII, Türkei, carton 170, 1901, *Studie des konsul Simon Joanovic uber der Sandschak von Novi Pazar.*

[90] E. Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions". *Cf.* also Milorad Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije 1790–1918*, vol. II (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1989), 451–455.

[91] *Kosovo–Metohija dans l'histoire*, 192–215.

of the surviving Kosovo Serb convicts eventually pardoned.[92]

Kosovo Serbs: Discrimination and Persecution 1882–1912

In was in 1882 that Sima Andrejević Igumanov published a terrifying testimony: *The Current Regrettable Situation in Old Serbia* (*Sadašnje nesretno stanje u Staroj Srbiji*), a book of credible and verifiable data on harassment, discrimination and atrocities committed by the Turks and Muslim Albanians in the early phase of the court-martial's activity. Fearful that Serbia would fail to pay enough attention to the sufferings of her co-nationals in Turkey-in-Europe, Sima A. Igumanov attempted to draw the public eye to the new wave of ethnically and religiously motivated violence:

"Our homeland [Old Serbia] has been turned into hell by dark crazed bloodsuckers and masses of melting Asian tyrants. Banditry, violence, deletion, spying, denunciation, daily arrests, accusations, trials, sentences, exiles, seizure of property and life in many ways, wailing and mourning for the dead and burial of the executed, all these have become ordinary events everywhere in Old Serbia and [Slavic] Macedonia."[93]

A mixture of religious, socially-based antagonisms and growing national rivalry added to the intensity of the Serb-Albanian conflict: "It is true that the Albanians in Kosovo, who were preponderantly Muslim, identified themselves religiously with the Turks, and on that basis were identified with the [Ottoman] Empire. They naturally regarded [Orthodox] Christians, being enemies of Turkey, as their own enemy. However, as far as the Slavs were concerned, the hatred of the Kosovars [Kosovo Albanians] was not founded on religion—although religion intensified it—but on ethnic difference: they fought the foreigner (the *Shkja*) because he coveted their land."[94] Nevertheless, the religious dimension, although not predominant among Muslim Albanians, remained the basis of social reality: many Muslim Albanians in Kosovo–Metohija believed Islam to be the religion of free people, whereas Christianity, especially Orthodox Christianity, was seen as the religion of slaves. European consuls observed an echo of such beliefs among the Albanians as late as the early twentieth century.[95]

[92] *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. VI–1 (Belgrade: SKZ, 1983), 323–326. *Cf.* also Janićije Popović, *Život Srba na Kosovu i Metohiji* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1987), 247–248.

[93] D.T. Bataković, ed., *Savremenici o Kosovu i Metohiji*, 101.

[94] "*Shkja* – plural *Shkje* – is the word the Albanians use for the Slavs. The derivation is from Latin *sclavus* in the meaning of Slav." (Quoted from S. Skendi, *Albanian National Awakening*, 202).

[95] *"Les musulmans d'origine albanaise* [...] *sont cependant fanatiques et leur fanatisme se base sur la conviction que l'Islam est la religion des gens libres et des patrons tandis que le christianisme est la religion des esclaves."* (Quoted from D. T. Bataković, "Mémoire du vice–consul de France à Skoplje (Uskub) sur les Albanais de Metohia de 1908" in *Miscellanea* 20 (Belgrade : Institut d'histoire, 1990), 112.

Serbia struggled to implement stronger diplomatic monitoring, to revive the issue of re-installing Serbian Metropolitans in both Prizren and Skoplje, as the first step to re-establish Patriarchate of Peć and to obtain wider international support for the official recognition of Serbs as a separate nation and their legal protection in Old Serbia. To the network of Serbia's diplomatic missions in Turkey-in-Europe, a general consulate based in Skoplje (Uskub) covering the whole of the Vilayet of Kosovo was added in 1887, while in 1889, after a long delay, a Serb consulate was eventually established in Priština.[96] The immediate response was Albanian-led anarchy that developed into a large-scale attempt to drive out the Christian Serbs from Metohija. In April and May 1889 alone, around 700 persons fled Kosovo and Metohija to Serbia. The Russian consul to Prizren, T. Lisevich, in his evaluation of the anarchy in Kosovo and Metohija, concluded that the Muslim Albanians' goal was to cleanse all areas between Serbia and Montenegro and thus deprive Old Serbia of its Serbian character. Anti-Serbian feelings culminated in the murder of Serbian Consul Luka Marinković in Priština in June 1890. Based on information received from the Serbs of Priština, the Serbian government maintained that an Albanian conspiracy was responsible for the assassination, while the Sublime Porte sought to present the murder as an act of general Muslim antagonism towards Christian foreigners. His successors, including the greatest Serbian playwright Branislav Dj. Nušić, succeeded in getting the first Serbian bookshop started and sponsored the renovation of the primary and secondary Serbian school in Priština.[97]

After the death of Meletios, the last Greek Metropolitan in Prizren, the concerted diplomatic effort of Belgrade

[96] *Spomenica Stojana Novakovića* (Belgrade: Srpska književna yadruga, 1921), 171–173. Until the end of the First Balkan War in 1912 daily reports on the living conditions of Serbs and the political situation in the Vilayet of Kosovo were sent regularly from the Serbian consulates in Skoplje and Priština (while copies were circulated to the Legation of Serbia in Constantinople). Several thousand comprehensive documents stored in the Archive of the Serbian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Arhiv Srbije, Beograd, Ministarstvo inostranih dela, Prosvetno–političko odeljenje i Političko odeljenje 1878–1912*) have been only partially published. *Cf.* the published diplomatic correspondence in Vladimir Ćorović, ed., *Diplomatska prepiska Kraljevine Srbije*, vol. I: 1902–1903 (Belgrade: Državna štamparija, 1933); and additional three volumes edited by the archivist Branko Peruničić, *Pisma srpskih konzula iz Prištine 1890–1900* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1985); *Svedočanstvo o Kosovu 1901–1912* (Belgrade: Naučna knjiga, 1988); *Zulumi aga i begova u kosovskom vilajetu* (Belgrade: Nova, 1988). *Cf.* also diplomatic correspondence published in *Zadužbine Kosova. Spomenici i znamenja srpskog naroda*, eds. R. Samardžić, M. Vojvodić and D. T. Bataković, 607–738; Milan Rakić, *Konzulska pisma 1905–1911*, ed. Andrej Mitrović (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1985).

[97] D. T. Bataković, "Entrée dans la sphère d'intérêt de l'Europe" in *Kosovo–Metohija dans l'histoire serbe*, 179–185.

The Vilayet of Kosovo, 1977–1912

and Cetinje, bolstered by the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, resulted in a Serb prelate, Dionisije Petrović (1896–1900), being appointed as Raška–Prizren Metropolitan. In accord with the Belgrade government, the new metropolitan, as well as his successor Nićifor Perić (1901–1911), carried out a broad reorganization of both ecclesiastical and educational institutions for the Christian Serbs, opened new schools, renewed teaching staff, established new church-school communities, and coordinated all activities relating to important national affairs.[98]

Serbia, on her part, planned to open a consulate in Prizren (1898–1900) so as to facilitate daily communication with the Raška–Prizren Metropolitan and to provide moral support to the discriminated local Serb population. However, as the local Muslim Albanians threatened to burn all Serb houses and shops in the town and sent fierce protests to the Porte, Serbia eventually gave up the idea altogether.[99]

Systematic persecution against the Serbs in Kosovo, Metohija and Slavic-inhabited Macedonia, flaring from 1882, was an integral part of Sultan Abdülhamid II's pan-Islamic policy. Seeking to put an end to this situation, Serbian Envoy to Constantinople Stojan Novaković made a solitary effort of diplomatic pressure on the Sublime Porte in 1898/99. In his diplomatic note submitted to the Ottoman Foreign Minister, Novaković stressed that "crimes and robberies are daily occurrences, and the perpetrators not only remain unpunished, they are not even pursued by the [Ottoman] authorities. The number of refugees fleeing across the border for their lives is enormous, and increases daily. According to the data the Royal government [of Serbia] possess, more than four hundred crimes have been perpetrated in the *sanjaks* of Priština, Novi Pazar, Peć and Prizren within a few months, last summer and winter. They include murder, arson, banditry, desecration of churches, rape, abduction, robbery, raiding of whole herds. This figure accounts for only part, one-fifth at most, of what really happened, since most crimes have remained unreported because the victims or their families dare not complain."[100]

Formal investigations by Ottoman authorities had no significant results, nor did they in any way improve the security of the Serb population in Old Serbia. Deprived of Russian support in Constantinople, the government in Belgrade accomplished nothing. A plan to submit a bilingual "Blue Book" of diplomatic correspondence on richly-documented Albanian violence against Christian Serbs in Old Serbia to the 1899 International Peace Conference at Hague was prevented by Austria-Hungary, after the protest sent to King Alexander I Obrenović of Serbia, politically bound to Vienna by secret treaties. In the absence of official support, Serb refugees from Old Serbia and Slavic Macedonia sent a memorandum to the Conference, but their complaints about being systematically discriminated by Muslim Albanian outlaws were not put on the official agenda.[101] The policy of impunity of which the Muslim Albanians, under the auspices of Sultan Abdülhamid II himself, took full advantage in the 1880s and in particular the 1890s, gradually turned into uncontrolled anarchy which was causing serious troubles for both the governor (*vali*) of Kosovo and the central government in Constantinople.[102]

Western travel accounts from the very end of the nineteenth century vividly portray the precarious situation of the Christian Orthodox Serb population in Kosovo and Metohija and the neighbouring areas of Old Serbia (*Vilayet* of Kosovo):

98 Novak Ražnatović, "Rad vlade Crne Gore i Srbije na postavljanju srpskih mitropolita u Prizrenu i Skoplju 1890–1902. godine", *Istorijski zapisi* XXII/2 (1965), 218–275; *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. VI–1 (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1983), 303–305; Archimandrite Firmilijan Dražić was first appointed administrator of the Metropolitanate of Skoplje in 1897, and eventually confirmed as the Serbian metropolitan of this diocese in 1902. The whole of Vilayet of Kosovo (Old Serbia) was thus covered by the Serbian metropolitans of Raška–Prizren and Skoplje.

99 D.T. Bataković, "Pokušaji otvaranja srpskog konzulata u Prištini 1898–1900", *Istorijski časopis* XXXI (1984), 249–250.

100 *Documents diplomatiques. Correspondance concernant les actes de violence et de brigandage des Albanais dans la Vieille Serbie (Vilayet de Kosovo) 1898–1899* (Belgrade: Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, MDCCCXCIX). It is a bilingual French/Serbian edition of diplomatic correspondence of Serbian Minister to the Sublime Porte Stojan Novaković with Tevfik–Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs. Serbian title: *Prepiska o arbanaskim nasiljima u Staroj Srbiji (Kosovski vilajet) 1898–1899* (Beograd: Ministarstvo inostranih dela ,MDCCCXCIX).

101 D.T. Bataković, "Memorandum Srba iz Stare Srbije i Makedonije Medjunarodnoj konferenciji mira u Hagu 1899. godine", *Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor* LIII–LIV (1987–88), 177–183.

102 *Pisma srpskih konzula iz Prištine 1890–1900*, 185–187.

"Of the rest of the Christian Servian [Serbian] population of Old Servia, for every nine who remain, one has fled in despair to Servia [Serbia], within recent years. The remainder, unarmed and unprotected, survives only by entering into a species of feudal relationship with some Albanian brave. The Albanian is euphemistically described as their 'protector'. He lives on tolerably friendly terms with his Serbian vassal. He is usually ready to shield him from other Albanians, and in return he demands endless blackmail in an infinite variety of forms. […] They can be compelled to do forced labour for an indefinite number of days. But even so the system is inefficient, and the protector fails at need. There are few Servian [Serbian] villages which are not robbed periodically of all their sheep and cattle—I can give names of typical cases if that would serve any purpose. For two or three years the village remains in a slough of abject poverty, and then by hard work purchases once more the beginning of the herd, only due to loose it again. I tried to find out what the system of land tenure in this country, where the Koran and the riffle are the only law, is what Albanian chiefs of the district chooses to make it. The Servian peasant, children of the soil, is tenant at will, exposed to every caprice of their domestic conquerors. Year by year the Albanian hillmen encroach upon the plain, and year by year the Servian peasants disappear before them."[103]

A similar first-hand account was recorded by a notable American traveller:

"It would be difficult for the Turks to carry out there the custom of disarming [Orthodox] Christians. But the Ottoman Government had secured the loyalty of Christians [Roman Catholic Albanians]—as well as Mohammedan Ghegs [Muslim Albanians] by allowing them to pillage and kill their non-Albanian neighbours to their hearts' content. They are ever pressing forward, burning, looting, and murdering the Servians [Serbs] of the Vilayet of Kossovo [Kosovo]. The frontier line of Albania has been extended in this way far up into Old Servia [Old Serbia]. Even the frontier of Serbia proper is not regarded by these lawless mountain men. They often make raids into Bulgaria when quartered as soldiers on the border. The Albanians have overrun all Macedonia. They have found their way in large numbers as far as Constantinople. But beyond their own borders and the section of Kosovo from which the Servians have fled, they are held within certain bounds. In many Albanian districts the Albanians are exempt from military service, but large numbers of them join the Turkish army as volunteers. They enlist for the guns and cartridge."[104]

A detailed list of Christian Serb households in the Bishopric of Raška–Prizren, compiled in 1899 by Metropolitan Dionisije, amounts to 8,323 Serbian houses in the villages and 3,035 in the towns of Kosovo and Metohija, which gives 113,580 persons (with ten persons per family on average). By comparison with the official data of the Serbian government registering some 60,000 Serbs forced to emigrate from Kosovo, Metohija and the neighbouring regions to the Kingdom of Serbia between 1890 and 1900, statistics show that the number of Serbs in villages had declined by at least one third from the time of the Eastern Crisis. Most of the remaining Serbian houses were in larger towns, where they were relatively protected from violence: in Prizren (982), Priština (531), Peć (461), Gnjilane (407) and Orahovac (176), and they were much fewer in small towns such as Djakovica (70) and Ferizović (20).[105]

The area of Metohija, however, remained the main target of continuous ethnic cleansing of Christian Orthodox Serbs. Metropolitan Nićifor Perić negotiated in 1903 to entrust the administration of Dečani Monastery to the brotherhood of the Russian skete of St. John Chrysostom from Mount Athos. The Russian monks were brought with the hope that they would protect the Serbs in Metohija, deprived of both Russian and Serbian diplomatic protection, from the unrestricted oppression of Muslim Albanian outlaws, restore monastic life in the impoverished monastery and bar the growing influence of both Austro–Hungarian and Roman Catholic propaganda. As far as the protection of Christian Orthodox Serbs was concerned, Russian diplomacy was also expected to provide assistance. Dissensions that arose between Belgrade and St. Petersburg, and divisions among the Serbs of Metohija for and against the actions of the Russian monks now in charge of Dečani monastery had additional negative effects on Serb national and cultural action in Metohija.[106]

According to Austro–Hungarian statistics of 1903, the population of Kosovo and Metohija consisted of 187,200 Serbs (111,350 Christian Orthodox, 69,250 Muslim and 6,600 Roman Catholic) and 230,300 Albanians (Muslim 215,050, Roman Catholic 14,350 and Christian Orthodox 900). These statistics, however, should not be completely trusted, given difficulties in collecting precise data and having in mind the Dual Monarchy's strong political interest in supporting Albanians at the time of data collection—at the very beginning of the Great Powers' reform action in Old Serbia and Macedonia, the three so-called

103 Henry N. Brailsford, *Macedonia. Its Races and their Future* (London: Methuen & Co, 1905), 275–276.

104 Frederick Moore, *The Balkan Trail* (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1906), 223–224.

105 S. Novaković, *Balkanska pitanja i manje istorijsko–političke beleške o Balkanskom poluostrvu 1886–1905* (Belgrade: Serbian Royal Academy, 1906), 515–527; *Documents diplomatiques. Correspondance concernant les actes de violence et de brigandage des Albanais dans la Vieille Serbie (Vilayet de Kosovo) 1898–1899*, 136.

106 For more detail, see D. T. Bataković, *Dečansko pitanje* (Belgrade: Prosveta & Istorijski institut, 1989; 2nd updated edition by Čigoja Štampa 2007) (with the earlier literature).

"Macedonian Vilayets" (1903–1908). Within this international effort comprising gendarmerie from most European Powers, only the Serb-inhabited areas of the Vilayet of Kosovo were excluded from the reform project as a result of Vienna's adamant demand.[107]

Liberation from the Ottomans

With the First Balkan War (1912) the tide turned. A series of Albanian rebellions (1910–12) had precipitated the formation of a Balkan Alliance (Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro), which, motivated by the deteriorating status of the entire Christian population in European Vilayets, declared war on the Ottomans. Prior to the war, Serbian Prime Minister Nikola Pašić offered the Albanian leaders an "accord on the union of Serbs and Albanians in the Vilayet of Kosovo", whereby ethnic Albanians were offered, within the Kingdom of Serbia, religious freedom, the use of the Albanian language in Albanian municipal schools and administration, preservation of the Albanian common law and, finally, an Albanian legislative body in charge of religious, judicial and educational affairs. At the huge gathering held in Skoplje on 10 October (and subsequently in Priština and Debar), the Albanians opted for armed defence of their Ottoman fatherland, and for using the arms obtained from Serbia against Serbia.[108]

Kosovo Albanians were supplied with 63,000 rifles from the Ottomans alone to organize full-scale resistance against the Serbian troops. And yet, no more 16,000 Muslim Albanians of Kosovo came to the frontline to face the Serbian army. The Serbian artillery scattered Albanian irregular (*bashibozuk*) units without encountering any serious resistance. Having been soundly defeated the Albanian chieftains Bairam Curri, Riza Bey and Isa Bolletini fled to Malissia in northern Albania. Oskar Prochaska, Consul of Austria–Hungary in Prizren, tried in vain to incite Albanians to resist the Serbian troops.[109] Whilst most of Muslim Albanians remained hostile, Christian Serbs in all of Kosovo and Metohija greeted the Serbian and Montenegrin armies with exhilaration.

The first Serb soldier to enter liberated Priština was the famous poet and former Serbian consul in Priština Milan M. Rakić, who had joined the army as a volunteer. After the liberation of Priština (22 October), and the decisive Serbian victory over the considerably stronger Ottoman troops at Kumanovo (23–24 October), the war was over in both Old Serbia and Slavic-inhabited Macedonia.

The Third Serbian Army, led by General Božidar Janković, later known as "the avenger of Kosovo" for liberating the most of Kosovo proper, attended the solemn liturgy at the Monastery of Gračanica celebrating the centuries-awaited liberation of Kosovo.[110] The military authorities issued proclamations in Priština and other towns calling Albanians to put down and surrender their arms. Even in the traditional hotbed of outlaws, Drenica, and in the Peć area Muslim Albanians eventually accepted partial if not full disarmament. However, as a result of anti-Serbian agitation by tribal leaders many Albanians fled and took shelter in the mountains. Serbian officers kept reassuring the Albanian population that Serbia is at war against the Ottomans, not against them. Serbia quickly established civil administration in the newly-liberated areas. Kosovo became part of the Lab, Priština and Prizren districts. Montenegro reorganized liberated Metohija into the Peć and Djakovica districts.[111]

The London Treaty of 30 May 1913 fixed the borders of Serbia, Montenegro and newly-established Albania, with the exception of some disputed portions left to an International Commission to decide on subsequently. Both Kosovo and Slav-inhabited Macedonia were officially incorporated into Serbia on 7 September 1913 by a solemn proclamation of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbia, while most of Metohija was integrated into the Kingdom of Montenegro by a similar decision.

In late July 1914, two days before Vienna declared war on Serbia, Austro–Hungarian consular officials in Albania were instructed to provide full financial and military support to an Albanian insurrection in Serbian territory. The Muslim Albanian leaders of Kosovo in exile Bairam Curri, Hasan Prishtina and Isa Bolletini obtained significant financial support as well as arms and ammunition supplies from Austro–Hungarian consuls in order to prepare armed incursions which would instigate a full-scale Albanian rebellion in the Serb-held territories of Metohija, Kosovo and north-western Macedonia, inhabited by a mixed Muslim Albanian and Christian Serb and Slavic population.[112]

In Constantinople, an agreement was concluded between the Hapsburgs and the Ottomans: Austria–Hungary was to incite and finance the Albanian rebellion, while the Young Turks were to be responsible for propaganda, military organization and operations. Incursions into the

[107] For more, see Milan G. Miloievitch, *La Turquie d'Europe et le problème de la Macédoine et de la Vieille Serbie* (Paris: Arthur Rousseau, 1905).

[108] Djordje Mikic, "The Albanians and Serbia during the Balkan Wars" in Bela Kiraly & Dimitrije Djordjević, eds., *East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars*, War and Society in East Central Europe, vol. XVIII (Social Science Monographs, Boulder Columbia University Press New York, 1987), 165–196. Elaborated in Dj. Dj. Stanković, "'Nikola Pašić i stvaranje albanske države", *Marksistička misao* 3 (1985), 157–169.

[109] John D. Treadway, *The Falcon and the Eagle. Montenegro and Austria–Hungary, 1908–1914* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1983), 121.

[110] Elezi Han, one of the smaller towns, was renamed after him to Djeneral Janković. It now is on the border with the FYROM.

[111] *Prvi balkanski rat*, 416–417, 464–469; for more, see Mikić, "Albanians and Serbia", 163–166.

[112] More detail in Andrej Mitrović, *Serbia's Great War* (London: Hurst & Co, 2007).

Serbian territory and the Muslim Albanian rebellion in Kosovo, Metohija and north-western Macedonia were to pave the way for opening another front against Serbia. After the Austro–Hungarian attack in July 1914, Serbia deployed most of her troops along the border with the Dual Monarchy. The initial small-scale attacks from Albania were recorded as early as the beginning of August 1914. The Ottoman and Austro–Hungarian alliance was becoming tighter, which sealed the fate of the six-month reign of the freshly-elected Prince of Albania, Wilhelm von Wied. After several unsuccessful attempts to crush the insurrection, the German prince was abandoned by his volunteers and left Albania for good in early September 1914.[113]

When the retreating Serbian army, followed by countless refugees, reached Kosovo, sabotage and surprise attacks began. In many Kosovo villages local Albanians refused to provide food without differentiating between soldiers and civilian refugees. In Istok, a small town in Metohija, on 29 November 1915, a unit of exhausted Serbian soldiers lagging behind the main military column was massacred by Albanian brigands. Near the Monastery of St. Mark of Koriša in the vicinity of Prizren, Albanians of the Kabash clan treacherously disarmed, robbed and brutally executed some sixty Serbian soldiers.[114]

After the Serbian army's retreat from Peć, Albanian outlaws pillaged many Serbian homes and shops. Austro–Hungarian guards prevented them from entering the hospital in Peć and massacring the wounded Serbian soldiers. Local Albanians set ambushes near [Kosovska] Mitrovica as well, killing exhausted soldiers and robbing unarmed refugees. Serious crimes were committed against the Serbian civilian population in Suva Reka and elsewhere in Kosovo as well.[115]

Following the agonizing withdrawal of the defeated Serbian troops to central and northern Albania—held by the Serb-friendly regime of powerful General Essad-Pasha Toptani in his Adriatic capital Durazzo—Austria–Hungary and Bulgaria established their rule in occupied Serbia (1916–1918).[116] Kosovo and Metohija were separated and made parts of two different Austro–Hungarian occupation zones: Metohija was included in the General *Gouvernment* 'Montenegro', a smaller portion of Kosovo with Kosovska Mitrovica and Vučitrn became part of the General *Gouvernment 'Serbia'*; the largest portion of Kosovo proper with the Prizren area (Priština, Gnjilane, Ferizović, Prizren, Orahovac) was included into the Bulgarian Military–Inspectional Region 'Macedonia'.[117]

As protectors of Albanians, Austro–Hungarians were quick to establish schools and local administration in the Albanian language. Kosovo Albanians remained privileged, whilst Serbs were utterly distrusted. Things were even worse in the Bulgarian occupation zone: massive oppression, internment of civilians, forced Bulgarization, persecution and murder of Serbian priests followed the establishment of Bulgarian rule. Nićifor Perić, former Metropolitan of the Raška–Prizren Diocese, was interned and murdered in Bulgaria. Serbian priests suffered most, persecuted and murdered in both occupation zones and by both Albanians and Bulgarians. The Metropolitan of Raška–Prizren, Vićentije, and his deacon, Cvetko Nešić, were taken from Prizren to Uroševac on 23 November 1915 and burned alive two days later.

In Kosovo rural communities Bulgarians often appointed ethnic Albanians and Turks as chiefs, officials or gendarmes, who then assisted their compatriots in plundering local Serb property, in winning court cases against Serbs, and in hushing up occasional murders. In some Kosovo villages, Turks and Albanians jointly oppressed Serbs without fear of punishment, just as it was during the last years of Ottoman rule.[118]

The restoration of the Kingdom of Serbia, carried out by the forces joined into the *Armée d'Orient* under the supreme command of General Franchet d'Esperey in the autumn of 1918, started after the Serbian armies made a major breakthrough on the Salonica Front, an event that changed the course of the Great War. Commanded by French General Tranié, French and Serbian troops reached Kosovo in early October, subsequently liberating Priština, Prizren, Gnjilane and Mitrovica. Serbian *komitadji* units, led by Kosta Milovanović Pećanac, met French troops at Mitrovica and immediately set off to Peć. Serbs surrounded the city and compelled the considerably stronger Austro–Hungarian garrison to surrender; it was only after that that the French cavalry trotted into town.

Muslim Albanians, however, took arms left behind by the defeated Bulgarian and Austrian troops and attacked representatives of the Serbian civil and military authorities, while the order to surrender arms met with strong armed resistance, in particular in Drenica and the rural

[113] Bogumil Hrabak, *Arbanaški upadi i pobune na Kosovu i u Makedoniji od kraja 1912. do kraja 1915. godine: nacionalno nerazvijeni nejedinstveni Arbanasi kao orudje u rukama zainteresovanih država* (Vranje: Narodni muzej, 1988), 124–145.

[114] *Zadužbine Kosova.*

[115] P. Kostić, *Crkveni život pravoslavnih Srba*, 141–143; Bogumil Hrabak, "Stanje na srpsko–albanskoj granici i pobuna Arbanasa na Kosovu i u Makedoniji" in *Srbija 1915*, Zbornik radova Istorijskog instituta 4 (Belgrade: Istorijski institut, 1986), 80–85; B. Hrabak, *Arbanaški upadi i pobune*, 186–195.

[116] D.T. Bataković, "Serbian Government and Essad–Pasha Toptani" in *Serbia and the Albanians in the 20th Century*, Andrej Mitrović, ed., Conferences, vol. LXI, Department of Historical Sciences, no. 20 (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts 1991), 57–78.

[117] A serious crisis broke out in 1916 over the issue on dividing occupational zones between Bulgaria and Austria–Hungary. *Cf. Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. VI–2 (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1983), 146–148; for more, see Mitrović, *Serbia's Great War*, passim.

[118] Janićije Popović, *Kosovo u ropstvu pod Bugarima* (Leskovac, Štamparija Ž.D. Obrenovića, 1921); on the persecution of the clergy, see additional documentation in *Zadužbine Kosova*, 745–750.

surroundings of Peć. It was not until mid-December 1918 that Serbian forces finally managed to crush Albanian resistance and partially disarm the rebels. The Second Serbian Army briefly introduced martial law and re-established civil administration only after the eventual restoration of law and order.[119]

Within the Serbian and the Yugoslav Realm: Reconstruction, Agrarian Reform, Resettlement

After Montenegro's unconditional decision to unite with Serbia on 26 November 1918, and the formation of a common Yugoslav state (the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) on 1 December 1918, Kosovo–Metohija remained an integral part of Serbia and her different political units *(oblast* and *banovina*). The purpose of the centralized system that was established was to give a common, European-like Yugoslav identity to different religious, ethnic and national groups divided not only by their different pasts, customs and traditions, but also by many related prejudices, stereotypes and self-referring grievances. For the ruling Karadjordjević family, restorers of Serbia, liberators of Kosovo and founders of Yugoslavia, it was a tremendously difficult task to find a European-type pattern that would be able to unite disparate elements within the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and to reconcile their often opposing political traditions.

After the First World War, the role of the main protector of Albania and the certified interpreter of Albanian interests was taken over by a new regional power—Italy. Rome continued its old practice of stirring Serb-Albanian conflict, now with the newly-established Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929), over supremacy in the Eastern Adriatic. For several years (1918–1924) Kosovo–and–Metohija remained a restless border area constantly threatened by Albanian outlaws (*kaçaks*), supported by the "Kosovo Committee", an organization of Kosovo emigrants struggling for a "Greater Albania".

The Kosovo Committee in Albania was financed by various Italian governments. In Yugoslavia, as in pre-war Serbia, the ethnic Albanians were a minority hostile towards the new state ruled by their former serfs. The Kosovo beys reached an agreement with Belgrade about their own privileges, satisfied that their kinsmen were guaranteed religious rights but not adequate minority rights, deprived of secular schools and wider cultural activities in their native language.[120] Nevertheless, Kosovo Muslim Albanians, as a predominantly conservative patriarchal community, often preferred religious to communal schooling, and Islamic to secular institutions.

The leading Albanian beys from Kosovo, Metohija and north-western Macedonia founded the *Çemijet* political party in 1919. They made direct arrangements with Belgrade, offering political support in exchange for partial exemption from the agrarian reform. Supported by the local Muslim population, mostly Albanian, Turkish and Slav Muslims, the *Çemijet* won 12 seats in the Yugoslav Parliament in the 1921 elections, and was even more successful two years later (14 seats). The *Çemijet*, serving mostly religious and social interests rather than political ones, gradually evolved into an organization that combined religious affiliation with distinct national goals. As early as 1925, however, the party was banned by the Royal Yugoslav authorities for its clandestine ties with the remaining *kaçak* groups and the anti-Belgrade government in Tirana. It continued, for a certain period of time, to operate clandestinely, recruiting followers, mostly young men, for the Albanian national cause.

To the challenge of both Kosovo Albanians and their kinsmen from Albania, Belgrade responded by taking two-fold measures. First, repopulation of Serbs in Kosovo was undertaken with the aim of restoring the demographic balance disturbed during the last decades of Ottoman rule. Second, as the initial step in pulling these regions out of their centuries-long backwardness, the feudal system was abolished in 1919. Serfdom was put to an end and former serfs were declared the owners of the land they tilled. For the first time, the native Kosovo Serbs as well as many landless Kosovo Albanian families obtained their own land. Following the *Decree on Settlement in Southern Regions* (24 September 1920), colonization began in late 1920, albeit without adequate preparations. It has been suggested that implementation of the colonization project "was entrusted to feeble and unskilled officials", which led to dangerous mismanagement.[121]

Thus the first Serb settlers were left to themselves, while the royal authorities charged with carrying out the resettlement project often took advantage of flaws of the reform to engage in various forms of abuse. Many Kosovo Albanians were deprived of their former property, at least partially. After the first decade of implementation, both the agrarian reform and colonization, although aimed to upgrade the economy and secure interethnic balance, proved to suffer from major shortcomings, which had the worst consequences for the Serb settlers them-

119 Bogumil Hrabak, "Učešće stanovništva Srbije u proterivanju okupatora 1918", *Istorijski glasnik* 3–4 (1958), 25–50; Idem, "'Reokupacija oblasti srpske i crnogorske države arbanaškom većinom stanovništva u jesen 1918. godine i držanja Arbanasa prema uspostavljenoj vlasti", *Gjurmime albanologjike* 1 (1969), 255–260; Andrej Mitrović, *Ustaničke borbe u Srbiji 1916–1918* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1988), 520–522.

120 Under the Treaty of Saint–Germain (1919), minorities in Serbia within the borders of 1913 (including Kosovo–Metohija) were excluded from international protection. *Cf.* Radošin Rajović, *Autonomija Kosova. Pravno–politička studija* (Belgrade: Ekonomika, 1987), 100–105.

121 B. Krstić, *Kosovo. Facing the Court of History*, 83.

selves but also provoked growing discontent among the Albanians.[122]

However, of the total amount of land allotted to Serbian settlers in Metohija and in Kosovo only five percent was arable. In two huge waves of colonization (1922–29 and 1933–38), 10,877 families (some 60,000 colonists) were allotted 120,672 hectares (about 15.3 percent of the land of present-day Kosovo–and–Metohija). Another 99,327 hectares planned for settlements were not allotted. For the incoming settlers, 330 settlements and villages were built, with 12,689 houses, forty-six schools and thirty-two churches.[123]

Two inter-war official state censuses (1921, 1931) used questionnaires containing questions regarding religious affiliation and native language, but not ethnic origin or national identity. Nevertheless, in demographic terms, the present-day Kosovo–Metohija had a relative Albanian majority, excluding therefore all propaganda speculation, both inter-war and post-war, on alleged mass migrations or mass expulsions of Kosovo Albanians (1919–1941). According to the 1921 census, Kosovo had 436,929 inhabitants; Albanians (i.e. inhabitants using Albanian as their native language) constituted 64.1 percent (280,440). Religious affiliation gave the following results: 73 percent Muslim, 26 percent Christian Orthodox and nearly two percent Roman Catholic. According to the 1931 census, using the same questions, present-day Kosovo–and–Metohija had 552,064 inhabitants, of which 347,213 were Albanian-speaking (62.8 percent). Religious affiliation provided the following data: 72 percent Muslim, 26 percent Christian Orthodox and two percent Roman Catholic.[124]

Within the French-inspired *banovina* system, established by King Aleksandar, the distribution of ethnic Albanians was as follows: 150,062 or sixteenth percent in *Zetska banovina* (most of Metohija and today's Montenegro with Dubrovnik); 48,300 or 3.36 percent in *Moravska banovina* (central Serbia with northern Kosovo) and 302,901 or 19.24 percent in *Vardarska banovina* (eastern and southern Kosovo, Prizren and Gora area, and Slavic-inhabited Macedonia). As for the ethnic Turks, they numbered 124,599 or 7.91 percent of the population in *Vardarska banovina*, mostly in the Prizren area.

Recent estimates for the 1921 and 1931 censuses, plus the 1939 internal military data, show an increasing trend both in percentage and in absolute terms as far as the Serbs in present-day Kosovo–and–Metohija are concerned: in the 1921 census they numbered 92,490 (21.1 percent); in 1931 they numbered 148,809 (26.9 percent); and in 1939 there were 213,746 of them (33.1 percent). By contrast, the Albanian population increased in absolute terms but decreased in percentage: in 1921 it numbered 288,900 (65.8 percent); in 1931, 331,549 (60.1 percent); and in 1939 it increased to 350,460 (54.4 percent). The ethnic Turks as the third largest ethnic group decreased in both terms (27,920—6.3 percent; 23,698—4.3 percent; 24,946—3.8 percent).[125] The increase in the number of Serbs was caused not only by the influx of settlers, but by some 5,000 state officials and technicians of various professions as well.[126]

In terms of security, the whole area was frequently raided from Albania. The Serb colonists as well as the Yugoslav state officials were the most frequent victims of numerous Albanian outlaws, especially in the Drenica area. In 1922, Albanian outlaws (*kaçaks*), considered by the local Albanian population as national heroes, committed fifty-eight murders, eighteen attempted murders, thirteen assaults and seventy-one robberies. In Metohija alone there were at least 370 active *kaçak*s, led by Azem Bejta in the Drenica area. The Serbian Orthodox Church remained the favourite target of *kaçak* attacks to the extent that in the 1920s both the Monastery of Dečani and the Patriarchate of Peć—in the Ottoman period racketeered by local Albanian chieftains for armed protection against their fellow tribesmen—had to be placed under military protection. The royal Yugoslav authorities, continuously trying to establish long-term security, responded with severe and often brutal military and police measures against local outlaws and raiders from Albania, occasionally harshly retaliating against Albanian civilians as well.

The *kaçak* activities decreased after their leader Azem Bejta died following a fierce fight with the Yugoslav military forces.[127] It has been difficult to estimate the exact number of Albanians who immigrated to Albania from Kosovo and other Yugoslav areas: from 1924 to 1926 some 849 persons immigrated to Albania, while an additional 8,571 left between 1927 and 1934. The practice of temporary migration makes it difficult to establish how many settled permanently in Albania or elsewhere. Neverthe-

122 Milovan Obradović, *Agrarna reforma i kolonizacija na Kosovu (1918–1941)* (Prishtina: Institut za istoriju Kosova, 1981).

123 Nikola Gaćeša, "Settlement of Kosovo and Metohija after World War I and the Agrarian Reform" in *Kosovo. Past and Present*, 100–110.

124 Interwar censuses quoted by Hivzi Isljami, "Demografska stvarnost Kosova" in *Sukob ili Dijalog. Srpsko–albanski odnosi i integracija Balkana* (Subotica: Otvoreni univerzitet, 1994), 40.

125 Milan Vučković & Goran Nikolić, *Stanovništvo Kosova u razdoblju 1918–1991. godine* (Munich: Slavica Verlag, 1996), 80–82; Julie A. Mertus, *Kosovo, How Myths and Truths Started a War* (Berkeley: University of California, 1999), 315–316.

126 Djordje Borozan, "Kosovo i Metohija u granicama protektorata Velika Albanija" in *Kosovo i Metohija u velikoalbanskim planovima* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2001), 125–126.

127 The extensive documentation from the Serbian and Yugoslav archives for the 1920s is available in Ljubodrag Dimić & Djordje Borozan, *Jugoslovenska država i Albanci*, vol. I–II (Belgrade: Službeni list SRJ, 1998); Dragi Maliković, *Kačački pokret na Kosovu i Metohiji 1918–1924* (Leposavić & Kosovska Mitrovica: Institut za srpsku kulturu, 2005). For the Albanian, mostly romantic perspective on the *kaçak* movement, see Limon Rushiti, *Lëvizja kacakë në Kosovë (1918–1928)* (Prishtina: Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës, 1981).

less, recent claims by certain Western scholars that the Kingdom of Yugoslavia drove out as many as half a million or even more Albanians in the interwar period in order to resettle Serbs on the confiscated land are based on propagandistic figures supplied by Albanian emigrants of the 1920s and 1930s. These figures, embraced by Albanian and some Western scholars sympathetic to the Albanian cause, find corroboration neither in the Serbian/Yugoslav archives nor in the available statistics (both public and confidential) of interwar Yugoslavia.[128]

In order to strengthen its influence in Italian-dominated Albania and to pacify Albanian outlaws in Kosovo and Metohija, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes became actively involved in the internal power struggle in Albania. From the time of Balkan Wars plans were developed for the Serbian political, economic and even military penetration into the northern areas of Albania. In the early 1920s Belgrade strongly supported the establishment of a separate state of the Mirditës, a Roman Catholic tribe of northern Albania headed by Mark Gjoni. In the mid-1920s Belgrade financed the return to Albania of the exiled political leader Ahmed Zogu, who promised to stifle the activities of the anti-Serbian and anti-Yugoslav Kosovo Committee. Zogu organized the assassination of his bitter rivals Bairam Curri (1925) and Hasan Prishtina (1933), the most prominent leaders of the Kosovo Committee. Nevertheless, with Mussolini's growing influence in the region, Belgrade was unable to impose its decisive influence on the Tirana government. Under Ahmed Zogu, a former protégé of Belgrade and the future King Zogu I, Albania eventually came back under the political and economic influence of Fascist Italy.[129]

The conflict with Italy and the Rome-controlled Albanian national movement was given fresh impetus as the Second World War approached. Under Mussolini's patronage, Albanian emigrants from Kosovo–Metohija, the pro-Bulgarian IMRO movement in Yugoslav Macedonia, and the Croatian fascist forces (Ustasha), coordinated their guerrilla actions against the politically vulnerable Yugoslav kingdom.[130] Belgrade's ambitious plan to avert the growing danger for the stability of its southwest borders by the means of an organized mass migration of the ethnic Albanian and Turkish populations from both Kosovo and Slavic Macedonia to Turkey (1938) was never implemented due to the death of Kemal Attatürk, the fall of Milan Stojadinović's government (1939), unsettled financial terms with Ankara and the outbreak of the Second World War.[131] However, the growing discontent of Kosovo Albanians, who hoped to receive decisive support from the Fascist camp after Italy occupied Albania in 1939, remained a latent threat to Yugoslav security.[132]

The Second World War: Rage, Resettlement and Repression

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia was dismembered by German Nazis, Italian Fascists and their Bulgarian and Hungarian allies after a blitzkrieg in April 1941. Most of Kosovo–Metohija, western Slavic Macedonia and Montenegrin border areas went to Fascist Albania, occupied by Italy two years before. Bulgaria took a small eastern portion of Kosovo, but its northern parts with the rich Trepča mines were assigned to German-occupied Serbia. A decree of King Victor Emanuel III, dated 12 August 1941, solemnly proclaimed a "Greater Albania". In this new satellite Fascist-type state, the Italian Government set up an Albanian voluntary militia numbering 5,000 men—*Vulnetari*—to help the Italian forces maintain order as well as to independently conduct surprise attacks on the Serb population. In addition, a campaign to settle Albanians from northern and central Albania into the abandoned estates of both native Kosovo Serbs and Serb settlers started as early as 1941: "The Italian occupation force encouraged an extensive settlement program involving up to 72.000 Albanians."[133]

The main consequence of establishing a Fascist-sponsored and Nazi-supported "Greater Albania" was the merciless persecution and expulsion of some 60,000 to 100,000 Serbs, mostly colonists. Roughly 10,000 of them, native Kosovo Serbs included, fell victim to punitive actions of various Albanian militias. Both Fascist Italian and Yugoslav Communist propaganda portrayed the Kosovo Albanians as victims of "Greater Serbian hegemony". The new Fascist rulers gave the Kosovo Albanians the right to fly

[128] Muhamet Pirraku, "Kulturno prosvetni pokret Albanaca u Jugoslaviji 1919–1941", *Jugoslovenski istorijski časopis* 1–4 (1978), 356–370; Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca: Cornel University Press, 1984).

[129] Živko Avramovski, "Albanija izmedju Jugoslavije i Italije", *Vojnoistorijski glasnik* 3 (1984), 153–180; Roberto Morrozzo della Rocca, *Nazione e religione in Albania (1920–1944)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990), 151–166; Marco Dogo, *Kosovo. Albanesi e Serbi: le radici dei conflitto* (Lungro, C. Marco, 1992), 147–219.

[130] *Cf.* Giuseppe Zamboni, *Mussolinis Expansionspolitik auf dem Balkan* (Hamburg: Burke, 1970), 301–338; *Cf.* also Stefan Troebst, *Mussolini, Makedonien und die Mächte 1922–1930. Die 'Innere Makedonische Revolutionäre Organisation' in der Südosteuropapolitik des faschistischen Italien* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1987).

[131] Individual proposals concerning mass emigration or even expulsion of the ethnic Albanians within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, such as the infamous proposal by the historian Vasa Čurbrilović in 1937, were neither discussed nor accepted by the Yugoslav government which remained focused exclusively on the bilateral agreement with Ankara. Contrary to what is often strongly suggested by most Albanian and some less reliable Western scholars, neither in the Serbian nor in Yugoslav military or civilian archives is there any evidence for any link between this document of Čubrilović and official Yugoslav policy.

[132] Branislav Gligorijević, "Fatalna jednostranost. Povodom knjige B. Horvata 'Kosovsko pitanje", *Istorija XX veka: časopis Instituta za savremenu istoriju* 6, 1–2 (Belgrade, 1988), 185–192.

[133] Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian*, 123.

their own flag and to open schools with instruction in Albanian. The tribal and mostly peasant Kosovo Albanian population received the newly acquired national symbols enthusiastically, but was not ready to restrain its actions to the cultural and political plane. In reality, the Albanians planned to organize a full-scale revenge against the Serbs, perceived as oppressors under the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Sanjak of Pljevlja and the Vilajet of Kosovo, Vienna 1897

During the first few months of Fascist occupation, Italian and Albanian forces burned down nearly 10,000 homes of Serb settlers in frequent night raids. The owners and their families were expelled to Montenegro and central Serbia, and some were sent to internment camps in Albania. At least 900 Serbs were sent to the Porte Romano concentration camp in Durazzo (Durrës). Most of them were from Gnjilane, while others were from Prizren, Priština, Peć, Uroševac and Lipljan. Roughly 600 Serb prisoners from the Gnjilane area drowned on a cargo ship on their way to concentration camps in Italy. In the Italian-Balist *questura* of Prizren, the large building of the Roman Catholic Seminary was used as a prison for Serb detainees, who were often tortured to death. Many Serbs "ended up in concentration camps in Priština and Mitrovica. These Serbs were apparently used as a labour force for fortification works in Italian Albania, and in the Trepča mines working for the Germans."[134] The Albanians, both locals and fresh settlers from Albania, used to plough the colonist fields afresh to erase every trace of Serb settlement and forestall Serb return. If Serbs did try to return after the war, they would find it hard to recognize their seized property.[135]

The main targets were, as earlier during periods of anarchy or wars, the priests and monks of the Serbian Orthodox Church and their flock: Andrija Popović, a priest from Istok, and Nikodim Radosavljević, a hieromonk of Gorioč monastery, were murdered by Albanians in 1941 together with 102 Serbs from the parish of Istok; Damaskin Bošković, a renowned hieromonk of Devič monastery, was tortured and murdered by local Albanians in mid-October 1941, while the medieval monastery of Devič was burned down and destroyed; parish priests of Uroševac (Dragoljub Kujundžić) and Djakovica (Slobodan Popović) were murdered in 1942; the parish priest of Kosovska Mitrovica (Momčilo Nešić) was murdered in 1943; parish priests of Peć (Mihailo Milošević) and Ranilug (Krsta Popović) were murdered in 1944, etc. At least twenty-six Serb churches and monasteries were desecrated, pillaged or burned; some, like Gorioč monastery, were used as prisons for the Kosovo Serbs; dozens of smaller Serb churches were razed to the ground and the medieval monasteries of Gračanica, Sokolica, St. Mark of Koriša and St. Peter of Koriša were looted on a regular basis by local Albanians. During these frequent raids several monks and nuns were either wounded or killed.[136] Many Christian Orthodox graveyards were devastated or desecrated by local Albanians to erase every trace of Serb settlement.

Large-scale destruction of Serb colonist villages was a major component of a strategic plan: to demonstrate to potential post-war international commissions drawing new borders that Serbs had never lived in Kosovo. A prominent Kosovo Albanian leader, Ferat-beg Draga, solemnly proclaimed in 1943 that the "time has come to exterminate the Serbs [...] there will be no Serbs under the Kosovo sun."[137]

[134] Bernd J. Fisher, *Albania at War 1939–1945* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1999), 87.

[135] *Cf.* extensive documentation in Nenad Antonijević, *Albanski zločini nad Srbima na Kosovu i Metohiji za vreme Drugog svetskog rata. Dokumenti* (Kragujevac: Muzej žrtava genocida, 2004).

[136] *Zadužbine Kosova*, 783–793.

[137] Hakif Bajrami, "Izveštaj Konstantina Plavšića Tasi Diniću, ministru unutrašnjih poslova u Nedićevoj vladi oktobra 1943, o kosovsko-mitrovačkom srezu", *Godišnjak arhiva Kosova* XIV–XV/Prishtinë : Arkive të Kosovës, (1978–79), 313. *Cf.* also Jovan Pejin, *Stradanje Srba u Metohiji 1941–1944* (Belgrade: Arhivski pregled, 1994).

New persecutions of the Kosovo Serbs ensued after the capitulation of Italy (September 1943), when Kosovo and Metohija came under the direct control of the Third Reich. The Albanians' nationalism was spurred on by the creation of the "Second Albanian League", while the infamous Albanian-staffed SS "Scanderbeg" division launched a new wave of violence against the remaining Serbian civilians.[138] According to the first, although incomplete, post-war Yugoslav estimations, there were in Kosovo and Metohija 5,493 killed or missing persons and 28,412 imprisoned or disabled persons, mostly Serbs,[139] while about 75,000 Albanians from Albania had settled on the abandoned Serbian farms during the Fascist and Nazi occupation.[140]

In the membership of the newly-established Communist Party of Albania (formed under the supervision of Yugoslav instructors Miladin Popović and Dušan Mugoša), there were numerous advocates of the Greater Albanian idea. Its leader Enver Hoxha had taken the first step towards an agreement concerning the creation of a post-war Greater Albania. Albanian communists joined forces with the Balli Kombëtar, an active Kosovo Albanian nationalist organization. Nevertheless, the agreement reached in the village of Mukaj on 2 August 1943 turned out to be a short-lived one.[141] In addition, the Bujan Declaration of Kosovo Albanian communist representatives (including numerous representatives of Albania), issued on 2 January 1944, called for the unification of Kosovo and Metohija with Albania after the victory of the communist guerrilla. This decision was quickly dismissed by the Yugoslav communist leadership under the Moscow-appointed military leader Josip Broz Tito as premature and damaging to the common communist goals in the final phase of the Second World War.

The Communist Experiment: A Failed Reconciliation

Soviet-type communism was believed to be the model for long-term historical reconciliation between Serbs and Albanians. The ambitious reconciliation plan within this new Stalin-led social project soon proved to be infeasible: despite tremendous ideological changes, the Balkan geopolitical realities remained unchanged; the old territorial rivalry simply acquired a new ideological framework. It was *realpolitik* that compelled the Moscow-appointed communist leader Josip Broz Tito to preserve Yugoslavia's integrity so that the new communist Yugoslav federation could become the legal successor of the Yugoslav Kingdom in the post-war period. At the same time, J.B. Tito had to take into account the sentiments of the Serb communists and partisans that constituted the overwhelming majority of his forces fighting in different regions of Yugoslavia against Nazi Germans, Fascist Italians, Fascist Croats (Ustasha), the SS Handjar Division in Bosnia, the SS Scanderbeg Division in Kosovo, and so forth.[142]

A large-scale Albanian rebellion against communist Yugoslavia in late 1944 underscored the necessity of maintaining Kosovo–Metohija within Serbia even under the new Soviet-type federal system. In November 1944, Kosovo–Metohija was liberated from Nazi occupation by Tito's communist forces—the partisans. The *Balli Kombëtar* supporters and other Albanian units, rearmed and freshly recruited into partisan formations (November—December 1944), organized the large-scale uprising, attacking Tito's partisan forces. The Albanian revolt was brutally crushed only when additional Yugoslav troops were brought in, and military rule was set up in Kosovo and Metohija between February and May 1945.

The decision that Kosovo and Metohija should remain part of Serbia as a distinct region (*oblast*) was made after the abolition of military rule on 10 July 1945. As a concession to Kosovo Albanians, the Yugoslav communist leadership issued a decree, a temporary measure on paper, forbidding the return to Kosovo–Metohija and Slavic Macedonia of all interwar Serb settlers (at least 60,000), including those forcibly displaced by the wartime authorities of 'Greater Albania'. The notorious "Temporary Ban on the Return of Colonists to their Previous Places of Resi-

138 Bataković, *Kosovo Chronicles*, 13–17; for a detailed account, see Laurent Latruwe & Gordana Kostic, *La Division Skanderbeg. Histoire des Waffen SS albanais des origines idéologiques aux débuts de la Guerre Froide* (Paris: Godefroy de Bouillon, 2004).

139 Arhiv Jugoslavije [Archives of Yugoslavia], Belgrade, 54–20–47. The only available official state report, of 1964, obviously incomplete, recorded the following number of war victims: 4029 Serbs, 1460 Montenegrins, 2177 Albanians, 74 Jews, 47 Croats, 32 ethnic Turks, 28 Slav Muslims, 11 Slav Macedonians, 10 Slovaks, 9 Slovenes, one Hungarian and 98 unspecified others (N. Antonijević, *Albanski zločini*, 39).

140 According to the census of 1948, despite heavy war losses claimed by Albanians themselves, the number of Albanians augmented by 75,417 within nine years. *Cf.* Predrag Živančević, *Emigranti. Naseljavanje Kosova i Metohije iz Albanije* (Belgrade: Eksportpres, 1989), 78. The latest research, based on official, although incomplete documentation, scales down the number of immigrants from Albania in the 1950s, who were using Yugoslavia only for transit towards Western countries, *Cf.* Bogumil Hrabak, "Albanski emigranti u Jugoslaviji", *Tokovi istorije, Časopis Instituta za noviju istoriju Srbije* vol. 1–2 (Belgrade 1994), 77–104.

141 The short-lived agreement with the CPA and the Balli Kombëtar of 1942 turned into full cooperation of Balli Kombëtar with the Nazis after the capitulation of Italy in September 1943.

142 The first Yugoslav anti-fascist guerilla (headed by Colonel Dragoljub Mihailović, from early 1942 General and Minister of War of the Royal government-in-exile), known as the Ravna Gora Movement (*Ravnogorski pokret*) or traditionally *dražinovci* or simply Chetniks, were also fighting the occupation forces, including those in Kosovo and Metohija. Nevertheless, having been betrayed by the Partisans in November 1941, they entered into armed conflict with the communist guerilla, adding another quagmire to the civil war. For more, see Walter R. Roberts, *Tito, Mihailović and the Allies 1941–1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987).

dence" was issued on 6 March 1945 and entered into force 16 March 1945. Some 1,757 Serb families were settled outside Kosovo–and–Metohija until 8 October 1945, while another 2,918 families of Serb interwar colonists remained in Kosovo awaiting resettlement to other regions of Serbia.[143]

The ban was followed by the "Law on the Revision of Land Allotment to Colonists and Prospective Farmers in Macedonia and the Region of Kosovo and Metohija", passed on 3 August 1945. It was further cemented by the "Law on the Revision of Land Allotment to Colonists and Prospective Farmers in the People's Republic of Macedonia and the Autonomous Region of Kosovo and Metohija", passed on 2 November 1946. Only a few thousand Serb interwar colonists succeeded in returning to Kosovo in later periods, mostly those from communist families.[144] A special law on the management of the abandoned land of Serb colonists in the Autonomous Region of Kosovo–Metohija was endorsed by the Presidium of the Serbian National Assembly on 22 February 1947, while another decree (30 September 1947) made it possible for just a few hundred families—those that met the difficult ideological requirements for keeping ownership of land—to return to Kosovo.[145] The revision of the rights of pre-war settlers and their families sharply reduced this population to one third of their pre-1941 number. The rest were mainly resettled in Serbia's northern province of Vojvodina.[146]

The main reason for forming a distinct territorial unit of Kosovo–Metohija in 1945 was to prepare its unification with Albania, should Tirana accept to become the seventh Yugoslav republic, or to enter, united with Kosovo–Metohija, into a larger Balkan federation. The Tito-led Balkan Federation was supposed to include Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Albania and, possibly, in case of the communist victory in the civil war, Greece. The whole project was abandoned in the wake of the Yugoslav split with Stalin in 1948. Kosovo and Metohija thus became an internal Yugoslav issue.[147]

After 1945, Yugoslavia became a six-member federal communist state based on a mixture of Soviet-type federalism and a Habsburg-inspired Austro-Marxist form of cultural autonomies. In his 1971 interview with the Parisian newspaper "Le Monde", the Yugoslav dissident Milovan Djilas (one of the founding fathers of the Montenegrin nation) did admit, however, that the division of Serbs amongst five of the six republics had been aimed at subduing the "centralism and hegemonies of the Serbs", seen as a major "obstacle" to the establishment of communism.[148]

The first, Royal Yugoslavia (1918–1941) had been a French-inspired nation-state marked by the Serbian, Jacobin and centralist, vision of Yugoslavism, whereas communist Yugoslavia (1945–1992) was based on an opposite model: federal, Croat vision of Yugoslav unity. Within such a context, the Albanian minority of Kosovo and Metohija was to play an important political role. National integration of Albanians lagged a whole century behind the other Balkan nations. Kosovo Albanians considered Yugoslavia as a transitional phase on their path to national emancipation and eventual unification with Albania. A failed attempt by communist Albania to take hold of Kosovo within a broader Balkan federation in late 1940s, left the Albanian minority within Yugoslavia profoundly dissatisfied. Although the Albanians remained in communist Yugoslavia against their will, they shared with other nationalists in the communist ranks some strong anti-Serb interests, highly compatible with the main ideological goals of the ruling Communist Party.[149]

Within such a system, the Kosovo Albanian minority was to play an important political role. In order to erode the interwar political domination of Serbs as the majority nation, Tito chose to follow the Soviet model and established six new federal units, or republics. In order to rebalance the interethnic relations, at first, in 1945, Kosovo–and–Metohija was created as an autonomous region (*oblast*) within the federal unit of Serbia. In 1959, the Serb-inhabited municipality of Lešak was attached to Kosovo–and–Metohija Region in order to strengthen the Serb community in the area. By the 1963 Constitution, the Kosovo–and–Metohija Region was upgraded to an Autonomous Province within Serbia. The 1974 Constitution bestowed upon the Province wider powers additionally limiting Serbia's authority. The powers were only slightly different from those of the republics: the main provision Autonomous Province lacked was the right to self-determination, reserved only for the republics within the Yugoslav federation.

The political and cultural emancipation of the Kosovo Albanians within Serbia began to be fully promoted immediately after the war. In 1949, the official second to

143 "Privremena zabrana vraćanja kolonista u njihova ranija mesta življenja", *Službeni list DFJ* 13, 16 March, (Belgrade: Službeni list DFJ, 1945).

144 "Zakon o reviziji dodijeljivanja zemlje kolonistima i agrarnim interesentima u Makedoniji i Kosovsko-metohijskoj oblasti", *Službeni list DFJ*, 5 August 1945. *Cf.* also *Službeni list DFJ* 89, 1946.

145 More details with data in M. Obradović, "Revizija agrarne reforme na Kosovu", *Kosovo*, vol. 3 (Priština: Zavod za istoriju Kosova, 1974), 367–412.

146 Dj. Borozan, *ibid.*, 103, fn.1.

147 Branko Petranović, "Kosovo in Yugoslav–Albanian Relations and the Project of a Balkan Federation, 1945–1948" in Andrej Mitrović, ed., *Serbs and Albanians*, 1991, 88–98. *Cf.* also Branko Petranović & Momčilo Zečević, *Balkanska federacija 1943–1948* (Belgrade: Zaslon, 1991), 77–104.

148 *Le Monde*, 30 December 1971. *Cf.* more in Aleksa Djilas, *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution, 1919–1953* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).

149 D. T. Bataković, "Frustrated Nationalism in Yugoslavia: from Liberal to Communist Solution", *Serbian Studies. Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 11/2 (1997), 67–85.

Tito proudly stated that the "Albanians in the Autonomous Region of Kosovo–Metohija, who had been oppressed in the old [Royal] Yugoslavia, have now been completely guaranteed a free political and cultural life and development and an equal participation in all the bodies of the popular authorities. After the liberation [1945], they acquired their first primary schools—453 primary schools, 29 high schools and 3 advanced schools. Studying from textbooks in their native [Albanian] tongue, some 64,000 Albanian children have so far received an education and about 106,000 ethnic Albanian adults in Kosovo and Metohija have learned to read and write."[150]

Nevertheless, the restless Albanian population, still favouring unification with Albania, was put under the strict control of the Serb-dominated state and police apparatus. Until 1966, Serbs in the state security forces in Kosovo and Metohija accounted for 58.3 percent of the security service cadres, 60.8 percent in the police and 23.5 percent in the total population; Montenegrins made up 28.3 percent of the cadres in the security service, 7.9 percent in the police and 3.9 percent of the total population; Albanians accounted for 13.3 percent in the security service, 31.3 percent in the police and 64.9 percent in the total population.[151]

The concern that considerable quantities of arms were still hidden in private possession was confirmed by the occasional shoot-out with Albanian outlaws, from 1948 supported by military agents from Albania. An extensive operation of collecting hidden arms was carried out in the winter of 1955–56. Serbs and Albanians suffered almost equally, despite the fact that larger quantities were found in Albanian possession. The operation was not motivated by concealed ethnic discrimination but rather by immediate ideological and state reasons, which became evident from numerous complaints lodged not only by Albanians, but also by dignitaries of the Serbian Orthodox Church reporting numerous abuses of the Serb–and Montenegrin–dominated secret police in the region.[152]

Nonetheless, the Kosovo communists, both Serbs and Albanians, who had executed the most prominent Kosovo Serb novelist Grigorije Božović as early as 1945, continued to arrest and harass Serbian monks and priests, considered as enemies of the communist dictatorship. It was under the auspices of Tito's state officials that an impressive pre-war Serbian Orthodox church in Djakovica was demolished on St. Sava's Day in January 1950, in order that a monument to the fallen partisans of Kosovo could be erected in its place.[153] Yugoslav communists were equally brutal in suppressing the Stalinist-oriented Albanian nationalists advocating unification with Albania, represented since the 1960s by fanatic and able activists such as Adem Demaqi.[154]

During the period of Soviet-type centralism in Yugoslavia (1945–1966), Albania, as part of the Soviet bloc (1948–1961), was hostile towards Yugoslavia. Therefore, Tito relied on the Kosovo Serbs as the main guardians of the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. The State Security Service (*UDBA*), headed by Tito's first deputy, Aleksandar Ranković, persecuted both Serbs and ethnic Albanians as ideological enemies throughout the 1950s. After the ideological reconciliation with Moscow (1955) and within the policy of gradual *rapprochement* with Albania (1966–1971), Tito favoured an advanced level of political emancipation of the Kosovo Albanians. The Yugoslav dictator had hoped, in vain, to reinstall Yugoslav influence in Albania. Instead, the power bestowed upon Albanians in Kosovo by the Constitutional amendments of 1968 and 1971 was diverted to serve primarily the Albanian national cause.[155]

The new model of federalism launched in Yugoslavia after 1966 was rounded off by the 1974 Constitution. A model of *national-communism* was introduced where the power of federal jurisdiction came to reside in the ruling communist oligarchies of the six constituent republics. Thus, the communist *nomenklatura*, becoming sovereign in their own republics, came to represent the majority nationality. As the only republic with provinces, Serbia was the exception, since, under the 1974 Constitution, both of her autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo could use, in many cases, the power of veto against the central authorities of Serbia.[156]

Through the model of *national-communism* the 1974 Constitution introduced majority rule of the majority nation in each of the six republics and two provinces of the federation. The result was continued discrimination—to a greater or lesser extent—against smaller-in-number nations or national minorities within each republic or province.

150 Aleksandar Ranković, *Izabrani govori i članci* (Belgrade: Kultura, 1951), 184–185.

151 *Intervju*, Belgrade, 4 September 1978. *Cf.* an analysis on interethnic relations, ethnic stereotypes and social conditions, Srdja Popović, Dejan Janča & Tanja Petovar, *Kosovski čvor. Drešiti ili seći? Izveštaj nezavisne komisije* (Belgrade: Hronos, 1990), 18–19.

152 For more documents, see *Zadužbine Kosova*, 805–813.

153 *Ibid.*, 803–804; D. T. Bataković, *Kosovo. La spirale de la haine*, 47–50.

154 On Kosovo Albanian subversive organisation, see Sinan Hasani, *Kosovo. Istine i zablude* (Zagreb: Centar za informacije i publicitet, 1981), on Demaqi, pp. 162–163.

155 For internal politics of Yugoslavia, *Cf.* more in Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *The Improbable Survivor, Yugoslavia and its Problems 1918–1988* (London: C. Hurst & Co.), 34–47; B. Petranović & Momčilo Zečević, *Agonija dve Jugoslavije* (Belgrade: Zaslon, 1991), 307–319; D. T. Bataković, *Yougoslavie. Nations, religions, idéologies* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1994), 143–182.

156 On the fall of Ranković in 1966 and the subsequent period, see Steven L. Burg, *Conflict and Cohesion in Socialist Yugoslavia: Political Decision–Making since 1966* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983).

The new political course in Kosovo and Metohija emboldened the nationalists and advocates of unification with Albania. The Albanians saw the new party policy, drafted by the 1968 and 1971 Constitutional amendments, not as a fresh opportunity for intensified national and cultural emancipation but rather as a long-awaited chance for historical revenge against the Serbs, perceived exclusively as their long-time oppressors, and they used the newly-gained political, judicial and legislative powers as a tool against them. The historic term Metohija was officially removed from the official name of the province.

The policy of entrusting rule over Kosovo to ethnic Albanians exclusively was endorsed by J. B. Tito, anxious to pacify the growing Albanian nationalism in Kosovo. Being a renowned leader of the non-aligned movement and a high-ranking statesman on the international scene, Tito could ill afford to have in his neighbourhood a small Stalinist Albania continuing her violent ideological attacks on communist Yugoslavia, thereby challenging both her ideology and her state unity.[157]

In late November 1968, on the occasion of the National Day of Albania, the Albanian students in Priština and several other towns voiced not only demands for a separate Kosovo republic within Yugoslavia, but shouted Greater-Albanian, pro-Enver Hoxha slogans as well. These demonstrations, severely suppressed by the army and police forces, were hidden from the wider public, although they heralded long-term goals of Albanian nationalism in the Province. Kosovo Albanians considered Yugoslavia as an imposed, transitional phase on their path to eventual unification with Albania.[158] Only several years after the 1968 Kosovo Albanians demonstrations praising Albania's leader Enver Hoxha in Priština and two other towns of Kosovo, did Tito allow closer cooperation between Priština and Tirana in the vain hope that this rapprochement would appease the national discontent of the Yugoslav Albanian community.[159]

Obviously, the ideological and national model for Kosovo Albanians was not the official Titoist vision of communist-inspired policy of "brotherhood and unity" but the Stalinist-type of ethnic nationalism orchestrated by the communist dictator Enver Hoxha of Albania. Several generations of the Kosovo Albanian youth had, through educational arrangements with Tirana, been receiving an education based on a collectivist communist-type approach to the national question mixed with romantic nineteenth-century, in practice rather aggressive, nationalism. Therefore, Enver Hoxha's official theory that the Albanians were the direct descendants of ancient Illyrians was considered to be the ultimate "verification" of the historical right of Albanians to the whole of Kosovo. From that perspective, Serbs, who had settled in the Balkans in the late sixth and seventh centuries A.D. (i.e. centuries after the ancient Illyrians), were stigmatized in the popular Kosovo Albanian view as intruders into lawfully "Albanian lands".[160]

From Party-Sponsored Discrimination to Ethnic Mobilization

In Kosovo and Metohija, this new nationalistic policy resulted in a behind-the-scenes combination of political pressure and ethnic discrimination against the non-Albanian population. In the provincial administration, most of the Serbs and Montenegrins were either replaced by Albanians or politically marginalized. By a tacit agreement within the Communist Party, the Serb officials who had lost their positions in the Kosovo administration were almost automatically accepted and employed elsewhere in Serbia, so as to tone down their discontent. Continuous administrative, judicial, police or direct physical pressures orchestrated by the Albanian-dominated Kosovo communist *nomenklatura* primarily targeted Kosovo Serbs and Montenegrins. Their quiet but steady migration, mostly to central Serbia, was a process tacitly approved by the federal Yugoslav authorities.[161] The few officials who dared to denounce the ethnic discrimination, not only Serbs but also ethnic Turks (such as Kadri Reufi), were punished and expelled from the Communist party. By contrast, the Serb officials who cooperated with the Kosovo Albanian leadership were rewarded with higher posts in federal institutions or diplomatic bodies.[162] The most prominent Kosovo Albanian scholar Hasan Kaleshi was among the first to denounce, in the 1970s, the ethnic hatred propagated by Tirana-inspired textbooks and related historical writings. Often insulted or boycotted by other colleagues for his criticism of Albanian nationalism, Kaleshi died in suspicious circumstances a few years later.[163]

157 More on Albanian–Yugoslav relations: Milorad Komatina, *Enver Hodža i jugoslovensko–albanski odnosi* (Belgrade: Službeni list SRJ, 1995), 135–145; Branko Komatina, *Jugoslovensko–albanski odnosi 1979–1983. Beleške i sećanja ambasadora*, (Belgrade: Službeni list SRJ, 1995). Useful overviews are available in: Nicolas J. Costa, *Albania. A European Enigma*, (New York: East European Monographs, 1995), and Miranda Vickers, *The Albanians. A Modern History*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 1995).

158 Miloš Mišović, *Ko je tražio republiku Kosovo 1945–1985* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1987), 78–93, 150, 240–241, 346–347.

159 Further documentation in: *Pero Simić: Raspeto Kosovo. Dokumenta o Kosovu I Metohiji* (Belgrade: Novosti & Narodna knjiga, 2006).

160 For the Albanian view on Illyrian theory and the ethno–genesis of Kosovo, see *The Truth on Kosova* (Tirana: Encyclopedia Publishing House, The Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Albania, 1993). *Cf.* also D. T. Bataković, "Kosovo–Metohija in the 20th Century: Nationalism and Communism", *Eurobalkans* 30–31 (Athens: A. Papadopoulou S.A., 1998), 21–27.

161 Pedro Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia 1963–1983* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 160–163.

162 D. T. Bataković, *Kosovo Chronicles*, 70.

163 For more, see M. Mišović, *Ko je tražio republiku*.

THE POPULATION OF KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

Nationality	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981
Albanian	498,242	524,559	646,168	916,168	1,226,736
Serb	171,911	189,869	227,016	228,264	209,497
Montenegrin	28,050	31,343	37,588	31,555	27,028
Turk	1,315	34,343	25,764	12,244	12,513
Muslim	9,679	6,241	8,026	26,357	58,562
Gypsy	11,230	11,904	3202	14,593	34,126
Others	7,393	9,642	15,787	14,512	15,978
Total	**727,820**	**808,141**	**963,988**	**1,243,693**	**1,584,440**

During this silent ethnic cleansing the Serb population in Kosovo and Metohija was reduced by almost half, from 23.6 percent in 1948 to 13.2 percent in 1981, notwithstanding their relatively high birth rate during the whole period of Tito's rule. The Montenegrin population in Kosovo dropped from 3.9 percent in 1948 to 1.7 percent in 1981. Between 1961 and 1981, 42.2 percent of all Kosovo Serbs and 63.3 percent of all Kosovo Montenegrins left the province to settle in other parts of Serbia or Montenegro. Only 15 percent of these migrations were, however, motivated by economic reasons: all others were triggered by interethnic tensions, pressures and harassments by Albanians which remained unpunished by the local police and judicial authorities.[164]

This ethnically motivated persecution also targeted the Serbian Orthodox Church, perceived as the pillar of Serbian identity in the Province: bishops, priests, monks and nuns, cemeteries and landed property. Numerous instances of continuous persecution both by Albanian nationalists and by Albanian provincial bureaucrats were reported to the Holy Synod by the Raška–Prizren Diocese on 19 May 1969. Patriarch German, then the head of the Serbian Orthodox Church, was compelled to ask Tito, the communist dictator of Yugoslavia, for protection:

"The violence decreases somewhat only to reappear elsewhere in an even more serious form. During the last year its forms have become extreme. There not only has been destruction of crops in the fields, destruction of forests (monasteries of Devič, Dečani, Gorioč near Peć), desecration of graves (Kosovska Vitina and elsewhere), but even physical assaults on nuns (last year in the monasteries of Binač near Kosovska Vitina and Mušutište near Prizren, and this spring, in Devič—where the prioress suffered serious physical injuries, a novice of the Dečani monastery was injured by the axe, a hieromonk of Gorioč monastery was hit in the head with a stone, priests around Kosovska Mitrovica were stoned, etc.), which has resulted in the emigration of our faithful from those regions."[165]

The Patriarch's request, just another one in a series of similar complaints to the authorities of Serbia and other federal institutions, produced neither short-term nor long-term results. Namely, J. B. Tito promised protection and law enforcement but, in practice, no tangible results were achieved. Numerous complaints, including copious verbatim reports by Serb citizens and believers subsequently published in various church magazines, remained entirely ignored by the communist authorities both in Belgrade and Priština until the early 1980s.[166]

Moreover, the Kosovo Albanian *nomenklatura* often allotted the land of the expelled Serbs to immigrants from Albania. From 1945 until Tito's death in 1980, the number of Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija almost tripled, which gives a population increase of 164 percent from 1948 to 1981. The number of immigrants from Albania has never been exactly determined.

In the first post-war years, their settlement in Kosovo and Metohija had been aimed at facilitating the expected annexation of Albania to the Yugoslav federation as the seventh republic. The second wave of Albanian settlement was organized between the late 1960s and the early 1980s by the Kosovo Albanian *nomenklatura* in order to bolster the ethnic supremacy of Albanians in the Kosovo districts with mixed population and a stronger Serbian presence. The spectacular demographic growth of the Kosovo Albanian population, facilitated by the socialist welfare system and huge federal and Serbian investments into the economy of the Province, gave additional social stimulus to the hostile nationalism of new generations of Kosovo Albanians, at liberty to be educated on a dangerous mix-

164 Detailed analysis based on extensive field research can be found in Ruža Petrović & Marina Blagojević, *The Migration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija. Results of the Survey Conducted in 1985–1986* (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1992).

165 The whole letter is reproduced in *Zadužbine Kosova*, 833.

166 For further documentation from the Archive of the Holy Synod in Belgrade concerning continuous persecution of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Raška–Prizren Diocese between 1945 and 1981, see *Zadužbine Kosova*, 793–838. *Cf.* also Dimitrije Bogdanović, "The Serbian Church during the Kosovo Hardship" in Predrag D. Kijuk, Dušan T. Bataković and Slobodan Mileusnić, eds., *The Battle of Kosovo, 1389–1989* (Belgrade: Homeland, 1989), 142–144.

ture of nineteenth-century romantic nationalism and Enver Hohxa's Stalinist-type ethnic-communism. As a result, despite abundant political and social advantages they obtained after 1945, Kosovo Albanians still considered Yugoslavia as a transitional phase: they aspired to the status of a constituent republic of Yugoslavia endowed with the right to self-determination, i.e. secession, which they looked upon as a stepping-stone to eventual unification with Albania.

This barely hidden political goal of the Kosovo Albanians was recognized by experienced American journalists travelling in the area in the early 1980s: "The [Albanian] nationalists have a two-point platform [...] first to establish what they call an ethnically clean Albanian republic and then the merger with Albania to form a greater Albania."[167]

Economic frustrations of the Kosovo Albanians as a predominantly agrarian population lacking job opportunities was, therefore, largely diverted into national dissatisfaction through a massive propaganda campaign led by intellectuals proliferating national mythology. The political goal of the coming rebellion was symbolically announced by the fire Albanian extremists set to the historic seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Patriarchate of Peć, in March 1981. The large-scale Albanian rebellion in March and April 1981, described initially as a student revolt, evolved within weeks into a nationalistic movement demanding the status of a federal republic for Kosovo within Yugoslavia. The demand arose only a year after the death of J.B. Tito, disrupting the sensitive balance of power in the federal leadership of communist Yugoslavia.[168]

Attempts to appease the Albanian revolt in Kosovo and Metohija by means of the standard communist practice of repeated party purges and by continuous repression (actions of the federal military and police forces against Albanian protesters, large-scale legal prosecution and punishment, mostly of younger people) did not yield expected results. The League of Communists' parallel efforts to minimize the problem of discrimination against the Serbs and of their forced migration from Kosovo and Metohija only resulted in the growing frustration of Serbs all over Yugoslavia in the years that followed.

The foreign press frequently reported on the Yugoslav police retaliation against young Albanian protesters shouting slogans against federal Yugoslavia while praising Enver Hohxa, the communist dictator of Albania. The Kosovo Serb claims, supported by Yugoslav officials in Belgrade about Albanian-organized ethnically motivated persecution, discrimination and harassment were strongly and concertedly denied by Kosovo Albanians, Hohxa's officials from Tirana and their supporters on the international scene. The Kosovo Serb claims, often minimized by foreign correspondents and special envoys to the region were confirmed from independent sources, by unbiased American journalists fully acquainted with regional conflicts, developments and dilemmas. In the well-informed American reporter's view, the following process was the major development in Kosovo: "Serbs have been harassed by Albanians and have packed up and left the region. Some 57,000 Serbs have left Kosovo in the last decade [...] the exodus of Serbs is admittedly one of the main problems [...] in Kosovo."[169]

Similar balanced reporting on continuous hardship of the Kosovo Serb population both before and after the 1981 riots was drowned out by an orchestrated media campaign. In the late 1980s, Western reporting, with a few noble exceptions, was focused exclusively on constant violation of the human rights of the rebelled Kosovo Albanians. The conflict in Kosovo was often presented as internal ethnic strife, omitting the real ideological background of Albanian nationalism, fostered by the Albanian regime in Tirana.[170]

Nevertheless, in 1987 the *New York Times* came out with a detailed report: "the current hostilities pit separatist-minded ethnic Albanians against the various Slavic populations of Yugoslavia and occur at all levels of society, from the highest officials to the humblest peasants. A young Army conscript of ethnic Albanian origin [Aziz Kelmendi] shot up his barracks [in Paraćin, central Serbia], killing four sleeping Slavic bunkmates and wounding six others. The army says it has uncovered hundreds of subversive ethnic Albanian cells in its ranks. Some arsenals have been raided."[171]

It should be noted that, in retrospect, this kind of both credible and verifiable reporting provides a clear and indisputable account of the hidden political objectives of Kosovo Albanians and confirms the claims of Kosovo Serbs about being persecuted, discriminated and pressured into leaving the province. Managing to undermine the whole federal system as established by the 1974 Constitution, the Albanian question in Serbia and Yugoslavia produced a domino effect, arousing Serb concerns over their own position both in Serbia and in the Yugoslav federation. Much classified information about interethnic tensions in Kosovo and Metohija was leaked to the public and eventually found its way to Western press reports. It was reported that "ethnic Albanians in the Government have manipulated public funds and regulations to take over land belonging to Serbs. And politicians have exchanged

[167] Marvine Howe, "Exodus of Serbians Stirs Province in Yugoslavia", *The New York Times*, 12 July 1982.

[168] Nora Beloff, *Tito's Flawed Legacy. Yugoslavia and the West since 1999* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1985), 209–214.

[169] *The New York Times*, 12 July 1982.

[170] The official position of Albania in 1981 is available in the collection of articles from Tirana's *Zëri i popullit* daily: *A propos des événements de Kosove* (Tirana: 8 Nëntori, 1981).

[171] David Binder, "In Yugoslavia, Rising Ethnic Strife Brings Fears of Worse Civil Conflict", *The New York Times*, 1 November 1987.

vicious insults. Slavic Orthodox churches have been attacked, and flags have been torn down. Wells have been poisoned and crops burned. Slavic boys have been knifed, and some young ethnic Albanians have been told by their elders to rape Serbian girls."[172] The goal of radical Albanian nationalists was described as the formation of "ethnic Albania that includes western Macedonia, southern Montenegro, part of southern Serbia, Kosovo and Albania itself. That includes large chunks of the republics that make up the southern half of Yugoslavia. Other ethnic Albanian separatists admit to a vision of a greater Albania governed from Priština in southern Yugoslavia rather than Tirana, the capital of neighbouring Albania. [...] As Slavs flee the protracted violence, Kosovo is becoming what ethnic Albanian nationalists have been demanding for years, and especially strongly since the bloody rioting by ethnic Albanians in Priština in 1981—an 'ethnically pure' Albanian region, a 'Republic of Kosovo' in all but name."[173]

It was also observed, correctly, that the "growing tension between Albanians and Serbs here this year has converted this poor southern region from a chronic local trouble spot into the potential flash point of a country increasingly divided by national rivalries. Since the outbreak of riots here in 1981, authorities of the autonomous province of Kosovo have faced a steady challenge from separatist and nationalist groups among the dominant Albanian population. More than 1,000 people [Kosovo Albanians] have been jailed for seeking Kosovo's independence from Serbia, the Yugoslav republic to which Kosovo nominally belongs, or unification with the neighbouring nation Albania. The significance of this conflict has been multiplied this year by the emergence of concern among Yugoslavia's Serbs, the country's largest ethnic group, about the 'forced emigration' of Serbs from Kosovo under pressure from the Albanians. Small farmers, tradesmen and professionals have been steadily leaving the province's cities and the small Serbian villages around them, raising the prospect that a historic seat of the Serbian nation will soon be populated only by Albanians. More than 20,000 have emigrated since 1981 out of a total Serbian population of about 220,000. Meanwhile, the Albanian population of over 1.2 million is expanding at the fastest pace in Europe. The local Serbs arguing that Albanian-dominated provincial authorities have offered them no protection from violent attacks, have signed petitions and staged several demonstrations outside Priština this year. To the embarrassment of [Kosovo Albanian] authorities, they have also sent three delegations to press their case in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia and of Yugoslavia. The acts have inflamed nationalist feeling among Serbians outside Kosovo and prompted demands by intellectuals and even Serbian communist political leaders for constitutional changes and other drastic action to stop the emigration and restore Serbia's control over Kosovo. The Serbian outbursts, in turn, have provoked concern by leaders of Yugoslavia's five other, smaller republics, who sympathize with some complaints but are wary of Serbian national aspirations. The last delegation of Serbs to visit Belgrade early this month, meanwhile, warned that they would take up arms against their perceived tormentors among the Albanians."[174]

The intransigence of the national-communist *nomenklatura* in the Yugoslav federal leadership, tacitly patronizing Albanian extremism, created dangerous tensions which were difficult to control: from 1981, self-organized Kosovo Serbs gradually gained wide popular support after frequent mass protests before federal Yugoslav institutions in Belgrade.[175] Since the very beginning of their open protest against discrimination, the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija enjoyed both moral and political support of priests, monks and bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church — generally perceived as the archenemy of the communist regime. With its open letters to the public de-

172 *Ibid.*

173 *Ibid.*

174 Albania itself, the world's most rigid Stalinist government has kept the nation so isolated and poverty-stricken that about 5,000 refugees have fled across the heavily guarded border to Kosovo. A powerful tradition of close-knit clans has bound the community together, raised the birth rate and discouraged emigration to other parts of Yugoslavia. The result, said economists and government officials, has been pressure for land in Kosovo even from those Albanians who are neither separatist nor anti-Serbian. "Let me explain the psychology of an Albanian farmer about the land," said Abrashi, himself Albanian. "For centuries these people have been defining their existence and their worth only through land. They are ready to make great sacrifices, to work 30 years, to go and work abroad, to live in terrible conditions so as to collect, penny by penny, the money to buy a piece of land. And the land must be near that of the rest of the family. For that they will pay almost any price." Land prices in Kosovo, despite its poverty, are five times those in Serbia and typically range around $35,000 for an acre of good farm land, Abrashi said. Newspapers have reported sales of farms for over $1 million. As a result, Serbs, who unlike the Albanians have attractive alternatives outside the province, have had a powerful economic incentive to sell their land to Albanians. For the Serbs who have remained; frustrated Albanian youth have kept up a steady harassment ranging from the painting of hostile slogans on Serbian homes and vandalism of Serbian graveyards to beatings and rapes. "One cannot speak of these developments as being only the deeds of individual [Albanian] groups anymore," said Serbia's interior minister Svetomir Lalović in a recent speech. "At issue are seriously disturbed interethnic relations." Few killings have been recorded since the 1981 riots. But in the three months of July, August and September, authorities recorded 34 assaults by Albanians on Serbians. Two instances of rape provoked outraged demonstrations near Priština and motivated the last, angry delegation that marched on the federal parliament in Belgrade. Yugoslav officials predict that it will take many years to resolve the tensions in Kosovo, and dissidents are even less sanguine. (Jackson Diehl, "Ethnic Rivalries cause unrest in Yugoslav Region", *Washington Post* Foreign Service Saturday, 29 November 1986).

175 *Cf.* "Kosovo polje—dnevnik dogadjaja", *Intervju* 127, 11 April 1986; Atanasije Jeftić, *Od Kosova do Jadovna* (Belgrade: Srpska Pravoslavna Crkva, 1986); Kjell Magnusson, "The Serbian Reaction Kosovo and Ethnic Mobilization Among the Serbs", *Nordic Journal of Soviet & East European Studies* 43 (1987), 3–30.

nouncing "cultural and spiritual genocide" directed against the Serbian Christian heritage (desecration of churches, monasteries and graveyards, harassments and attacks on monks and nuns, etc.) widely distributed through the religious press, the Patriarchate, no longer seen as a parochial and conservative organization, but as a natural protector of national interest in dangerous situations, gradually regained the confidence of the wider public and established a new moral influence on a largely secular Serb population.[176]

Despite the growing support in all Serb-inhabited areas of Yugoslavia—from Slovenian enclaves, most of eastern and western Bosnia, Dalmatia and the whole of Krajina (areas of the former Habsburg Military Frontier) in Croatia to Herzegovina, northern Macedonia, Montenegro and Vojvodina—for the protection of the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija, the main federal institutions, still fully controlled by the old-age dogmas of the League of Communists, remained hostile to any significant change of political or legal provisions or to any kind of new constitutional arrangements that could impose restrictions on the discrimination against Kosovo Serbs and other non-Albanian ethnic groups and harmonize the legal system in the whole of Serbia.

On 25 October 1987, the eight-member Federal Presidency decided to deploy federal police forces to Kosovo and Metohija in order to maintain order. The Kosovo Albanian *nomenklatura* read this act as clear evidence of losing support among other nationalistic leaderships inside the Federation. Eventually supported by official Belgrade, local Kosovo Serb communists emerged victorious in this conflict, which ended up with repeated purges of Albanian communist leaders in Priština as well as elsewhere in Kosovo and Metohija.

As a result, after the federal authorities failed to ensure the protection of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, the problem was bound to become a means of highly orchestrated political manipulation, in particular when a new communist hardliner, Slobodan Milošević, using a populist strategy, imposed himself in the middle of 1987 as the sole protector of Serb national interests. Milošević's intention was to re-establish the influence of the discredited League of Communists on the basis of a newly-discovered Serb nationalism, a model already applied a decade before in other constituent republics of federal Yugoslavia. Most Serbs perceived him as a genuine Serb patriot who pretended to be a hard-line communist. Milošević, however, turned out to be a communist only pretending to be a Serb patriot.[177]

His neo-communist populism gained momentum as the collapse of communism encouraged by nationalism was already underway in Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union itself. Milošević's hard-line communist approach to the national question soon proved to be the most discrediting element for general Serb interests in Yugoslavia.[178]

Even before Milošević rose to power in 1987, the secessionist movement of the Kosovo Albanians had been able to mobilize a large spectrum of Albanian Diaspora in the West, using a mixture of traditionally right-wing accusations against the Serbs and an ultra-left "Marxist-Leninist" rhetoric furnished over the years by Enver Hoxha's Albania. After the 1987 party coup in Belgrade, Albanians skilfully portrayed themselves as the main victims of the neo-communist regime of Slobodan Milošević, while Serbia was often portrayed as the "last bastion of communism in Europe".[179] Using politically correct liberal rhetoric, and staging well-organized pacifist demonstrations, Kosovo Albanians managed to attract the attention of the Western media and their political elite.[180]

Nevertheless, in reality, while maintaining full control over the key institutions and executive power in the Province, Kosovo Albanians, and extremist nationalists in particular, continued to harass and discriminate the non-Albanian population. A rare first-hand American correspondent noted that "ethnic Albanians already control almost every phase of life in the autonomous province of Kosovo, including the police, judiciary, civil service, schools and factories. Non-Albanian visitors almost immediately feel the independence—and suspicion—of the ethnic Albanian authorities."[181]

The Kosovo Albanians, following the pattern of strict tribal obedience, were organized as a homogeneous political movement bound by common nationalist ideals. Political freedom and human rights, as viewed by the Kosovo Albanians, were exclusively linked to their collec-

176 "Declaration of the Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church against the Genocide by the Albanians on the indigenous Serbian Population, together with the Sacrilege of their Cultural Monuments in their own Country", *South Slav Journal* 11/2–3 (40–41) (London: South Slav Journal, 1988), 61–64, 87–89.

177 For more, see Slavoljub Djukić, *Kako se dogodio vodja* (Belgrade: Filip Višnjić, 1991); Kosta Čavoški, *Slobodan protiv slobode* (Belgrade: Dosije, 1992).

178 J. F Brown, *Nationalism, Democracy, and Security in the Balkans* (Brookfield: Dartmouth Pub, 1992); Lenard J. Cohen, *Broken Bonds: Yugoslavia's Disintegration and Balkan Politics in Transition* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995).

179 D. T. Bataković, *Kosovo. La spirale de la haine*, 71–77.

180 For an Albanian point of view, see Ibrahim Rugova, *Independence and Democracy* (Prishtina: Fjala, 1991; Alush Gashi, ed., *The Denial of Human and National Rights of Albanians in Yugoslavia* (New York: Illiria, 1992); *Open wounds: human rights abuses in Kosovo* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1993).

181 The obvious result of such a policy was the following: "while 200,000 Serbs and Montenegrins still live in the province, they are scattered and lack cohesion. In the last seven years, 20,000 of them have fled the province, often leaving behind farmsteads and houses, for the safety of the Slavic north." (David Binder, "In Yugoslavia, Rising Ethnic Strife Brings Fears of Worse Civil Conflict", *The New York Times*, 1 November 1987).

tive rights and were confined to their claims for unrestricted majority rule in a territory defined as "the Republic of Kosovo" within the Yugoslav federation.

Protests of Kosovo Albanians provoked another wave of ethnic mobilization. It was the Trepča Albanian miners' protest of November 1988 followed by a similar Albanian miners' hunger strike in January 1989 that generated a series of Albanian-organized solidarity strikes in Belgrade-based, state-owned companies throughout Kosovo and Metohija. In addition, between November 1988 and September 1989 mass strikes or other work boycotts took place in at least 230 companies throughout the province, producing a tremendous loss of two million working hours. Albanian-sponsored strikes soon became the chief weapon of the Independent Trade Unions of Kosovo (BSPK), organized in 1990 to substitute the provincial Federation of Trade Unions (FTU). On 3 September the BSPK called for a one-day general strike to protest against the dismissals of 15,000 Albanian workers. The general strike of Kosovo Albanians, fully boycotted by the Province's thirty-five percent Serb and non-Albanian population, managed to halt most of the big companies all over Kosovo and Metohija and demonstrated the power of ethnic mobilization and solidarity. However, the strike failed to achieve its aims; rather, Serbia responded by firing an additional 5,000 workers who had refused to comply with the strict rules of workers-self-management that were still a legal obligation for all workers in Yugoslavia.

Conflicts, Parallel Worlds, Confrontation

The final result of the limitation of Kosovo autonomy imposed by Serbia was another huge wave of unrest and, in turn, severe police repression. As Albanian protests continued, the Yugoslav leadership, at the request of the authorities of Serbia, deployed the federal army forces to Kosovo and Metohija in February 1989. During the ensuing March protest some protesters, some of whom were armed, were killed while hundreds were arrested in conflicts with the federal army. That same month, the Albanian communist leader Azem Vllasi and another fourteen Albanian communists were sentenced for "counterrevolutionary activities undermining the social order", for organizing the riots of miners at Stari Trg and Albanian ethnically motivated demonstrations throughout Kosovo.[182]

By the 26 March 1989 amendments to the Constitution of Serbia, the autonomy of both Serbian provinces, Kosovo (with the term Metohija reintroduced) and Vojvodina, was reduced to the level enjoyed under the 1963 Constitution.[183] The limitation of autonomy meant in fact the removal of all constitutional provisions perceived or treated as elements of potential Kosovo statehood. It also ended the unrestrained, ethnically motivated political domination of Albanians in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo.[184]

The Albanian members of the dismissed communist Assembly of Kosovo responded on 2 July 1990 by proclaiming the Republic of Kosovo within Yugoslavia, i.e. a federal unit separate from Serbia. Furthermore, the Kosovo Albanian representatives, fully ignoring the political rights of Kosovo Serbs and other national communities and ethnic groups, adopted their own Albanian "Constitution" at an assembly held secretly in Kačanik on 7 September 1990. These acts, followed by a widespread Albanian boycott of all official Serb-dominated institutions, from schools to hospitals, were regarded by Serbian authorities as illegal attempts at secession.[185]

Belgrade's immediate response was to fire all Kosovo Albanians who challenged the restored statehood of Serbia. The next measure was harsh police retaliation against often violent Kosovo Albanian protesters. Unyielding in their aim to obtain independence from Serbia, Kosovo Albanians at first chose a strategy of passive resistance, personified by Ibrahim Rugova, a prominent communist intellectual that became leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), a political party functioning as a mass Albanian national movement. Rugova's policy was to refuse all contact with official Belgrade and the Serb-dominated authorities in Kosovo, labelling them illegal institutions that violated 1974 Kosovo autonomy. Furthermore, throughout the early 1990s, Kosovo Albanians adamantly rejected frequent calls, supported by the international community, for a democratic compromise through political compromise with the anti-Milošević democratic forces in Serbia. Kosovo Albanians, therefore, invested nothing into the promotion of democracy or human rights in Serbia. The majority of Kosovo Albanians boycotted all post-1990 multiparty parliamentary elections in Serbia while in parallel denouncing Milošević's communist regime as pursuing "colonial" and "apartheid" policy.

The only beneficiary of the situation was Milošević, who rose to power through being perceived as the main protector of discriminated Kosovo Serbs. In practice, Milošević manipulated the Kosovo issue for his own short-term needs, primarily as a safe reservoir for at least twenty-six parliamentary seats needed for maintaining his undisputed power in Serbia. In return, Milošević tolerated

182 It was later that their sentences were abolished under the pressure of the international and Yugoslav public. *Cf.* Hugh Poulton, *The Balkans. Minorities and States in Conflict* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1991), 67–68.

183 "Ustav Republike Srbije", *Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije* 1 (Belgrade 1990).

184 *Cf.* "Amandmani na Ustav Srbije 1989", *Službeni glasnik SR Srbije* 11 (Belgrade 1989).

185 *Cf.* Shklzen Maliqi, "A Demand for a New Status: The Albanian Movement in Kosova" in Veremis & Kofos, eds., *Kosovo. Avoiding Another Balkan War*, 210–218.

the parallel political system established by Albanians for their own community in Kosovo and Metohija. The long-term strategy of Kosovo Albanians remained unchanged during the wars of Yugoslav succession waged in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia: they sought to obtain international support, first political and eventually military, for the cause of Kosovo's secession from Serbia which, in April 1992, formed a common state with Montenegro: the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.[186]

Kosovo Albanians, therefore, kept rejecting all calls for democratic struggle within Serbia and for cooperation with the nascent democratic bloc in Belgrade. Milošević was, for his own ends, using Kosovo to remain in power, stifle the democratic opposition and suppress any discussion about his communist-inspired policy, Kosovo included. Already in 1992, Milošević lost mass support and resorted to electoral fraud to maintain power, while using the international embargo imposed on Serbia and Montenegro in June 1992 to increase his control over the economy, politics and media through both security and army services. The Serbian democratic opposition (DEPOS) was eventually supported by the highest-ranking representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church in their often joint efforts, during 1992, to stop the bloodshed of the civil wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and to pave the way to compromise and peace through political dialogue and international mediation:

"The Serbian Orthodox Church and the Serbian people have never adhered to godless Communism or to any other totalitarian ideology. [...] The Serbian Church openly dissociates and distances itself from this and this kind of [Milošević-appointed] government and its supporters. We wish to remind all [persons] in power, especially in Serbia, that no one's chair [political position] is more important than the destiny and freedom of the whole nation and that no one has a monopoly on the people and the future of our children. [...] Also, we appeal to all authorities in Serbia and all factors in Europe and the world to respect the rights and responsibilities of all who live in Kosovo and Metohija, and not to impose solutions under pressure from any side; instead, [we appeal for] true support to a compassionate and just democratic order that will ensure protection for all people and nations in this region, which, because of its spiritual, national and cultural significance, is to Serbs what Jerusalem is to Jews."[187]

After the Dayton Peace Accords of 1995 Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević, as one of the signatories of the hard-won peace, went from being the demonized "butcher of the Balkans" to being the guarantor of the post-war settlement in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Despite growing opposition to his oppressive neo-communist regime throughout Serbia and the three-month protests against electoral fraud in the winter of 1996, Milošević still enjoyed almost unconditional Western support and even became the chief Serbian negotiator for the pending Kosovo crisis. However, the increasing efforts of different international mediators demanding a peaceful solution to the Serb-Albanian conflict in Kosovo failed due to procrastination within the Belgrade regime, but also due to the opposition of Albanians who demanded, as a first concession, the restoration of the autonomous status granted by the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution.[188]

The attempts to normalize the education process for ethnic Albanians by allowing them to use public schooling facilities and thus to reduce interethnic tensions in Kosovo did not produce the expected results: Serbian officials presented the problem of the education system as primarily a humanitarian issue, whereas the Albanians saw the problem as inseparable from the future political status of Kosovo.[189]

While Albanians saw the restoration of the autonomous status of 1974 merely as a transition to their full independence from Belgrade, different semi-official Serbian proposals called for a permanent solution to the problem through the partitioning of Kosovo along ethnic lines. In parallel, the democratic opposition in Belgrade proposed various transitional solutions, ranging from regionalization (Miodrag Jovičić) to cantonization (D.T. Bataković) of Kosovo and Metohija, hoping to prevent further aggravation of interethnic relations which would obviously lead to uncontrolled armed conflicts in the nearest future.[190]

The opposing attitudes of Serbs and Albanians, with their leaders Slobodan Milošević and Ibrahim Rugova entrenched in their uncompromising positions, blocked the various mediation efforts of EU or US representatives. The general impression of foreign analysts was that Kosovo was turning into two "parallel worlds", with each side demonizing or simply ignoring the other.[191] Albanian-sponsored terrorist attacks and more than sixty assassinations

186 *Cf.* Albanian point of view in Elez Biberaj, *Kosova: the Balkan Powder Keg* (London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, 1993).

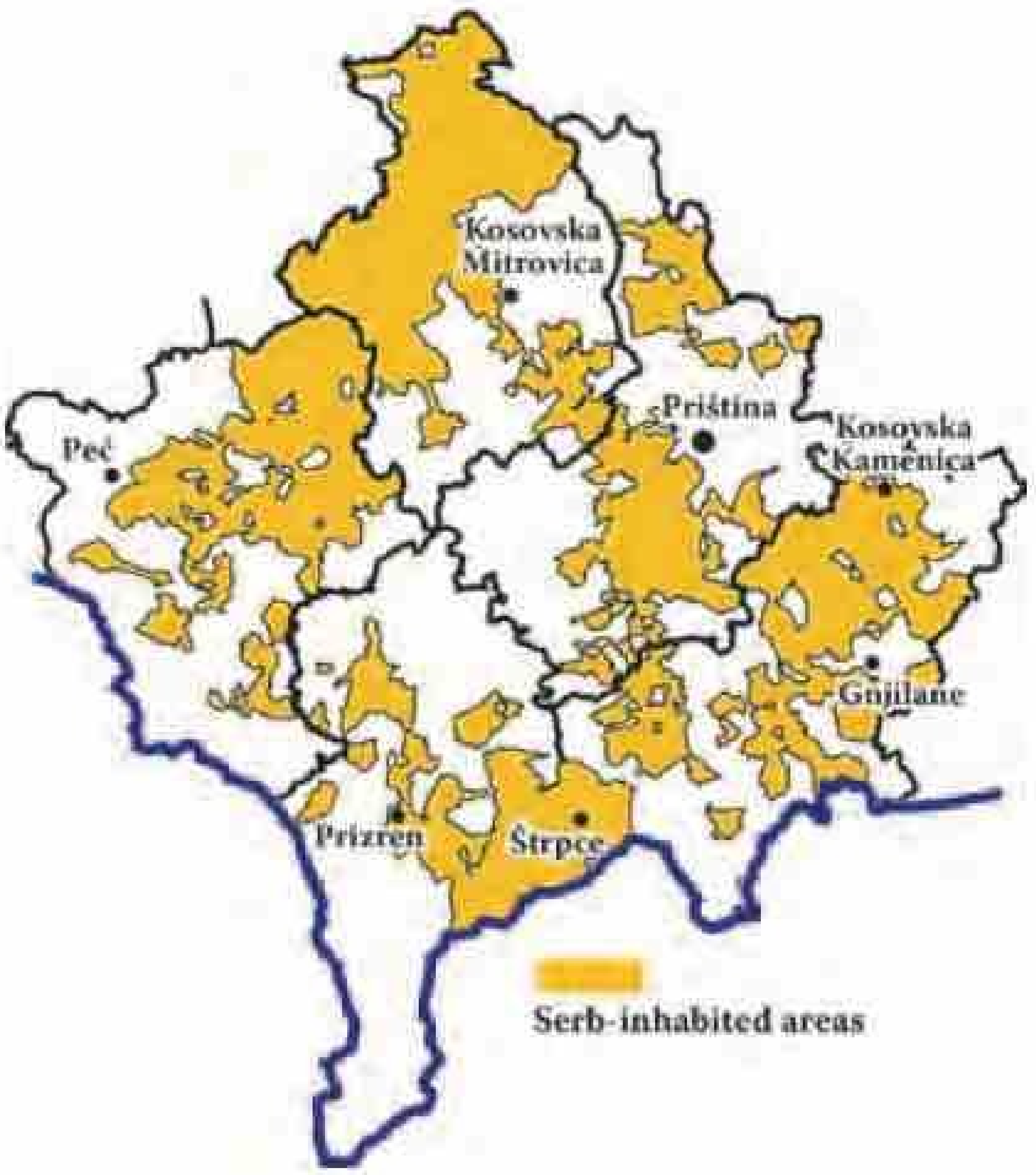
187 The entire text of the *Memorandum* of the Holy Assembly of Bishops (held 14–27 May 1992) was published in *Glasnik Srpske patrijaršije* 6 (June 1992), 94–97.

188 D.T. Bataković, "Kosovo–Metohija Question: Origins of a Conflict and Possible Solutions", *Dialogue* 7/25 (Paris 1998), 41–56.

189 The Milošević–Rugova agreement, signed under the auspices of Sant'Egidio, never came into effect due to different interpretations: *Naša Borba*, Belgrade, 3 and 4 September 1996. An overview of different initiatives with corresponding documentation in Stefan Troebst, ed., *Conflict in Kosovo: An Analytical Documentation, 1992–1998*, ECMI Working Paper No. 1 (Flensburg: European Centre for Minority Issues, 1998). *Cf.* also a detailed account of the negotiation process by Predrag Simić, *Put u Rambuje, kosovska kriza 1995–2000* (Belgrade: Nova, 2000).

190 D.T. Bataković, "Progetti serbi di spartazione", Kosovo: Il triangolo dei Balcani, *Limes* 3 (Roma 1998), 153–169.

191 See the analysis: *Parallel Worlds*, Institute for War & Peace, Media Focus 3, London, 4 December 1998.



Kosovo & Metohija – Serb-inhabited Areas, 1999

from 1995 to 1998, notably of Kosovo Serb policemen and civilians, but also of Kosovo Albanian officials loyal to Serbia, were aimed at destroying the last bridges of communication between the two communities, and punishing all the members of the Albanian community unsympathetic to the secessionist cause.

The Albanian clandestine paramilitary organization KLA (the Kosovo Liberation Army) announced armed resistance in February 1998. This was a major turning-point after which the decade-long passive resistance of the Albanians gradually turned into armed rebellion and afterwards into full-scale civil war in the Province. Milošević's regime responded with severe, often excessive, police measures targeting both terrorist KLA groups and, occasionally, civilians involved in providing logistics. After a series of persistent clashes between the KLA and Serbian police forces, the armed conflict escalated in the summer of 1998.[192]

After the failed Rambouillet negotiations on the future status of Kosovo, NATO decided to resolve the crisis by military action.[193] Officially, the NATO campaign against Yugoslavia, lacking legal authorization from the UN, had five initial objectives: 1) safe return of Albanian refugees; 2) withdrawal of all Serbian forces from Kosovo; 3) NATO military control on the ground; 4) extended autonomy for Kosovo; and 5) the gradual introduction of multiethnic democracy. Another two objectives were added subsequently: overthrowing Milošević and no commitment of ground troops.[194]

The bombing of Yugoslavia that started on 24 March 1999 strained Serbian-Albanian relations in Kosovo to the limit. The Kosovo Albanians supporting the paramilitary KLA units openly rejoiced at the bombs falling on Belgrade and other towns in Serbia. In addition, the KLA forces resumed operations against Serbian police units and local Serbian civilians, but also against those Albanians or members of other ethnic groups (such as Roma, Muslim Slavs, Gorani and others) that had remained loyal to Serbia throughout the conflict. In response, the Serbian police and military forces launched full-scale operations against Albanians, and the KLA forces, apart from small pockets in central and north-eastern Kosovo (the Dreni-

192 *Cf.* "Serbia: Democratic Alternative", *Special Report by US Institute of Peace*, Washington DC, June 1998, p. 7. For more, see D. T. Bataković. "The Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija. War, International Protectorate and National Catastrophe", *Eurobalkans* 36–37 (Autumn/Winter 1999), 23–40.

193 David Gompert, "How to Defeat Serbia", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 4 (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Inc., 1994).

194 "A Bungled War", *The Economist*, London, 8 May 1999, 11. See a rather critical analysis of the Kosovo crisis development and NATO operations in Ignatio Ramonet & Alain Gresh, eds., "La nouvelle guerre des Balkans", *Le monde diplomatique, Manière de voir* no. 45 (May–June 1999). *Cf.* another, less critical, Western perspective by Ronald Dannreuther, "War in Kosovo: History, Development and Aftermath" in Mary Buckley and Sally Cummings, eds., *Kosovo. Perception of War and its Aftermath* (London & New York: Continuum, 2001), 12–29.

Serbian church monuments in Kosovo-Metohija, 1998

ca and Lab areas), were crushed and pushed into the mountains towards the Albanian border (the Junik area). With many crimes against civilians, committed by both sides, plus the high percentage of civilians, mostly Albanian, displaced to neighbouring countries, interethnic relations sank to their lowest level since the Second World War.[195] Nonetheless, it was the brotherhood of the Serbian monastery of Dečani that sheltered some 200 local Albanian women and children trying to escape from persecution and revenge.

According to UNHCR data on 25 May 1999, there were 957,913 ethnic Albanian refugees who left Kosovo since the first armed attacks of the KLA on the Serbian police in March 1998. The large-scale exodus of Albanians from Kosovo was, from the Albanian standpoint, variously explained: first, as ethnic cleansing organized by Serb paramilitary forces; second, as flight from Kosovo to avoid the NATO bombing; third, Kosovo Albanians found themselves coerced by the KLA. Indeed, the KLA made an effort to legitimize the NATO air strikes and "secure" the arrival of NATO troops in Kosovo. During April 1999, it was also a way for a part of the defeated KLA units to be transferred to Albania or Macedonia along with the refugees in order to avoid destruction by the Yugoslav army (*Vojska Jugoslavije*) and police forces of the Milošević regime.

The Hague Tribunal (ICTY) indictment against Milošević for war crimes unsealed in the middle of the NATO bombing campaign contributed significantly to his decision to accept the total withdrawal of Serbian military and police forces from Kosovo, with the proviso that the new international protectorate should not extend to other parts of Serbia which were to remain under his control. According to the military-technical agreement signed in Kumanovo on 9 June 1999, Kosovo, after the withdrawal of all Serbian forces, was placed under the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) military protectorate. The authority of the United Nations civil administration was introduced by UN SC Resolution No 1244 of 10 June 1999. Although an international protectorate, Kosovo and Metohija, by the provisions of UN SC Resolution 1244 legally remained within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.[196]

The centuries-long interethnic conflict between Serbs and Albanians in Serbia's troublesome province of Kosovo and Metohija, still heavily burdened by religious, national and ideological antagonisms, remained unsettled, and was only deepened after the unprecedented seventy-eight day-long NATO bombing campaign in the spring of 1999—the alliance's first and last attack on a sovereign nation in post-Second World War Europe.

[195] Predominantly pro-Albanian interpretation of the events in the report of the International Crisis Group, *The Kosovo Spring*. The International Crisis Group Guide to Kosovo (Brussels 1998); for Serbian attitudes, see pp. 77–82. *Cf.* also D. T. Bataković, "Kosovska kriza: izazovi i ishodi", *Književne novine* 971, Belgrade, 1 April 1998.

[196] For a legal aspect, see Robert M. Hayden, *Blueprint for a House Divided. The Constitutional Logic of the Yugoslav Conflict* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 167–180.

Kosovo under KFOR, June 1999

Greater Albania according to the Albanian nationalists

Appendix
Emigration of Kosovo–Metohija Serb colonists
1918–1941

Nº	District	Serbian families 1918–1941	Serbian families 1991	Percentage
1	Vitina	480	75	15.83
2	Vučitrn	700	8	1185
3	Glogovac	407	0	0.00
4	Gnjilane	304	30	9.86
5	Dečani	938	59	6.28
6	Djakovica	2079	94	4,52
7	Istok	1000	119	11.90
8	Kačanik	86	4	4.40
9	Klina	652	86	13.19
10	Kosovo Polje	384	36	9.30
11	Kos. Kamenica	212	39	18.39
12	Lipljan	555	121	21.80
13	Mališevo	380	1	0.26
14	Obilić	319	70	21.94
15	Orahovac	310	12	3.80
16	Podujevo	1566	163	10.40
17	Peć	1441	159	11.03
18	Priština	336	82	24.40
19	Srbica	531	0	0.00
20	Suva Reka	173	0	0.00
21	Kos. Mitrovica	171	26	15.20
22	Uroševac	633	104	16.42
23	Štimlje	69	3	4.34
24	Prizren	266	15	5.64
	Total	**14,045**	**1,371**	**9,75**

Kosovo and Metohija: The Rise and Fall of the Serbian People

Radovan Samardžić

Saint Sava of Serbia, Church of the Holy Apostles, south choir of the nave, mid-14th century, the Patriarchate of Peć

In the middle of the Balkan Peninsula lies a region called, until the liberation in 1912, or more precisely in 1918, Old Serbia. During the long centuries, the medieval Serbia shifted from one place to another depending on where the tribes, scattered over the vast land, decided to settle and form a community, always under another name. History follows these aims from as early as the 9th century, although there is reason to suppose the existence of a primary form of state life even before this period. The cradle of the first Serbian state composed as a tribal unity is believed to be Raška, a mountainous region in the basins of the Ibar, Lim, Tara and Piva rivers. Between this region and the coast, on the stretch of land extending from the Cetina river in Dalmatia to the Bojana river in lower Montenegro, Serbia lay the foundations for her dynamic development in the 12th century. By the end of the century, the Nemanjić dynasty had established itself as its rulers.

With the rise of Serbia from the end of the 12th century under Stefan Nemanja (1166) until the death of Emperor Uroš (1371), and the battle of Kosovo (1389), a high level of sophisticated culture and Christian spirituality was created, first by upgrading the church, organization, religious and cultural education, following the gigantic efforts of St. Sava and his father Stefan Nemanja (St. Simeon); secondly, through the aims of all rulers and archbishops to build the specific Serbian civilization on foundations that had already been laid within the Byzantine commonwealth. In Serbia, Orthodoxy was not set apart from regulations, both traditional and novel, established in Byzantium, the center of the Eastern Orthodox Church, Moreover, it was harmonious to the character of Serbia and its people. The unity of the state, church and people was attained on the bases of the St. Sava spirituality. The Nemanjić dynasty was proclaimed sacred; each member of the family had his place on the richly colored frescos in the churches. The literature

Mehmed Pasha Sokolović (Sokollu Mehmed Paşa) (1505–1579), Grand Vizier of sultan Suleiman the Magnificent since 1565 and of his son Selim II and grandson Murad III. Being a Christian Orthodox Serb from Rudo in Eastern Bosnia (today Republika Srpska), young Bajo son of Dimitrije, from the village of Sokolović near Rudo, was educated in the monastery of Mileševa and afterwards taken by the Ottomans (devşirme) converted to Islam and sent into the janissary corps. As third vizier at the Sublime Porte, Medmed Pasha has restored the Serbian Orthodox Church under the name the Patrarchate of Peć in 1557. Mehmed Pasha Sokolović has appointed his first cousin Makarije Sokolović, as the first Serbian patriarch of the Patriarchate of Peć. Several other patriarchs came from the same Sokolović family, all close relatives of Mehmed Pasha.

and hymns dedicated to them portrayed the hagiographies of Serbian rulers and archbishops. The teachings of St. Sava, later named the *svetosavlje,* consisted not only of the Serbian religious Christian Orthodoxy, but the loyalty of the Serbs to the state and laws of the Nemanjić dynasty. All levels of society had the same, or at least similar, traditions that fulfilled their daily lives and permeated the countryside with a specific spirituality, so that every bush and every rock had a voice of its own. The Serbs were a tame, noble, sensitive people inclined to emotional outbursts and swift changes in their collective temperament Even though they were mostly peasants, living in scattered villages, they often gathered in squares, in front of the feudal mansions, and especially around churches and monasteries where they would rejoice in listening to each other sing (if they did not argue over who was to sing), when they were not immersed in listening to a holy liturgy. By expanding the boundaries of the state, the Serbian rulers and feudal lords enlarged the number of their endowments and with them, the cult of St. Sava. On the other hand, an uncommon religious tolerance existed in Serbia. The explanation lies in the fact that a noticeable part of its population, in Littoral in particular, practiced the Roman Catholic faith. These were not only foreigners, but Serbs as well, who, unhampered in their religious feeling, played a significant role in the Serbian government, diplomacy and economy.

In the Middle Ages, a plain, later to be named Kosovo, that was spread out between the mountains, became the heart of Serbian civilization after 1204. The region was densely populated owing to developed agriculture, livestock breeding and, above all, mining, all of which considerably enriched the Serbian state. Beside the plowmen, stock-breeders, craftsmen and numerous miners, a considerable number of the Serbian nobility was centered there. It was most probably these noblemen who leaving their castles in 1389 assembled to fight the Ottomans to their death. like the rulers in the West, the Nemanjić's, too, had several castles where they would occasionally stay and whence they justly ruled the country. These castles, built frequently as mighty fortresses, were built on the smallest possible distance from Kosovo and its neighboring regions, which is proof enough that here lay the demographic, economic and political center of Serbia. Continuing further, the most firmly embedded trace imprinted on this ground is the number of churches and monasteries congregated on circumscribed space, proud in their magnificence, the inimitable beauty of architectural design, frescos, rich interior ornamentation and wealth of treasure; no other place, except perhaps on the coast, saw the Serbs build so many municipal churches as in Kosovo. The region in time developed not only into a compact core of medieval Serbian civilization, but became the sacred land of Serbian spirituality, where, along with piety and theological thought, literature, philosophy, and to a degree, science, were cherished at the castles. After the promotion of the autocepha-

lous Serbian archbishopric to the rank of a patriarchate (1346), the first throne of the metropolitan diocese was placed in Skoplje. The seat of the patriarchate remained for centuries in the Peć monastery. Thus, a general picture was created that Kosovo, with it massif regions, was the heart of Serbian Orthodoxy and the most sturdy bastion of its people.

Thus entered these regions into history. First, the basis of the final Kosovo oath still retains, without doubt, the solemn and magnificent image of Kosovo as the central land of the Serbian Empire, bearing its greatest spiritual and material richness. All enemies of the Serbian people believed that by ravaging and taking Kosovo, the nation would be beheaded, dismembered and alienated. Notwithstanding the enemies' successes, whenever they fell lowest, the Serbs invoked Kosovo to restore their dignity and create anew conditions for life to continue. Educated on the bases of St. Sava's teachings, old imperial and more novel patriarchal decrees, this people had become in time a morally composed whole had developed a growing attachment to Its own self-governing establishments, trod through centuries from battle to battle to survive, while envisioning and realizing its future as an extension of Its historical heritage. Kosovo bad been the most active and most impressive life-bestowing core of such a belief.

Perhaps Murad I had set off to Kosovo to fight the decisive battle in the history of his emirate. In those days, strategy maintained the belief that an empire could be won or lost only in a decisive battle, and in two ways: first, the Side that lost the battle would leave its broken forces on the field, i.e. the greatest number of its military nobility, thus the road leading to its country would remain open; second, it was only chivalrous to win by one's sabre or die at the enemy's sabre. It seems that the battle of Kosovo proved fatal to both sides: both the Serbs and Ottomn Turks were bereft of their ruler and the battlefield was covered by an equally perished army. Only the Ottomans were able to regain power of their forces in the European and Asian provinces of their subsequent empire (though several decades had passed in the process of doing so), whereas the Serbs, crushed, at first discouraged, gathered only to restore their state and periodically withhold incursions by moving north.

The Ottomans directed the hedge of their small, but raging hordes toward Kosovo and through Kosovo, to overcome the major fortresses and reach the roads leading northwest They gained possession of new lands with more ingenious strategies than the remainder of broken Serbs could sustain their defense: at their disposal were the experiences of those who crushed and took many lands, both Muslim and Christian, on their campaigns from the East. Part of the population that fell captive, especially the nobility, was sabered or taken to slavery; the remainder was warranted survival if it complied to execute certain duties. They built fortresses usually in towns with strong defenses and in areas they were planning to besiege. They would leave then military companies, administrative and judiciary bearers in these bastions. Churches were immediately turned to mosques. Everywhere the dervishes built their nests before any others, and as members of mystical orders and preachers of religious syncretism, would transfer the population to a spiritual state that was only a step from islamization. Merchants and craftsmen gathered around the army to render their services. The circle of Ottoman government widened even at times when the army making further penetrations, left such a situation in the deep background. Then a powerful army lead by sultan would ensue to strike a decisive battle and finally claim the demolished Christian territories. By the mid-15th century, Kosovo and its neighboring countries were already in the composition of the Ottoman Empire, and the population was listed so

Prizren Manuscript of Dušan's Code, 15th century

Dušan's Code (Serbian: Душанов законик, Dušanov zakonik, known historically as Zakon blagovjernago cara Stefana) is a compilation of several legal systems that was enacted by Stephen Uroš IV Dušan of Serbia in 1349. It was used in the Serbian Empire and the succeeding the Serbian Despotate. It is considered an early constitution, or close to it; an advanced set of laws which regulated all aspects of life.
The code continued as the constitution under the rule of Dušan's son, Stefan Uroš V, and during the fall of the Serbian Empire, it was used in all provinces. It was officially used in the successor state, Serbian Despotate, until its annexation by the Ottoman Empire in 1459. The code was used as a reference for Serbian communities under Ottoman rule, which exercised considerable legal autonomy in civil cases. The code was used in the Serbian autonomical areas under the Republic of Venice, like Grbalj and Paštrovići.
The code also served as the basis of the Kanun of Albanian prince Leka Dukagjini (1410–1481), a set of customary laws in northern Albania that existed until the 20th century.
It regulated all social spheres, thus it is considered the second oldest preserved constitution of Serbia. The original manuscript is not preserved, but around twenty manuscript copies, ranging from the 14th to the 18th century, remain.

Arsenije III Crnojević (Čarnojević), Serbian Patriarch of Peć, leader of the 1690 Great Serb Migration from Kosovo to Habsburg Empire

the profession, legal status and tax duties of each would be known. The endeavor of crusading Europe to rout the Ottomans failed in 1448 on Kosovo field, with the military defeat of forces lead by Janos Hunyadi (Sibinjanin Janko).

In Kosovo and the neighboring areas the Ottomans found and listed a population almost entirely Serbian. Further rolls, frequent especially in the 16th century, indicated a slow change in ethnical, i.e. religious relationships. The Christian population was incomparably in the advantage with its number even in the towns, most gladly populated by the Ottomans and subsequently turned to military, administrative, judicial, religious and economical strongholds. The supposition that *Arbanas* (the Albanians today) Catholics should be recognized in a Christian composition falls flat for the simple reason that missionaries of the Roman Curia were the most zealous bearers of Albanian Catholicism, and along with this, nationality. Changes in demographic relations in Kosovo did not differ from similar changes in other parts of European Turkey; Bosnia, Herzegovina, Macedonia, or Bulgaria: the number of Turks was noticeable, mostly in towns and fortified places, but these were mostly Muslims of various origin marked with a Turkish name. The Muslim Albanians mingled into their orders just as they came to other parts of Ottoman Turkey. Albanian herdsmen settled several deserted Serbian villages back ill the 16th century. There were other cases of sporadic settlement of a nation extremely mobile in its poverty. They moved to places on various sides of the Balkan Peninsula, and very remote ones as well.[1]

With Ottoman penetration, the Serbs in Kosovo, as well as in Old Serbia, lost most of their nobility, the town-dwellers often had their heads put under the conqueror's sabre, the number of peasants was reduced unless they found refuge somewhere or swore to he subordinate subjects. Yet the people, despite all periodical incursions, settled around their hearths: the new administration required the regular cultivation of Iand and for cattle to multiply on lush pastures—all for the needs of the Empire. Monuments were exposed to perpetual ruin, mostly those dating from the Nemanjić epoch. This phenomenon was stamped most painfully in the collective conscience of the Serbian people. Castles were stripped through pillaging, in part turned to fortresses with Ottoman garrisons in part left o to ill-tempered time, to become covered by thorns and elders, pillaged for building materials and inhabited by owls, bats and snakes instead of being inhabited by feudal lords and their servants. During the conquests, or soon after, most of the town churches were destroyed, burnt or turned to mosques. Monasteries and churches, built on free land, were exposed to ruing which has continued until today, the phenomenon of which has rendered Kosovo, as well as other Serbian countries, an exceptionable example of cultural genocide upon the inheritance of a nation. The Peć Patriarchate, Dečani and Gračanica seem to have survived for the sole purpose of triggering the imagination to envisage a picture of medieval Kosovo, ornate with numerous beautiful religious and secular edifices, surrounded by regions densely designated with endowments of the Nemanjić dynasty and their feudal lords. The monastery of the Holy Archangels, a stately edifice, was deserted back in the 16th century. The well-known Banjska was burnt in 1419, and, by the beginning of the 15th century, was destroyed and finally rebuilt as a mosque. Most of the Serbian monasteries shared the fate of the Bogorodica Hvostanska (Mala Studenica): left without revenues, and a small fraternity,

[1] What remains to be explained is how the term Albania or *Arnautluk* spread from the 15th century to include regions formerly not encompassed by that name, and where the Albanian population lived as a distinct ethnic minority. Should the long-ago emergence of this phenomenon be sought in the status of ethnic Albanians of part of a population in medieval Serbia which had particular social obligations, since a similar phenomenon occurred with the emergence of the Vlachs, who, as a distinct social group were mentioned in Dušan's Code (1349) as herdsmen and soldiers together with the ethnic Albanians; even they were on their way of losing their ethnic distinction, thus the Ottoman administration finally gave a Vlach name to a particular tax category of its population whose obligation was to perform special duties, primarily for the needs of the army. In sources of different origin, one may find innumerable examples where ethnic names were used in lieu of the name denoting class affiliation and profession. Too obviously Serbian names, the supplementation Albanian ("Arbanas"), "Bulgarian," Croatian, even Greek was added.

it dilapidated and turned to ruins. This particular monastery was deserted probably at the end of the 17th century. Samodreža had the most reliable place in the imaginative national heritage. Monasteries were left to ill-will not only through fires, destruction and pillaging, but also when the wealthy land, off which they lived, was confiscated. Sometimes, urged by Roman missionaries, the Turks would torture, kill and rout the Peć patriarchs, (after 1557) and Serbian metropolitans, the secular clergy and monks, after which the once mighty Serbian Church abruptly shriveled (even though Serbia, especially Kosovo had, during the periods of Ottoman subjugation, a greater percentage of clergy than some of the most developed Western countries). Anthropogeographers found ordinary villages which, according to preserved traces, had around 7–8 churches, whereas today there are none. Traces of several hundred temples and edifices of secular usage are submerged in the soil of this earth. Kosovo and Metohija, upon which medieval Serbian civilization was built, as part of the European one, attained its highest splendor only to regress to prehistory: now archeologists have more business there than art historians or other scientists of cultural heritage.

With the fall of Serbia under Ottoman dominiation 1459, the Serbian Patriarchate ceased to exist. Even though they strove to work independently, especially in the field of culture, maintaining historical tradition, copying books, opening a monastic press, restoring old and building new churches, the Serbian dioceses, one by one, came under the rule of the Ohrid Diocese, i.e. the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. The movement of the Serbian clergy might have evolved almost peacefully, owing to the fact that the Greek Church strove to establish its authority for material gains rather than to establish cultural influence. The movement spread to all Serbian countries, including Kosovo area, where one rebel, Archbishop Pavle of Smederevo, tried to renew the Serbian Patriarchate. Metropolitan Nikanor (1530–1551) of Gračanica, with his work on theological discipline, literature, the preservation of the tradition of manuscripts and paintings, became the leading figure of the spiritual renaissance in Serbia. Gračanica had, among other things, a press that issued one of the most famous old Serbian graphic skills (*Oktoih*, 1539). Restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557 rendered Kosovo and Metohija again the center of all major cultural and political events determining the further course of Serbian history. Serbian Patriarchs of Peć were the leaders of the spiritual renaissance of their people, the congregating of whom took place on grounds larger than the Nemanjić Empire; the church was the first to lead the Serbs to liberation uprisings and insurrections, which inevitably drew the first black clouds over Kosovo and the surrounding areas of Old Serbia.

The deterioration of the Ottoman regime which had begun to disintegrate with the termination of wars of conquest and plunder, while lacking the forces to urge further progress—economical, social, and almost ethical, was felt most profoundly in the mountainous regions inhabited by a population that had in the meantime regressed to clan and tribal organization, fending for itself by raising cattle and pillaging. The mountains enveloping Kosovo and Metohija sent bands of raiders and cattle herds gushing down like a torrent. The inhabitants of the mountainous ranges and hills were goaded not only by their poverty but also by the cunning and growing outlaw activities committed by Ottoman pashas. Even though they were often replaced by the Sublime Porte, the local governers had their shares in the looting undertakings pursued by the highlanders; from the mountain populace their own escorts and personal army were chosen, with which they cruised their *sanjak* and other neighboring regions; built sturdy towers, made their nests and left behind a posterity that strove to establish rule for itself in the region. Mutual tribal clashes wherein the pashas frequently managed to deceitfully become entangled, ended with the emergence of at least some of them in peaceful habitats, ravaging and looting the place to rid themselves of their rage. The tamest parts of Old Serbia, above all Kosovo, were girdled by lawlessness and violence habitual to all gory regions. The Ottoman Empire would shift its stand on this phenomenon: sometimes it displayed the firm intent to tame the outlaws and establish legal order, which would have suited a state that cared for its dignity, and at other times it sheltered, albeit unsuccessfully, that lawlessness as a result of which the Serbian "reaya"—its perpetual enemy from time immemorial—perished, along with its spiritual center at Peć, actually caused no greater disturbance.

Arsenije IV Jovanović, Serbian Patriarch of Peć

Girdling Kosovo, particularly since Skoplje became the seat of the highest Serbian ecclesiastical officials, was a circle of Roman missionaries, more frequent in their expeditions and more cunning in their aims ever since the *Con-*

Count Georges Branković, Despot of Illyricum

gregation de Propaganda Fide was formed in 1622. They undoubtedly deserve merit for increasing literacy among the Catholic Albanians, whereas, for the purposes of expanding their propaganda, they found support in all those whom they could drive under that name. All the more noticeable was the number of Catholics who, following in the steps of the missionaries, descended the highlands of northern Albania to Serb-inhabited Kosovo. Nevertheless, the target of the Roman visitators was the Patriarchate of Peć. They were interested in proselytism, toward the Serbian Church, but they strove to maintain favorable relations with the local Ottoman governors and Albanian tribal leaders, in order to cover up the propaganda efforts against the Serb ecclesiastical leadership and Orthodoxy as a whole. The struggle against the patriarchate and its flock was given so much preference over other directives from Rome that the process of *islamization* first and mostly reached the Albanian Catholics or those on their way of becoming so. If the value of the task of the Catholic mission and the regular church in Kosovo and around it, could be measured by the damage done to the Serbian Orthodox population, its success should not be doubted; the effect was worthless.

Despite internal unrest and the lethal hoop binding it in the 17th century, demographic relations in Kosovo did not change much. Due to infectious epidemics, wars, increased violence, raider attacks and tribal anarchy in the massif regions, the population was reduced, yet the Serbian populace could have lost altogether only a few percent. The decisive breakdown was to come with the first Great Serb Migration in 1690.

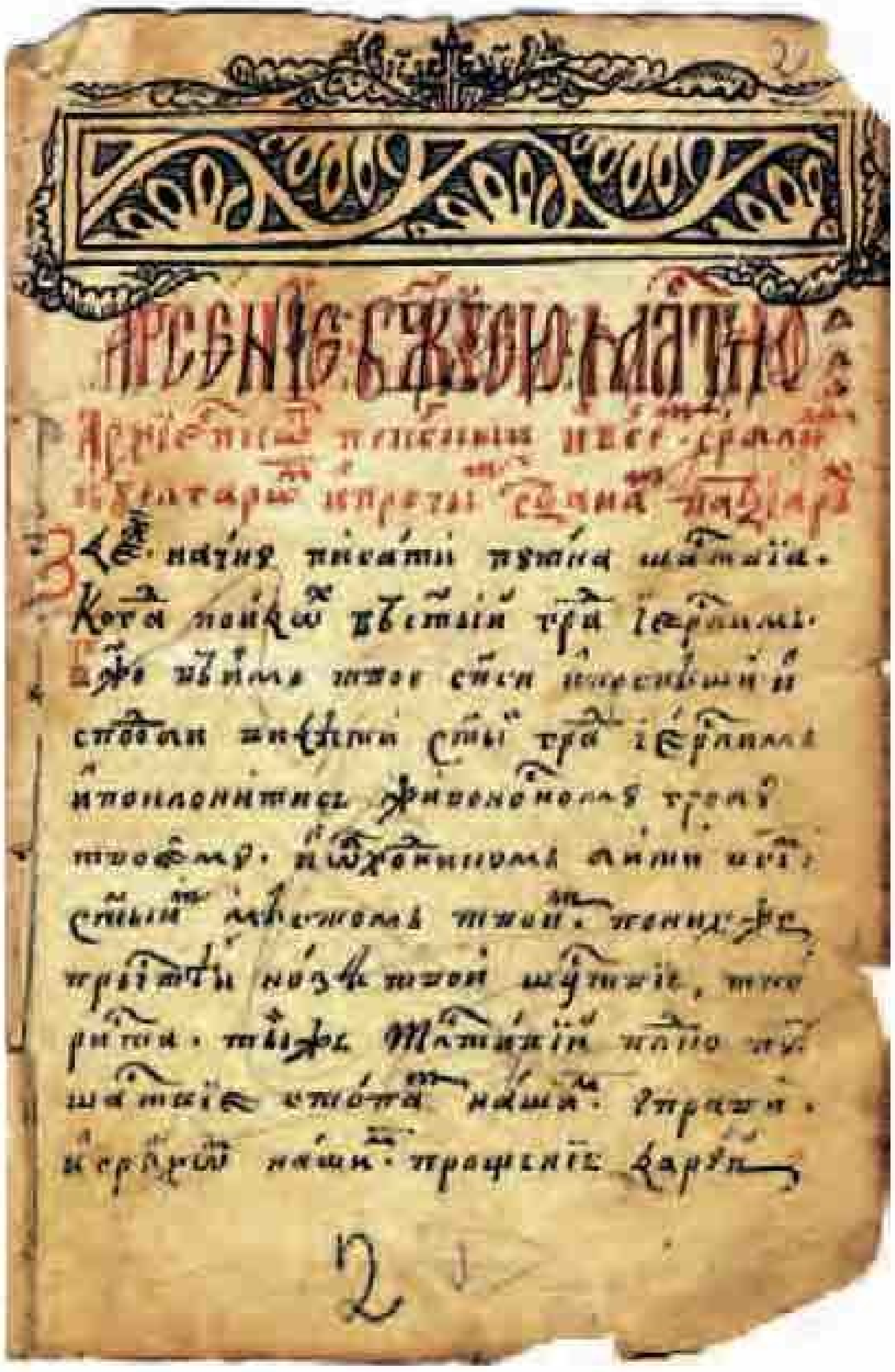
In the great war between the Holy League and Ottomans, in 1688–1690, Serbia was a battlefield. Even though the army of Habsburg Emperor Leopold I in its penetration south was frivolously small in number, its appearance, the appeal of the Emperor from Vienna and especially the invocation of national leaders urged the Serbs from all sides to rise against the Ottoman Turks, particularly at the accesses to Kosovo, and open the road for the Habsburg Christian army to nest in the same central region of the former Nemanjić state, and begin its ill-fated escapades to Skoplje, Štip and Veles. Again Kosovo became the land crucial for Serbian survival. Once it occurred to them they might lose their empire, fanaticism and the rage to war composed the Turks. Smashing the Christian forces at Kačanik, at the beginning of 1690, were the Tatars and Muslim Albanians took part, and pushing from the rear-line was the regular Ottoman army. The same order went for the retaliated onslaught into the countries of Old Serbia with the most destructive acts of savagery on the plain of Kosovo. The time for new conquests and devastations of the Serbian land had come. After three whole centuries, starting again with the fall of Kosovo, absolute evil with slaughter, deportation to slavery befell the nation, while towns and villages were turned into sites of fire. It was in 1690 that a great many endowments of medieval rulers and feudal lords were left to perish sadly. At the time, the events taking place in Kosovo were being delivered in abhorring detail to many European papers. Again the nation took refuge, like countless times before in history, and finally there came a directive from the sultan to end the extermination of the "reaya" (for the land had to be cultivated and the empire maintained). Despite the fall of the people and the rapid emergence of the sultan's army on the great rivers, and its repeated conquest of Belgrade (1690), the Serbian rebels continued to attack the Ottomans and disrupt their gatherings for the purpose of penetrating to the Danube Basin.

The main event during these years of sufferance (1689–1690) was nevertheless, the Great Migration. When the penetration of the Tatars, Muslim Albanians and Ottoman Turks became insufferable, Serbian Patriarch Arsenije III Crnojević abandoned his throne in Peć and, in the autumn of 1690, leading a fleeing nation, crossed over to Habsburg Empire. Arsenije III first received from Emperory in Vienna privileges that his Slavic-Serbian people will have, at least in professing their Orthodox religion, a special political position within Habsburg realm. Even before that time the Christian Orthodox Serbs had lived in the dilapidated parts of south Hungary (present day Vojvodina). Their number with the influx of the new fugitives did not increase drastically, yet, it so happened that the Serbs again began to acquire the special rights that once, at the end of the 15th the beginning of the 16th century they attained with the creation of their despotates on the soil of the Hungarian

kingdom. The despotates were founded by the last members of the Branković dynasty while fighting the Ottomans at the border. However, this time another Branković appeared: he was the titular Hungarian count and usurper Despot of Illyricum, George Branković, a descendant of the distinguished Branković from Transilvania, who was at the time already a slave in Vienna. Nevertheless, the people assembled in Buda (1691) and called out to the duke. Accompanied by obstruction and misfortune, the rise of the Serbs in Pannonia began. Kosovo was covered with a dark shadow of oppression, if not doom, for the deserted throne of the Serbian archpriest and national leader.

After the turbulence of war (1683–1699), the Balkan ground calmed slowly. Soon Habsburgs and Ottomans waged two more times until finally a frontier was established on the Sava and Danube rivers (1739). Meanwhile, like ungovernable rebels, the Christian Orthodox Serbs were again compelled to desert their hearths under the leadership of Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović and migrate to Habsburg lands (1737). A wasteland, northern Serbia served for decades to come, as a frontier country overgrown with forests and under-bushes for refuge to all who came from whatever side seeking to survive. And after an annihilation, the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija and in the entire region of Old Serbia remained and incomparable majority. The storms that passed over the country and across the Ottoman Empire wiped out many old decrees, mobilized groups of people and individuals caused general fermentation and thirst for blood and tossed the whole empire of the Ottomans into disorder. Among other things, it was the century of a forceful emergence of the ethnic Albanians on the historical scene. Once incited and set in motion, they formed companies that dispersed to plunder in all directions, to Belgrade, Vidine, and Plovdiv, even further. They most gladly assembled in Istanbul and, at first starved, would penetrate individual military regiments and engage in illegitimate businesses or simply plunder to which the authorities responded with brutal measures of extermination. To the rebellious tribes that refused subjugation and dispersed to loot neighboring regions, the Porte sent pashas with armies but returned half-way without accomplishing their task, or made peace for which both sides knew to be false. After all, in the central regions of the Balkans, raiding parties called krdzalije, comprised of those inclined to plunder, were formed from vagabonds of different origin. They sought a master to hire them as his personal army and those were mostly pashas-outlaws. With them, the ethnic Albanians ranked as first. This way Kosovo and Metohija became one of the targets of Albanian's penetration. Nevertheless, these areas gradually became occupied with the use of several methods that became engraved deeper and deeper into the composition of their mentality. Some tribes and clans moved toward more fertile land, goading countless of cattle moved toward more fertile land, goading countless of cattle that wreaked havoc behind it Some tribal chiefs or bandit leaders sent companies of their boys to attack the villages by night, create disturbances with gunshots and roaring, set fire to roofs, slaughter, take slaves and rout the cattle. Decay was encroaching into the Ottoman administration and army, since, contrary to the law and needs, many social riffraff had infiltrated themselves to attain power more easily and have free opportunity to loot. The destiny of the Serbian population depended more and more on the benevolence of a foreign country while the former was being pulled out of the state of lawlessness and general weakness by tolerating more obviously those who gave their allegiance to it only for the sake of realizing their individual powers and benefits in the name of the ruler. Way back at the end of the 17th century, pashas in Serbia acted more and more like outlaws than gouverners of the Sublime Porte. The overbearing bey families rooted themselves as masters in some parts of north Macedonia and Albania, then Kosovo, Metohija, and Brda. Even though they were of different origin, they were all considered ethnic Albanians, since only on that basis could they be surrounded by their own people, and, for the benefit of their own dominion, instead of state order, established the particular state of tribal anarchy and migration where they felt safe (in their mutual showdowns and before the punitive expedition of the regular army). At the end of the 18th, and the beginning of the 19th century, under the Bushatli pashas from the powerful Albanian clan, these areas, taken as a whole, were among those countries from which outlaws were drafted for the Ottoman Empire. These situations, rendered more detrimental with the influence of Roman Catholic missionaries upon the behavior of the Albanian leaders and some groups of the population, the Serbian people were confronted with the growing interference of the Greeks in matters of the church, and finally, with the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć (1776). Old Serbia, with Kosovo, its most sensitive part, changed

Oil lamp, the Treasury of the Dečani Monastery



Handwriting of Patriarch Arsenije III Crnojević (Čarnojević)

its appearance: resistant, the nation stuck to the ground more than ever, bound to it with its soul, still the majority, but the whole country, at one time blooming, turned to levant neglect and became a place of fear caused by flourishing lawlessness of the nobility and hypocritical administration of a patriarchal society without true spirituality. In medieval Serbia, whether they were an minority ethnic group or social stratum, the Albanians were, according to the law, privileged. By returning to tribal society, they were jeopardizing one another, despite all customs of peace and illusions on the existence of a general law that needed to be reestablished. They were hostile toward other nationalities whenever the internal laws of tribal expansion allowed them to usurpate land or crush by violence.

The Ottoman Empire was maintained by developing mutual dependence between the subjects, at times even hostility. Despite all illusions, it caused regression both to the Serbs and the Albanians, hampered their development and made each in its own way unfortunate. The empire allowed Albanian tribal gatherings and did nothing to prevent them from hitting upon their neighbors, but impaired itself by wreaking chaos to the establishments on which it was founded; it then sent pashas and their armies, appearing as representatives a serious state, to punish and pacify them. (The assemblies of leaders aiming to form the Albanian League, 1878–1881, with a bloody threat to Serbia and Montenegro, did not pass without the knowledge and stimulation of official Constantinople, yet, immediately after the Sublime Porte ordered the movement to. Be incapacitated and its leaders dispersed: at the end of the Eastern crisis, 1875–1878, the decisions made by the major states to the detriment of the Ottoman Empire should have been prevented in the first place, but, when they were validated, it was best to comply and obey and execute them under pressure). This game of fire, also played in other parts of the still spacious empire, caused Ottomans to lose its international reputation, however—at least in the case of Serbian-Albanian relations—a gain remained after all—Islam was spreading further and further, mostly damaging Serbia which had always been, and proved to be so again, the major enemy of the empire.

While they lasted, and wherever they existed—order of the state and social decrees life with the Ottomans had been bearable. Serbs in Kosovo and in Metohija, approaching the 19th century, endeavored in many ways to adapt to the environment and times to survive and remain in their homeland. It seemed they had been left on the other side of life and history! The Serbian secular clergy, and monks, most often exposed to violence, retrieved to Ottoman courts, made friends with the heads and other respectable citizens, fed countless gluttons, bestowed gifts along with their taxes, protected shrines by spreading rumors that the ill being treated while the tyrant's hand was becoming paralyzed and withered, sent letters on all Sides begging for understanding and help, but all this humbleness to invoke a more merciful fate was most often to no avail, so churches remained deserted, left to time and the non-Christian. Merchants and craftsmen strove not to stand out from the levant town to which they belonged neither in appearance or domestic life, speech and behavior, nor in any other chore they undertook. As compensation, they were, without public emphasis, loyal to their fatherland, tender contributors to monasteries and pious pilgrims. Saving was at least some security that perhaps one day with a little money they could escape from the burden hanging upon their shoulders. But in all Ottoman towns the Christians had a similar appearance. Nevertheless, the social mimicry of Serbs was mostly expressed in Kosovo. Adapting to Arbanas surroundings, in time they changed almost everything, houses, the clothes they themselves and their children wore, their bearing, even their appearance; they made efforts for at least the host to speak two, even all three languages; icons and icon lamps were hidden closets. Only their soul remained to be changed. After adopting another religion, either by force or willingly, mimicry was, just like the marrying their women, a sure way to Islamization and Arbanization. The name "Arnautaš" was given by the Serbs to

those whom they knew had first changed their religion by embracing Islam and then their nationality by enetring into Albanian clans. If historical data could be transferred into figures, at least thirty percent of Kosovo Albanian are of Slavic, i.e. Serbian origin (In Drenica area, the *Arnautaši* have even "albanized" the famous serbian hero, Miloš Obilić. Along with this, data gained from anthropogeographic and historical research arrived at a figure of around 150 refugees that came to Serbia between 1878 and 1912, after abandoning the wider region of Kosovo and Metohija, thus leaving room for the settlement or internal multiplication of Muslims of different ethnic origin, but mainly Ottoman and Albanians.

The interest of the major powers, beginning at the end of the 19th century, in the destiny of part of the Balkans comprised of areas inhabited by the Albanians or were destined with the Ottoman regime, to accept their spreading, contained, in its core, the several centuries old idea of the Roman Curia: destroying the seat of Serbian Orthodoxy which had most strongly resisted Catholic penetration to heretic areas. This notion, born in minds prepared for long-term memory, carried out gradually and patiently, came to ill-tempered harmony with the intention of Ottoman Empire to resume the conquest of Serbia even after her fall in 1459, and complete the subjugation, growing close to extermination, of the untamable Serbian nation particularly through Kosovo, being the life knot and promised land of the Serbs. Habsburg Empire publicly accepted these plans, incomplete, but partly realized already, in moments when Serbia revealed herself as the bearer of revolutionary principles of nationality in South East Europe. In solving the Eastern question, the major powers were all the more close to deciding that the Ottoman Empire, if it cannot be saved, should then be replaced by half-colonial pacification of the Balkans whereby its peoples should not be given the right to make decisions for themselves neither independently nor mutually concerning their future fate. The principle of nationality could be put into practice only on condition of establishing a compulsory balance that would be controlled. Information regarding the internal affairs of the Balkans came by default from hostile sources in Austria-Hungary and its religious patron, the Vatican. Thus a particular viewpoint on the Balkan problem was created; curbing it into their political sub-conscience, it was accepted by those who, at that moment, held different opinions and even upheld international decisions founded on opposite principles. The idea of a Balkan confederation, at first of doubtful merit, became a foundation approached by the major powers and social programs of Austro-Hungarian type. There was no place for Serbia, especially after the ascension of King Petar I Karadjordjević (1903–1914, officially until 1921), who considered himself a republican of revolutionary lineage. In the 1912–1918 wars, it destroyed two empires, the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian ones; the joint Yugoslav state was created in compliance with principles dating from the 19th century according to which the political map of modem Europe was finally drawn. Yet, Serbia was still marked as a public threat, a barrel-keg of gunpowder, from which the fuse ought to be pulled, a country which should first be given bearable dimensions and then be taken under strict supervision. The spirit of buried Austria-Hungary, and mostly its own notions on the solution to internal relations on the Balkans came to life on different sides and in several aspects. History also stepped backward when those nations were introduced into the Communist International.

Decisions to separate Kosovo and Metohija from Serbia, and all the political measures undertaken in Vienna and Berlin in 1912-1918, was the violation of the ethnic and religious balance to the advantage of the Albanians, could be considered oas a forced change of demographic balance: the creation of the Albanian domination by violence was operated at the expence of Serb-inhabited areas in Kosovo, Metohija and neighbouring areas.

Royal doors of the Metropolitan Antonije, 1570,
repainted at the beginning of 19th century by Aleksije Lazović,
Treasury of the Patriarchate of Peć

Karadjordje, Petrović, founder of Karadjordjević dynasty (1804–1813)

Prince-Bishop Petar II Petrović-Njegoš (1830–1851)

MODERN SERBIA AFTER 1804

Supreme Leader Karadjordje, founder of Karadjordjević dynasty, 1804–1813
Prince Miloš Obrenović, founder of Obrenović dynasty, 1815–1839
Prince Mihailo Obrenović, 1839–1842
Prince Alexander Karadjordjević, son of Karadjordje, 1842–1858
Prince Miloš Obrenović, 1858–1860
Prince Mihailo Obrenović, 1860–1868
Prince Milan Obrenović, king since 1882, 1868–1889
King Alexander Obrenović, 1889–1903
King Petar I Karadjordjević, 1903–1921
King Alexander I Karadjordjević, King of Yugoslavia, 1921–1934
Regency of Prince Paul Karadjordjević for King Petar II Karadjordjević of Yugoslavia, 1934–1941
King Peter II Karadjordjević, 1941–1945

RULERS OF MODERN MONTENEGRO (Dinasty of Petrović Njegoš)

Bishop Danilo Petrović-Njegoš, 1697–1735
Bishop Sava, 1735–1781
Prince-Bishop Vasilije, 1750–1766
Sćepan Mali, 1767–1773
Prince-Bishop Petar I Petrović-Njegoš, 1782–1830
Prince-Bishop Petar II Petrović-Njegoš, 1830–1851
Prince Danilo Petrović-Njegoš, 1851–1860
Prince Nikola Petrović-Njegoš, king since 1910, 1860–1918

Prince Miloš Obrenović

Petar I Petrović Njegoš,
Prince-Bishop of Montenegro,
proclaimed Saint
as St. Peter of Cetinje

Prince Mihailo Obrenović

Nikola I Petrović Njegoš,
Prince and King
of Montenegro

King Petar I
Karadjordjević

King Alexander I
Karadjordjević,
King of Yugoslavia

Kosovo, the site of Judgment Day

Petar II Petrović Njegoš

Our God hath poured His wrath upon the Serbs,
For deadly sins withdrawn His favour from us:
Our Rulers trampled underfoot all law,
With bloody hatred fought each other down.
Tore from fraternal brows the living eyes:
Authority and Law they cast aside,
Instead chose folly as their rule and guide!
And those who served our kings became untrue,
Crimson they bathed themselves in kingly blood!
Our noblemen—God's curse be on their souls –
Did tear and rend the Kingdom into pieces,
And wasted wantonly our people's power.
The Serbian magnates—may their name rot out! –
They scatter'd broadcast Discord's evil seed,
And poisoned thus the life–springs of our race.
Our Serbian chiefs, most miserable cowards,
The Serbian stock did heartlessly betray.
Accursed be Kossovo's Evening Meal;
Far better had it been if from that hour
Our magnates all had disappear'd for aye!
If only Milosh still remain'd unto us,
With his two valiant Pobratims,
Then Serb would be with Serb to–day.
Thou Brankovitch, of stock despicable,
Should one serve so his Fatherland,
Thus much is Honesty esteem'd?
Who, Milosh, would not envy thee?
A victim thou to thine own truth and worth!
All–puissant spirit in the things of War;
A thunder mighty which did shatter thrones!
The deeds thy knightly soul hath wrought.
Outshine all lustre of the Past, –
The fame of Sparta and of mighty Rome!
Their valiant and heroic feats
Are all surpass'd by thy proud arm.
Where is Leonidas. where Scaevola,
When Obilitch doth enter the arena?
That arm of thine with but one only stroke
Brought down a throne and made all Hell to quake!
Yet Milosh fell, most marvellous of knights,
A victim fell unto the world's great Scourge.
In proud repose the puissant Leader lies:
There from his veins did spurt his noble blood,
Where he so proudly trod a while before,
His breast possess'd by one sole dread intent,
As he did press his way through Asia's hordes,
He swallow'd them with his great eyes of fire
Where he so proudly trod a while before.
Seeking his hallow'd tomb and life immortal,
Scorning alike the failures of small men,
And all that false and senseless company.
Our God hath pour'd His wrath upon the Serbs!

A seven–headed monster He sent forth
To plague and extirpate the Serbian Name,
Be they betrayers or be they betray'd.
On falling rums of a realm heroic
Did Milosh shine with firm and constant justice;
Crowned be too, with an undying glory,
Those pobratims who steadfast were to Milosh;
Not less the lovely Jugovitch bouquet!
So parsed the Serbian Cap and Name away:
Warrior lions gave place to ploughmen,
While selfish poltroons took Mohammed's creed, –
Their Serbian milk shall ever bring them plague!
All those who 'scaped from death by Moslem sword,
All those who still held true to Christian faith,
Who with abhorrence thought of bonds and chains,
All such as these took flight to mountains grey,
To wane and perish and pour out their blood;
'Mid mountains, trust and heritage to guard,
Our sacred Freedom and our glorious Name.
Thereto our Traders Providence hath called,
Our Serbian Youth as radiant as the stars,
The children of these mountains wild,
In bloody combats falling day by day,
For sake of Honour, Faith, and Freedom dear;
Yet all our tears are wiped away
When skilful gouslar comes with rousing lay.
Oh, let our losses all be light,
If the hard mountains of our land
Become the grave of Moslem might!...

[...]
[SIRDAR VUKOTA]
O accursed land, may you perish in doom!
Your name is most horrible and dreaded.
No sooner does a young hero appear
than you take him away in early youth.
Or if there is a brave man of honor,
you snatch him, too, long before his time comes.
Or if there is a garland of flowers
to decorate the heads of lovely brides,
you harvest it at the peak of flowering.
My land, you have turned to blood for me now!
In very truth you are now nothing more
than piles of bones and graveyard monuments,
on which our youth, resolved and without fear,
holds a solemn festival of horror.
O Kosovo, the site of Judgment Day,
may Sodom burst into flames on your field!

[...]
O you, Miloš, who does not envy you?
You are the victim of your noble feelings,
you, a mighty military genius,
a terrific thunder that shatters crowns!
The greatness of your noble knightly soul
surpasses the immortal, valiant deeds
of great Sparta and of powerful Rome.
All their brilliant courageous endeavours
your knightly arm places in deep shadow.
Leonidas and Scaevola, can they
match Obilić on any battlefield?
His powerful arm with a single blow
toppled a throne and shook all Tartarus.
The wonder of all valiant knights, Miloš,
fell victim at the throne of the world's scourge.

[...]
A MONTENEGRIN WEDDING GUEST
Our Obilić, you fiery dragon,
the eyes of those who look at you go blind.
All brave men will always honor your name!
You did not fail our crown like a coward
when you set your foot on the Sultan's throat
and stepped into the Sultan's torn belly.
Now I see you riding your stallion, Kiaurs,
and dispersing the Turks around the tent.
What will happen? Who will do the right thing?
Serb and Turk can never get together.
The salty sea will sooner change to sweet.

Rendered into English by James W. Wiles, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London 1930. Petar II Petrović Njegoš (1813–1851), was Serbian Orthodox Prince—Bishop of Montenegro (Metropolitan of Cetinje).

The burial chappel of Prince-Bishop Petar II Petrović Njegoš on the mountain Lovćen peak (1851)

Njegoš as Tragic Hero in the Thought of Kosovo

Ivo Andrić

THIS DRAMA BEGAN in Kosovo.

Ljuba Nenadović, though a Serb himself, was rather surprised when he saw in Montenegro in the nineteenth century, the power of the Kosovo tradition live, which in those hills centuries later was a reality, just as close and real as the bread and water. Wearied women that were resting besides stacked wood on the edge of the stony road talked to him about Kosovo as of their own fate and personal tragedy.

"Our rights are buried in Kosovo" the people were saying with resignation not even having one thought about looking for it in any other way than that which is dictated by the Kosovo covenant; the entire fate of all these people was marked and guided. As in the most ancient legend, which is always the biggest human reality, everyone has personally felt a historical curse which nobles, turned into farmers, leaving in their souls "fearful thought from Obilić," to live like that crucified between their "farmers", people's reality and knight like Obilić thought. Montenegro and people who escaped to the hills were quintessential of that Kosovo mystery. Everything that was born in those hills arrived to this world reflecting the view of Kosovo blood.

That is where the beginning of the Njegoš drama begins. Without it the tragedy of Njegoš life would be understood with difficulty. Njegoš is a prototype of a Kosovo fighter. And as poet and as a ruler and as a man, he is a personification of Kosovo battle, defeat and unbroken hope. He is, as someone said "Jeremiah of Kosovo", and at the same time an active, responsible fighter for "removal of curse" and bringing to reality of Obilić thought. It is argued that the word "Kosovo" besides the word "God" is mentioned most frequently in the Mountain Wreath. But, neither thought nor poetry are indispensable for Kosovo tradition; this tradition for Njegoš is very life, it is a subject of his realistic and cautious diplomatic correspondence as it is a subject of his main poetic work. In his correspondence with Russia and Turks, for him Kosovo is one date which influences all decisions and solutions of most concrete questions.

In formulating his petitions, he begins with words "from the fall of our kingdom." He speaks about Kosovo as of any other moral-political argument, as of live and crucial factor of collective and personal fate. In official correspondence, he writes to Osman-Pasha of Scutari: "...When wild Asian crowds destroyed our small heroic kingdom, then my ancestors and some other selected families, which did not die there from Turks, left their fatherland [Serbia's Kosovo] and settled in these hills."

In those hills "They serve the Cross and lived by Miloš." And only in that light the fate itself can be understood and as well as Njegoš' work.

(Excerpt)

Ivo Andrić, *Collected Works*, vol. 113, Belgrade 1981.
Translated from the Serbian by Fr. Bratislav Kršić.

Biljarda, the former residence of Petar II Petrović Njegoš, Cetinje. Since 1951 it is a Memorial Museum of Njegoš.

SPEECH AT THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF NJEGOŠ

Nikola I Petrović Njegoš

As King of Montenegro, as successor and nephew of today's great celebrant, I am grateful to this assembly and all the Serbian people for the sentiments of gratitude, love and admiration, which delights his memory.

As a lion from the bushes, from the long dead, from the old sculptured volcanic valley of Njeguši, my uncle Rade rushed out to strengthen the Serbian world in its ideals and obligations in completing the great national task. Its soul he instilled with faith for success, the blade he sharpened and warmed with poetry.

Our good, Serbian people responded delightfully.

Kosovo, the wound of his great heart, was healed, for in the days of the one hundredth anniversary since his birth that nation sanctified Kosovo for him.

A great nation in spirit could not have repaid the spirit of the greatest genius in a nicer way.

Glory to the Serbian people!

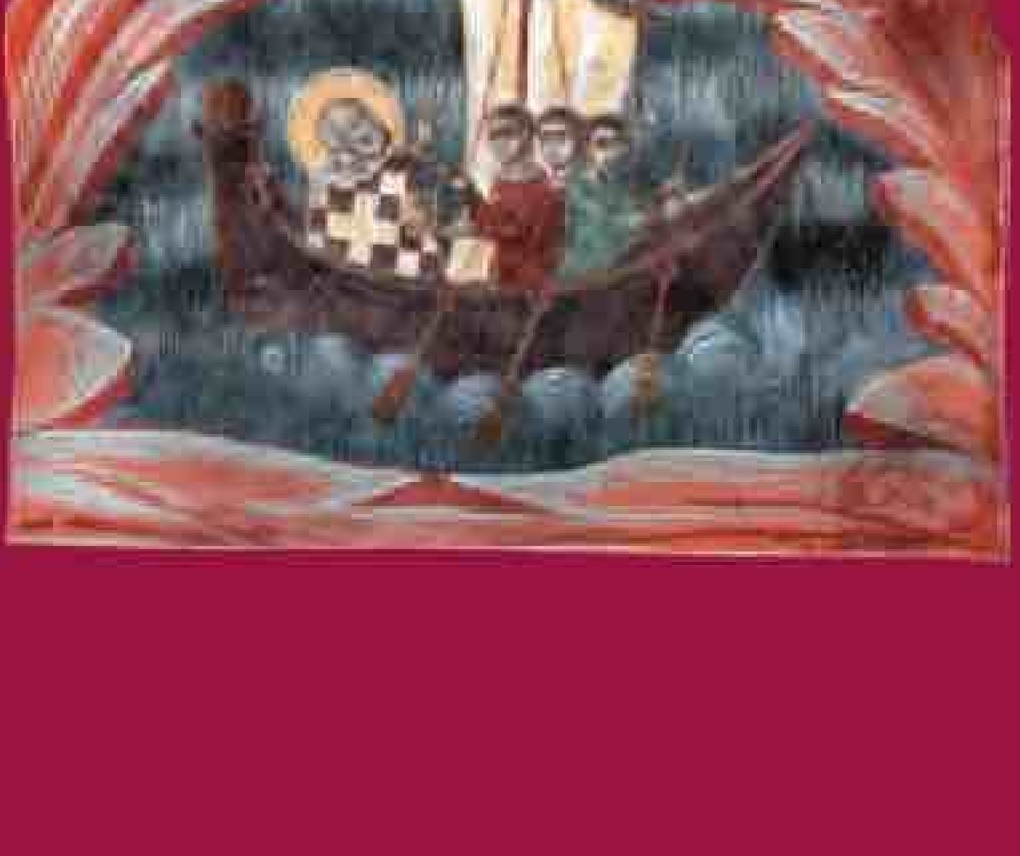
Glory to the ruler of Montenegro, to Bishop Rade (Petar II Petrović Njegoš)!

Nicolas Ier, roi de Monténégro

St. Arsenije – 2nd Archpishop of Serbia, St. Sava – 1st Archbishop of Serbia and St. Simeon Nemanja, exonarthex, Gračanica, 1570

VII

SERBIA AFTER THE 1389 BATTLE OF KOSOVO



The Ottoman Empires in Anatolia and Eastern Europe. Map: Patricia Moritz.
Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent.

Mehmed Pasha Sokolović (Sokollu Mehmed Paşa), 1505–1579

Serbs and Albanians under Ottoman Rule

Alex Dragnich and Slavko Todorovich

Captured Ottoman yatagans, ca. 1800.

The end of the Serbian Despotate in 1459 was followed by the demise of the Kingdom of Bosnia (1463). The Ottoman Empire now ruled not only over all Serbs, except those in Montenegro, of which more will be said later, but stretched all the way from Mesopotamia to the Danube, and westward to the Adriatic. Serbs, Greeks, Bulgars, and Albanians were subjugated, and they had no idea how long their plight would last. At the same time, some among them concluded that life would be easier if they converted to Islam. Many others decided to move out—to Hungary or to go to the coast to look for a haven in Venice or in Venetian-held territories in Dalmatia, or to try the gates of Dubrovnik, which in exchange for tribute to the sultan, was allowed to retain its small territory free of Ottomans. Those who stayed and did not convert had one thing in common: all of them were classified as *giaours*, a category that lumped together all those who were not Muslim.

To the Ottomans, the Byzantine and Roman faiths were two sides of the same coin, a logical conclusion. In real life, however, the best proof that it was not so was to be found in the very fact of Ottoman victory. It took them less than a century to annihilate three Balkan tsardoms, divided and never assisted by Christian Western Europe.

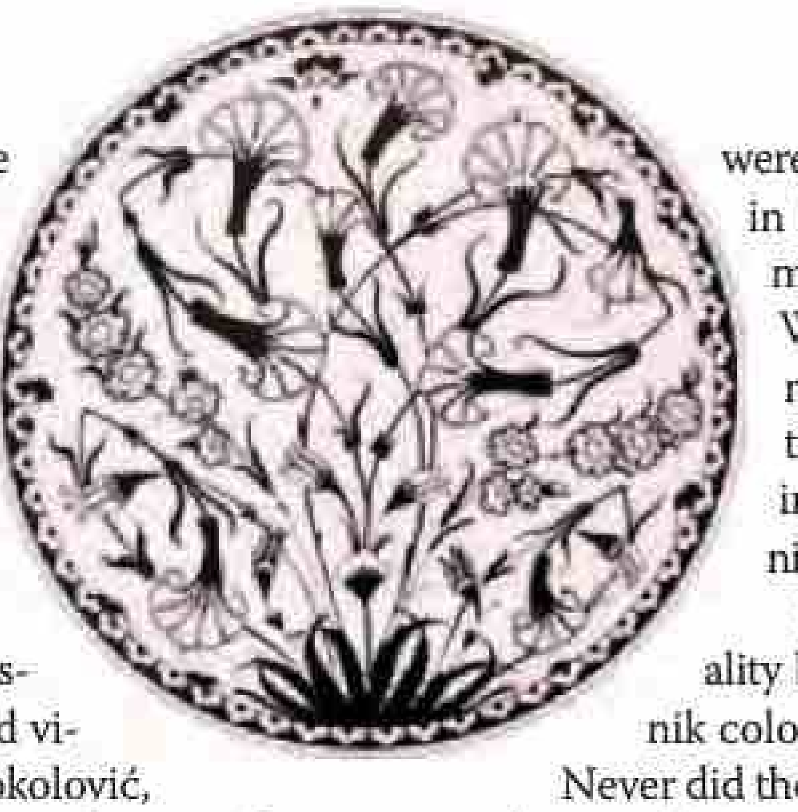
On the other hand, Christianity was the only single bond that the subjugated peoples of the Balkans now had in common. What else was there to hold onto until the Islamic flood should recede? Moreover, the Balkan peninsula became a 2-realm society: Muslim and Christian, one privileged and the other discriminated against. It was up to the individual to decide whether he wanted to live and die as an exploited person or lead a more favorable existence. It was obvious that hard decisions had to be made.

The Ottoman occupation did not mean the same thing for all Balkan nationalities. The Greeks, for example, who had played such an important role in the Byzantine world, were viewed with the greatest respect by the invader. The Ottoman Turks were good fighters and eager to participate in the spoils of war, but when it came to bureaucracy and administration in general they were sadly lacking. It was not long after the fall of Constantinople that the city's Greek, Venetian, and Jewish communities began to bustle with activity and opulence. Someone had to provide the continuity in commerce, administration, and in understanding the affairs of the Balkan mosaic. By all standards, in the reality of the period, the Greeks were the most suited for this function.

When it came to choosing who would represent the Christians and to provide spiritual leadership, the choice again fell to the Greeks. Having a Greek as Eastern Orthodox patriarch in Constantinople made a substantial difference.

For the Serbs, a glimpse into the extremity of their situation in that period is given us by a contemporary Serbian, turned adventurer, soldier of fortune, and author—Konstantine Mihailović of Ostrovica. Serving for 10 full years as a member of Ottoman shock troops and fighting for Sultan Mehmed II, he later escaped to Hungary. Toward the end of his life, this gifted man wrote *Memoirs of a Janissary*, in the form of a general history of the Turks of his time. One of the events he described was the fall of the Serbian mining town of Novo Brdo into the hands of the sultan. First, the sultan ordered all gates closed except one, through which all of the inhabitants had to pass, leaving their possessions behind. "So they began passing through, one by one," writes Mihailović, "and the sultan, standing at the gate, was separating males from females... then he ordered the leaders beheaded. He saved 320 young men and 704 women... He distributed the women among his warriors, and the young men he took into the janissary corps, sending them to Anatolia... I was there, in that city of Novo Brdo, I who write this..."

The shipping of young Christian men (and boys) to Ottoman schools to become janissaries, or if talented, to be a part of the administrative apparatus, was common practice in the Ottoman Empire. It was part of the tribute the Christian "raja" had to pay to the Turks, but it was not always the same in all regions. It is not clear whether it was a



compliment or a punishment when the Ottomans took more male children from one area than from another. Serbs were trying to hide their boys, only to realize later that the ones who were taken away fared much better in life.

Because religion, not nationality, was the fundamental factor in the Ottoman concept of governing, it was possible for a *raja* child to become a grand vizier of the Ottoman sultan. Mehmed Sokolović, a Serbian child from a village near Višegrad, was a Ottoman grand vizier. He built that famous bridge on the river Drina, the subject of the book by Serbian Nobel Laureate, Ivo Andrić. In general, it can be said that compared to today's totalitarian societies, where party and creed adherence is a must, Ottoman rulers come out rather liberal. As long as one was a devout Muslim, that was sufficient allegiance for the sultan. And allegiance he got. Mehmed Sokolović served three sultans in a row with the highest possible loyalty and fidelity.

As the Islamization process was taking place, it took root better in some areas, among certain classes and in certain environments. For example, the process was much faster in Albanian and Bosnian areas than in the region of Serbia's former state. Accepting Islam in Albanian regions was a less painful process, because the Albanians did not have an autocephalous Church, and their Christianity, whether Byzantine or Latin, had not become as integral in Albanian life and remained either Greek or Italian. And in Bosnia the widely spread Bogomil sect did not hold Orthodox Christianity in high esteem.

Wealth and material position were also important factors that entered into the decision process at times of conversion. Town dwellers, landowners, and military oriented personalities had to think in terms of Islam, if they wanted to preserve what they had and to take part in new accumulation. Those with professional skills—artisans, doctors, scholars, and administrators—could not expect to fare well if they stuck to their old faith. This, however, was not true of the common people and the peasants.

All of this played a role in defining the new stratification of the society under Ottoman rule, as well as the power balance among national groups. Undoubtedly, the balance was shifting, and as far as the Albanians and Serbs were concerned, it was shifting drastically in favor of the Albanians, to the detriment of good relations between them. With over 30 grand viziers of Albanian descent during Ottoman rule, the top policy- making machine was indeed saturated with people of Albanian stock.

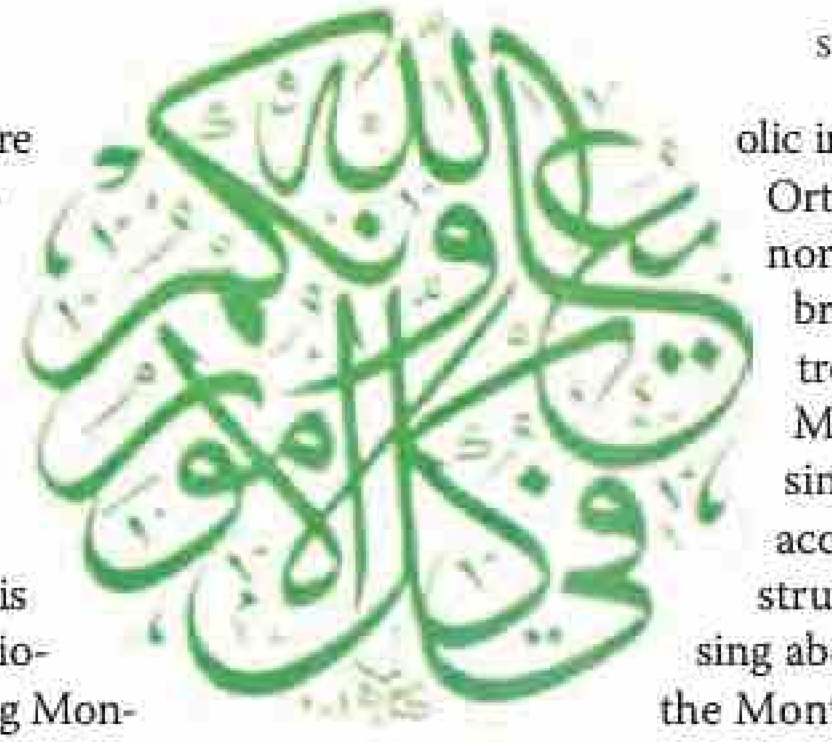
Above on top: **Circular floral design**, Asia Minor, 16th century
Above left: **The Lion, symbolizing Ali, is made up of calligraphy forming words meaning "In the name of the lion of God, the face of God, the victorious Ali." The image comes from a dervish wall-hanging made in Turkey**, 18th–19th century

No one knew the effect of the nationality background better than the Dubrovnik colony of merchants in Constantinople. Never did they have it better than when Sokolović was the grand vizier. Never were they hated and envied more in Constantinople than when Djivo Djurdjević and Pavle Sorkočević, the two senators from the city republic, could come, just as many other Slavs of rank, and ask for an audience and be received by the grand vizier with sympathy and understanding. The Serbian historian, Radovan Samardžić, describes such an instance almost poetically in his book on Sokolović:

"Sokolović took great pleasure in talking with Dubrovčani because he could talk with them in his mother tongue, without witless, muddle-headed, and dangerous interpreters obtaining firsthand detailed, and exact evaluation of conditions in Europe ... More than that, he experienced a personal satisfaction, impregnated with indefinable melancholy, on hearing in his own language all those expressions, thoughts, and slices of life, which to his own Turks, even if they still knew the language, were becoming foreign ... and when occasionally he would, with jesting sarcasm, frolic upon their poltroonery, easily detectable slyness, and clumsily hidden egoism, he [still] never ... let them return to their quarters unhappy or discouraged."

One could contend that in this particular case the prominent Serbian historian had fallen prey to unscientific sentimentality, but there is no doubt that, as far as the process of Islamization was concerned, Albanians in general showed themselves much more pliable than Serbs. The weight of their Albanian tradition must have been a lighter burden. Theirs is the famous saying: "Ku este shpata este feja" (Your faith is where the sword is). First class warriors, fascinated by guns, used to discipline and obeying when ruled by a strong hand, the Albanians represented a much better medium to be cast into the Ottoman mold than the individualistic and unpredictable Serbs.

In Ottoman society, which had several centuries to go before being seriously challenged, this was a crucial distinction that would decide the potential for advancement. After the Serbian Patriarchate was abolished (1556), it was a blessing for the Serbs to have had Mehmed Sokolović in a position of power, and he reopened the Patriarchate (1557) and placed his brother, Makarius, in charge. But the Serbs badly needed another Mehmed in 1766, when the Patriarchate was once again abolished. Unfortunately for them, one or two Serbian candles, at best, were not enough in



five centuries of Ottoman darkness. There is no doubt that the Albanians' continued presence at the seat of power gave them an upper hand, which was the beginning of a tragic divisiveness, of separate roads for them and for the Serbs. The former became the rulers and the latter the ruled.

This split, or a parting of the ways, is probably best seen in the gradual deterioration of relations between neighboring Montenegrin and Albanian tribes. In early stages of Ottoman occupation these relations were friendly. Living under similar conditions in the isolated highlands, having similar life patterns, traditions, and history, they were a world apart from the rest of the Balkans. They populated the roadless mountain areas that invaders had no particular desire to visit as long as their control was acknowledged by regular tax contributions and tributes. Usually they were left alone to lead and organize their own lives around their own social patterns. Their elected local leaders, together with their priests, ruled in strict observance of their traditions and customs. The Ottoman judiciary never bothered the Christians unless Muslim rule or people were involved. In their relationships members of the two societies, Christian and Muslim (Montenegrin and Albanian, although sometimes not necessarily so clearly delineated), were generally cordial. Through common experiences and alliances in local conflicts, as well as opposition to outside influences, the binding word *besa* (promise) often meant mutual protection.

The symbiosis that engulfed the clans of different ethnic cities was noticeable and evident until quite recently, and traces of it can be found even today. A French traveler was taken aback, when in the late years of the 18th century he visited Herzegovina. It was the Christian holiday of St. Ilija, but to his amazement he noticed that Muslims were going to the mosque, splendidly lit. His agitated curiosity and inquiry were given a laconic answer: "It's Ilija in the morning, Alija in the evening!" Even today one can still see Albanian Muslims of Kosovo, Metohija, or Macedonia, men and women and children of the same family, descending from their hills and visiting a Serbian monastery. Men, wearing their white skullcaps, in their white serge trousers braided with black lace, followed by their women (who no longer wear veils), bringing their infant children or alone, waiting for the priest to admit them to the Serbian place of worship. They arrive in reverence of the Holy Mother, or a saint whose icon is in the church or, more often, of relics of some Serbian king, sanctified in the monastery and known to help where Mohammed and Esculap had failed. "No wonder," a Serbian priest would comment after such visits (always on Friday), "they were Christians once."

In the 14th and 15th centuries the great majority of Albanians were Christians, Eastern Orthodox or Roman Catholic in the north, predominately Eastern Orthodox in the south. Members of the north Albanian tribe, Malisori, celebrated Saint Nikola's Day (their patron and protector, just as he is of the Montenegrins). Both could be heard singing their national ballads, to the accompaniment of the one-string instrument (gusle). The Malisori would sing about King Marko and Prince Lazar; the Montenegrins would sing about Skanderbeg, alias George Castriota.

It is an exceptional case today, but until recently it was not unusual to see Albanians visiting with their Christian friends on Christian holidays, or participating in dancing and feasting (wine and pork avoided), attending weddings and baptism ceremonies. Usually these were the traditional inter-family ties of friendship, a legacy from the old days, when the respective families were closely knit, living through periods of harmony or quarrels, but never inimical hostility. These were the days of stable family life, when young men went abroad only to return with money saved, and then continued to live in the manner of their fathers. Even today there are young Schipetars (Albanians) who remember that their fathers would never begin any project on Tuesday, the day of the Kosovo defeat.

The Monastery of Peć, which was the seat of the Serbian patriarch (1346–1556 and 1557–1766), maintained close and friendly relations with the Albanians of the rugged area of Rugovo, which provided shelter to Patriarch Arsenius IV in 1737, when he had to hide from the pursuing Turks.

Above on top: **Turkish levha in Celi Sulus by Sami Effendi, A.H. 1289/1872 A.D.—Translates: "May God help you in all matters."**
Above: Left to right: **Turkish Grand Vizier, Sword-bearer to the Sultan, Ladle-bearer of the Janissaries**, hand water-colored engravings, London, 1802, Collection of Basil W. R. Jenkins.

The Albanians continued to provide guard service to the Patriarchate in Peć and the Dečani Monastery, but in recent years with notable lack of success.

Late in the 19th century two English ladies visited Kosovo (Miss Muir Mackenzie and Miss A. P. Irby). In their book, Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey-in-Europe, they reported the respect among Albanians for the Serbian holy places. The authors blamed the Turks and their propaganda for any Albanian excesses that occasionally took place in the area. They maintained that the Turks were the ones who incited young Muslim Albanians to ill-treat the Serbs, to "throw stones and filth" at Serbian funerals, and to shout "insults and obscenities at Christians on Sundays."

Sultan Mehmed II in 1479,
portrait by Italian painter Gentile Bellini

But it was not only the Turks who were the source of such incidents. Other quarters (e.g., Rome and Vienna) contributed their bit to poison the atmosphere in Kosovo, Metohija, and the border area between Montenegro and the Albanian regions. Both Italy and Austria-Hungary had no interest in maintaining peace and harmony in those regions.

While one should never underestimate the importance of foreign schemes in muddling relations between the Slavs and the Muslims in the area, the phenomenon of Islamization, and all that it meant in terms of personal welfare and social advancement, still remained the main cause of the estrangement. To the Albanians, Islam was an opportunity that they could not let pass. It was a vehicle not only to get even, but, in addition, to outrank the Greeks and the Slavs.

The Islamization process was a continuous one, but its fervor and intensity were not. At certain periods, in certain areas, with certain people, the process would explode, usually triggered by some violent event. Something would happen, such as Albanians siding with Venice in a dispute with the Porte, or the Serbs would join the Austrian army in its incursions into the territory. The aftermath would be intensified Islamization. Pressures would be applied, and on such occasions Serbs would usually show more intransigence than Albanians. The Albanians could never understand that inherent Serbian hostility toward the Turks, but then they had no Kosovo in their heritage. The Greeks, on the other hand, understood it very well—they had Thermopylae.

One must credit all Balkan people with one thing: capacity for survival. But some did it the hard way; others compromised and adapted to what they regarded as a temporary situation. Even today, modern history has proved that Serbs fall into the first category. The Kosovo syndrome seemingly does not let them act in any other way.

Albanians are survivors, too, but in most cases they assured their continuity in an easier way. Islamization was one such way. The phenomenon of "crypto-Christianity," practiced profusely by many Albanians, both Roman Catholic and Orthodox, is proof. This cannot be said, however, to be a character trait of Albanians, or even duplicity, but rather a pragmatic solution of an intelligent survivor. Again we come to the question: could not the Serbs have done the same thing? Yes, and those who were not burdened with Kosovo did it (the Bosnians).

American historian Stavro Skendi defines the Albanian crypto-Christians as follows: "The crypto-Christians lived in regions near those inhabited by Muslims and professed Islam, but satisfied their consciences by practicing Christianity in private. They emerged in periods of outbursts of anti-Christian fanaticism" (The Albanian National Awakening, Princeton, 1967, p. 12). Skendi continues: "In the north the crypto-Christians were concentrated in the Pashalik of Prizren; they were called laramane (motley) and they lived chiefly around Ipek [Peć] and in the plain of Kosovo." Miss Mackenzie called these Albanians "secret Christians." She cited a case, in those border areas where Albanians and Montenegrins lived, of a young Albanian Muslim letting the Serbian priest into his house, because his parents were still clinging to the old faith, while he himself was a hybrid.

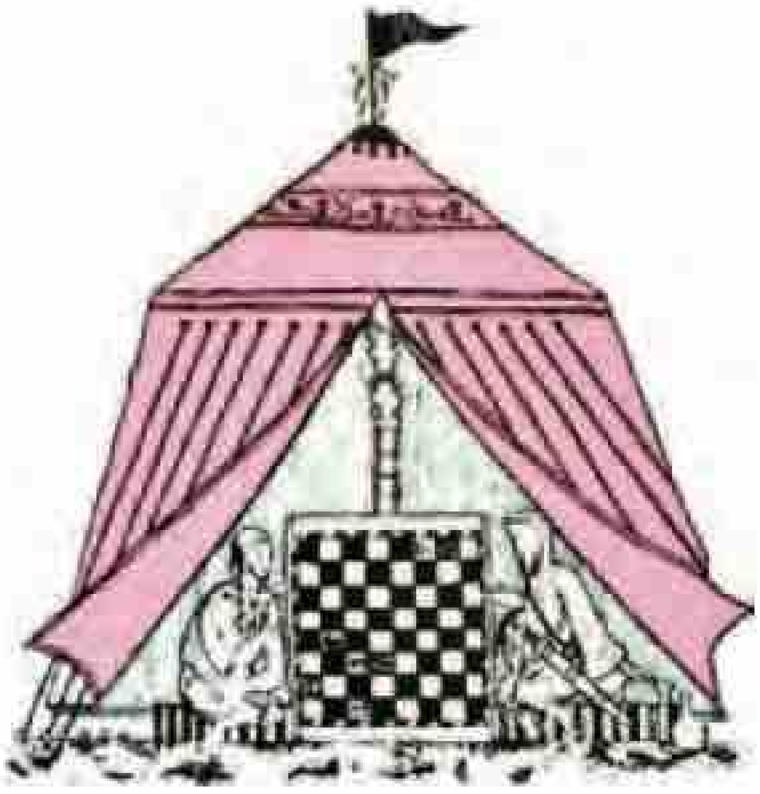
There was another religious phenomenon in Albania, mostly in the southern areas, with the same rationale. The Muslim sect of Bektashism (a product of Anatolia), as early as the 13th century, existed in the frontier region where Christianity, Islam, and paganism coexisted. Bektashis were not so much anti-Christian as they were pro-Albanian. They proclaimed themselves to be brothers of all peoples, which is why the Slavs preferred the Bektashis to the Sunni converts. The latter, however, were more numerous than the Bektashis in the regions of Kosovo, Montenegro, Herzegovina, and Bosnia.

The Sunni fervor prompted the puritanical Montenegrin Prince-Bishop Danilo (1670–1735) to purge converted Montenegrins. In their Muslim fanaticism, the latter had gone so far as to assist the invading Ottoman force to enter the Montenegrin capital of Cetinje. National bards sing of the brothers Martinović who executed the eerie plan of eradicating the traitorous *poturice* (converts) with their consecrated maces. It was done in the dark of one Christmas eve (1702). This crepuscular feat immensely impressed Russian Tsar Peter the Great. He ordered money, gifts, and missals and icons to be sent to the prince-bishop of Montenegro.

The massacre resulted from an intense hatred of everything Muslim, including people of their own blood who had converted to Islam. As a young man of 20, when he attained power, Danilo Petrović-Njegoš, felt rather strong-

ly that one day the Muslim corruption of Montenegrin Christian souls would have to be stopped. That day came when the Pasha of Scutari promised him safe conduct to Podgorica, where he was to consecrate a new church. Danilo did not trust Turkish promises but felt that "for the sake of my faith, I have to go, though it may be my fate not to return." He saddled his best horse and departed. On his way back Bishop Danilo was blackmailed. The pasha demanded 3,000 ducats for his release to the Montenegrins. As he was being marched back to Cetinje, he must have thought of a suitable revenge. The ransom was somehow paid, and Danilo summoned his flock to agree on the day when the traitorous Turks would be massacred all over the country. The executioners were merciless; all those who refused baptism were executed, and Montenegrins have ever since sung about this feat of "purification." Traitors were no more in their ranks. And the neighboring Albanians, if of Muslim faith, never lost sight of the bloody message.

Bishop Danilo's type of solution, regardless of how drastic and effective in Montenegro, could not stop the process of Islamization in the Balkans. The only viable opposition was in the fortitude of the Christian people themselves, in their resolution to oppose Islam and to "die for the Christian faith" if necessary. Albanians obviously felt that choosing death would be impractical. Once they found that conversion to Islam was a valuable asset, they could not be stopped. By the end of the 17th century, two-thirds of them were Muslims. The Turks were at the peak of their might, and their corruptive policy of granting favors and privileges to individuals and tribes that accepted Islam prevented all attempts to solidify any meaningful mass resistance.



Christian manuscript illustration of a Christian and a Muslim in the non-violent confrontation of a chess game, 13th century

In a sense, Albanians found the special treatment they got from the Turks, once they converted to Islam, not unusual. They were treated as a separate category in Byzantine and in Serbian times. Their warriors were in great demand, and one of the ablest generals that Emperor Dušan had at the time of his Greek campaign was an Albanian by origin. Dušan settled many Albanians in conquered lands as a reward for their services. Not only as mercenaries, but as a sheep and other livestock-raising ethnic group, the Albanians enjoyed a special and separate status.

By the 19th century, in areas where Serbs and Albanians were interrelating, something more critical than ethnic or religious differences was becoming evident as an impediment to communication between them. This was the disparity in political outlook or concepts. The Serbs had a very

Left: **The 1600 berat of Sultan Mehmed III guaranteeing protection to the Monastery of Dečani**
Middle: **Murad I (1362–1389)**
Right: **Bayazid I (1389–1402)**

clear idea about Serbian statehood, while the Albanians, with occasionally weak blips of Albanianism, were for the most part Turkish oriented. While the Serbs dreamed of their Serbian state, the Albanians tended to identify with the Ottoman Empire of which they were a part.

Albanian patriot Sami Bey Frasheri, in his history of Albania, written in Turkish in 1899 and later translated into German, describes the Albano-Turkish affinity in the following words:

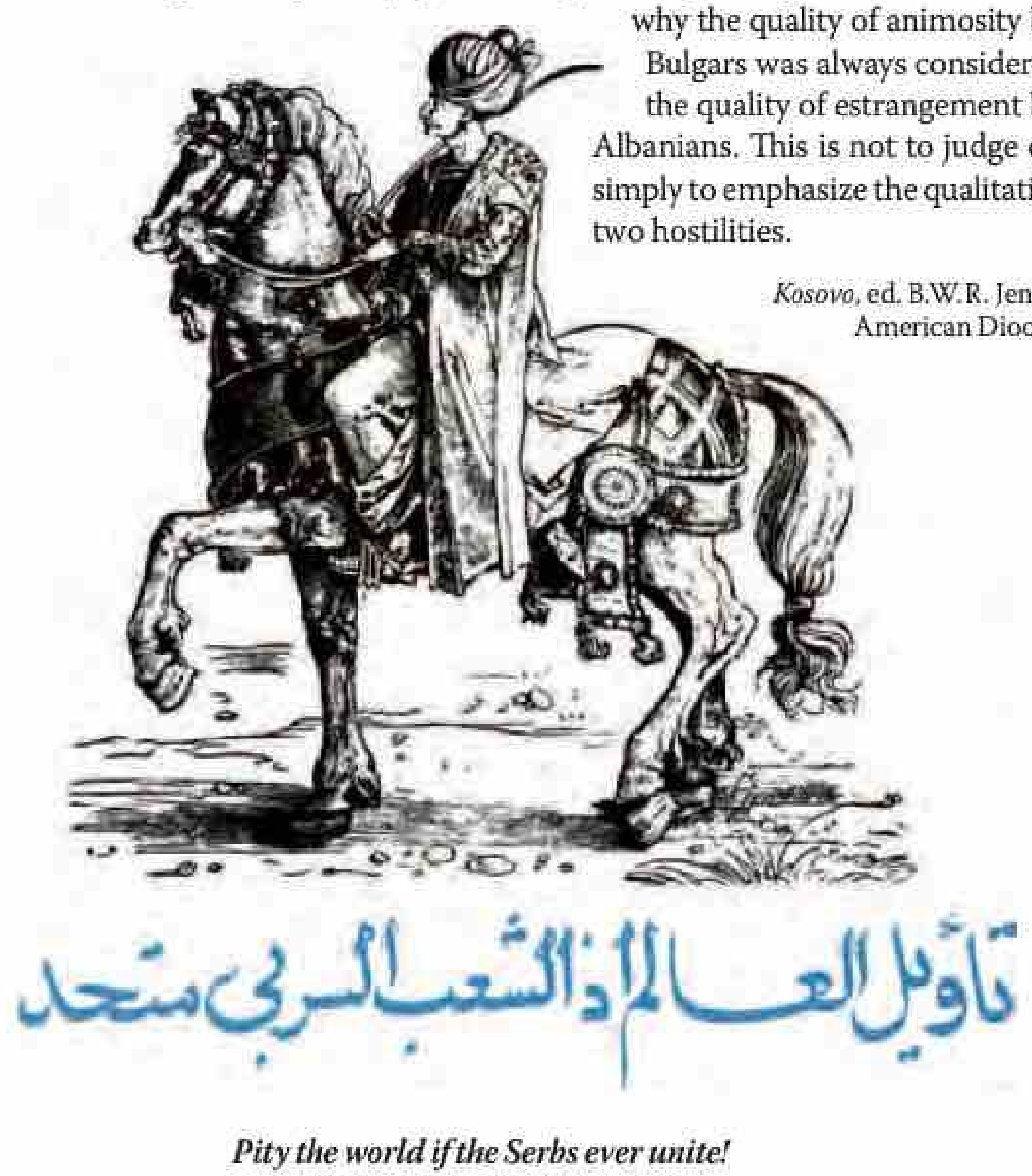
"Turks were finding devout and courageous co-fighters in Albanians, while Albanians found the Turkish kind of governing very much to their taste. In Turkish times, Albania was a wealthy and blossoming country because Albanians were riding together with Turks in war campaigns all over the world and were returning with rich booty: gold and silver, costly arms, and fine horses from Arabia, Kurdistan, and Hungary." (Was war Albanien, was ist es, was wird es werden?) [What was Albania? What is it? What will it be?], Vienna and Leipzig, 1913).

Warring and fighting, the Islamic converts developed an aggressive mentality, and in times of peace turned on their Christian neighbors. They began viewing themselves as the propagators of the Islamic faith. Much better armed than the deprived Christians, they left a bloody trail in their forceful Islamization drives among the Serbs. An old Serbian religious inscription, made in 1574, reads: "This is where great Albanian violence took place, especially by Mehmud Begović in Peć, Ivan Begović in Scutari, Sinnan-Pašić Rotulović in Prizren, and Slad Pašić in Djakovica—they massacred 2,000 Christians "… Have mercy upon us, Oh Lord. Look down from Heaven and free your flock" (translated from Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stari Srpski zapisi i natpisi* [*Old Serbian Inscriptions and Epitaphs*], Belgrade, 1902, vol. 1, p. 219). There are, in the same vein, numerous other memorials or inscriptions in Stojanović's collection.

Probably the most notorious among the converts was Koukli beg and his offspring who used force in their attempts to Islamize the area of Paštrik, Has, and Opolje at the end of the 18th century. Remembered as an arch enemy of the Serbs is another Islamic convert, Grand Vizier Sinan Pasha, who ordered the remains of Saint Sava transferred from the Mileševa Monastery to Belgrade and there burned on a wooden pyre in 1594. In his rage he reasoned that once turned into ashes Sava's body would cease being a rallying point for Serbian Christendom. Blinded by his new faith, he never realized that his enemies were not guided by Sava's flesh but by his spirit and his ideals.

In Turkish times their deprived status would have been acceptable philosophically to the Christians. Had the Albanians also been among the deprived segments of the population, even if they showed signs of enmity, a Christian affiliation would have made them more palatable to the Serbs. But to abandon the faith of one's ancestors, in order to join the privileged class, was not acceptable. This is why the quality of animosity between Serbs and Bulgars was always considerably different from the quality of estrangement between Serbs and Albanians. This is not to judge or to moralize, but simply to emphasize the qualitative difference in the two hostilities.

Kosovo, ed. B.W.R. Jenkins, Serbian Western American Diocese 1992, pp. 102–106.



Pity the world if the Serbs ever unite!
Suleiman the Magnificent, 1541

The Fate of the Serbian Cultural Heritage (13th–20th Century)

Milan Ivanović

In the region of Kosovo and Metohija, the ancestors of the Serbian people have left invaluable traces of their life and creative work, from as early as the time of the first waves of their migrations toward the central parts of the Balkan Peninsula. The time of the disappearance and destruction of the antique towns under the attacks of the Avars and during the migrations and settling of the Slaves in this region is well-illustrated by the ceramics and jewelry of the Slav origin excavated from the ruins of ancient Ulpiana near Priština, and dated around the late 6th century. The Byzantine historical records prove that the final settling of the central Balkan area by the Slav people ended during the course of the 7th century. Even though the early Slav archeology in Kosovo and Metohija was only sporadically paid attention to by experts, the archeological finding places—at Koretin near Kosovska Kamenica, in the far east of the region, at Matičani near Priština, Doblibar near Djakovica, Prčevo near Klina, in the central part, as well as at Vrbnica and Vodica near Prizren, in the Beli Drim river valley, close to the Albanian frontier, in the far west of this region, have proved an uninterrupted and compact presence of the Serbian population in the region of Kosovo and Metohija from the time of their advent right down to the period of the ripe Middle Ages. The anthropological-archeological records which offered excellent proofs of the Slav character of this region in the early Middle Ages, were in the case of the Vodice location simply and deliberately destroyed already during the very excavation, in 1975!

Remaining to testify about Kosovo and Metohija as the center of the governmental and social authority of "all Serbian countries," particularly in the 13th and 14th centuries, are not only the magnificent temples on monasteries Dečani, Gračanica, The Mother of God of Ljeviša, and of the Peć Patriarchate, preserved until our day, but also the imposing ruins of the churches such as Isposnica (asceterion), of Peter of Koriša, Bogorodica (Holy Mother) Hvostanska, the Holy Archangels, Banjska, Novo Brdo, Zvečan, Ubožac, Ajnovac, and tens of our other rulers' and feudal lords' pious endowments (foundations) from the 13th and 14th centuries. Some of these monuments rank among the highest artistic creations of the Christian civilization. But these landmarks and historical sights were never the only ones; they were followed by hundreds of rural churches, monasteries and temples which represented (and partly some others as well) a firm foundation in the evolution of our culture and arts.

With the Ottoman conquests in the late 14th and 15th centuries, this rise was interrupted, and with the sufferings of the Serbian people came also devastations of their monasteries and churches, towns and villages. There are many historical and material records about it. On the Serbian Menaion in the National Library in Paris there is a note of monk Adonius who, on his arrival at Banjska, in 1419, found "the temple and books burnt down and the treasury looted." In the early 17th century, Sinan-Pasha of Prizren used the building material of the destroyed monastery of the Holy Archangels, the pious endowment of Emperor Dušan, to erect his large mosque in the same town. The Turkish Yegen-Pasha looted Monastery Gračanica and moved, on nine horsebacks, its valuables to Constantinople.

Particularly difficult situations were after the years of 1690 and 1737, when following the great anti-Turkish wars waged by the Austrian army sided by the Serbs, it came to the well-known migrations of the Serbian people across the Sava and Danube rivers.

The cruel Turkish retaliations also resulted in a series of destructions of Serbian Churches and monuments. These revengeful acts were, by their consequences, heavier than those in all the preceding times. The oppression and driving of the Serbian people out of Kosovo and Metohija, destructions of their material and cultural wealth were continued even during the 19th century, especially after the Serbian Uprisings in 1804 and 1815 and the liberation wars in the last decades of the century. With brief interruptions they were continued in the 20th century as well, in the times of the Austro-Hungarian and German-Italian occupations of the country in the First and Second World Wars. Destructions of the Serbian churches and monasteries had been particularly heavy in the 19th century. Yashar-Pasha Džinić, of Albanian origin, the usurper-master of Kosovo, had systematically carried out these destructions. Using the stones of the destroyed Kosovo former churches, he built up bridges on the Sitnica river near Lipljan and Vragolija.

Palm Sunday, detail, west vault, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

The notorious persecutor of the Serbs, Haji-Zeka destroyed the big church at Jošanica and transported its stones and columns to build his mosque at Lještani. The Peć Mutesaphir (director) Mulla Zeka transported, in the '70s, from the church of Our Lady the Hvostanska its columns, capitals, ornamental cut-stones, and elaborated stones to the Peć place to build a Turkish bath for himself. Some unknown Albanians swiped the finished cut-stones of the churches and monasteries at Slovinj, near Lipljan, and sold them as their own products to the contractors of the company which constructed the Priština-Skoplje railway, so that they could build them in the bridges and passes along the Trans-Kosovo line. But, nevertheless, and in spite of everything done, what has left is by no means negligible. Besides those greatest monuments with their invaluable frescos and treasuries, there are still those small churches and ascetic temples almost in every town or village or in the mountains—no matter if they were destroyed or left in ruins—that have remained as witnesses. And where neither ruins nor any traces of their existence were left, there are still their names that exist: the names of the church dales, hills and groves; fields and meadows; the names of the church and monkish draw-wells, brooks and springs (one of them is found today in the very pen of an Albanian house at the Village of Vrbovac in Drenica); then also tombs and cemeteries; bridges and wharfs—survived to keep the memory of the ancient times when the Serbian landmarks had existed there. Out of the presently officially registered 1445 places in Kosovo and Metohija, 1090 are found by this project to have been either preserved or ruined remnants of the Serbian immobile (standing) monuments.

And what to say about the Serbian mobile objects-monuments: icons, books, textiles, and metals? If one has in view the fact that for maintaining the regular spiritual and religious life, according to the then valid regulations, every church was obliged to have an iconostasis (with the altar gates and at least two throne—and 12 holiday-icons) and that every church had to have 7 to 10 books, number of priest's garments and at least 3 to 4 church vessels (icon candles, disks, chalices, censers), then we could suppose that all these churches together possessed about 10 to 15 thousand icons, about 7 to 10 thousand books for religious services, several thousand sacred vessels and, of course, several hundreds of church bells and clappers. But even if that valuable property existed, it has for the most part disappeared, with the exception of the treasuries of Monasteries Dečani and partly Gračanica and Peć.

Out of only fifteen of Serbian icons dating from the 14th century which have been preserved, two thirds are of the Kosovo and Metohian origin, or kept in the yonder monasteries. And of others, there are maybe about 200–300 preserved icons, including those from the 19th century. The situation is no better regarding the Serbian charters, manuscripts and printed books that belonged to the churches and monasteries of Kosovo. There is only the original of the 1330 Bulla of Dečani (*Dečanska Hrisovulja*) kept in the Archives of Serbia, in Belgrade. The Big St. Stephen Bulla (*velika Dečanska Hrisovulja*) by which King Milutin founds Monastery Banjska is now kept in the Sarai State Library in Istanbul. The Charter of King Stefan of Dečani (*Povelja Kralja Stefana Dečanskog*), donated to the Prizren Episcopate, in 1327, disappeared from Belgrade during the Aus-

tro-Hungarian occupation in the First World War. Only just in the fire of the National Library in Belgrade after the bombardment on the 6th of April, 1941, burned away 43 manuscripts and printed books from the period between the 13th and 18th century, brought to the Library during the 19th and 20th centuries from Kosovo and Metohija, then called Old Serbia, to be preserved and kept there. Among them were also the Prizren Gospel (*Prizrensko Jevandelje*) from the 13th century, the Memorial Service Ritual Book of the Mother of God (our Holy Lady) of Ljeviša Monastery (*Pomenik Bogorodice Ljeviške*) from the 15th century as well as tens of the 14th- and 15th-century books from the rural churches of Kijevo, Dolac, Ljubižda, Sredska, Gornja Srbica and from the churches of Orahovac and Djakovica.

Tens and tens of the medieval Serbian manuscripts and printed books were carried off to museums and other institutions all over the world. Russian Slavist and Consul Al. Grigorovich took off 25 old manuscripts from the Peć Patriarchate, leaving to the hospitable Peć monks his receipts for 6 books only. The second Russian Consul in Sarajevo, A. Hilferding, carried away 4 books from Gorioč, a Gospel (13th-14th c.) from Prizren, then a book, Metropolitan Melentije's present to him, and an Anthology of prayers (14th c.); then 6 books from Dečani, 3 from Peć, and 6 books (14th-15th c.) from Gračanica Monastery. The Psalter of Branko Mladenović of Drenica is now kept in the Rumanian Academy of Sciences in Bucharest. The Octoechos (*Oktoih*) from Sirinićka Župa, written in 1353, together with the Gospel Readings (*Čitanje iz Jevandjelja*) written in the 13th century by the Sirinić Scribe Ravul, is now kept in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, Ireland. The Gospel book (*Četvorojevandjelje*) with a note of the same Sirinić Scribe Ravul is found in the National Library in Paris, and the Sirinić Religious-service Anthology (*Bogoslužbeni zbornik*) in St. Catherine Monastery, in the Sinai Peninsula. The manuscripts of the Novo Brdo Calligrapher Vladislav Grammaticus (Vladislav Gramatik) were carried off to many cities of Europe. His religious Anthology (*Zbornik*), written in 1469, is kept in the Yugoslavian Academy of Sciences and Arts, in Zagreb, Croatia; the other Anthology (*Zbornik*) of his, from 1456, is now in the University Library of Odessa, the USSR; the Book of Sermons of John the Chrysostom, in the Rilski Monastery, Bulgaria; the Panegyric (*Panegirik*), in the Library of the Theological Faculty in Sofia; the Hexaemeron (*Šestodnev*), in the Roumyantsev Museum, in Moscow. Likewise, some other manuscripts and printed books dating from the 14th and 15th centuries are now kept in the most renowned collections in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, Prague, Vienna, Berlin, Vatican, Paris, London, Dublin, Sofia, Arad, Dresden, Krakow, Leipzig, Munich, Zagreb, Belgrade, and in other cities of the world.

During the First World War, the Bulgarian Deputy Metropolitan, Stephan Karayanev of Veles took away from Priština the Memorial Service Ritual Book of the St. Trinity Monastery at Mušutište, which had been maintained since 1465 to that day. During the Second World War, the Albanian nationalists mined and destroyed Monastery Devič at Drenica, and on that occasion also a rich collection of old manuscripts burnt away; they burned down and destroyed the village churches of Bistražin, Donji Ratiš, Nec, Ponoševac, Rastavica, and Čikatovo as well.

But, nevertheless, the cultural heritage of the Serbian people deserves an adequately beholden attention and a longer lasting recording. If we have given by this work even a modest contribution to this end, we shall be content.

Great Migration of 1690 and continued Serb migrations

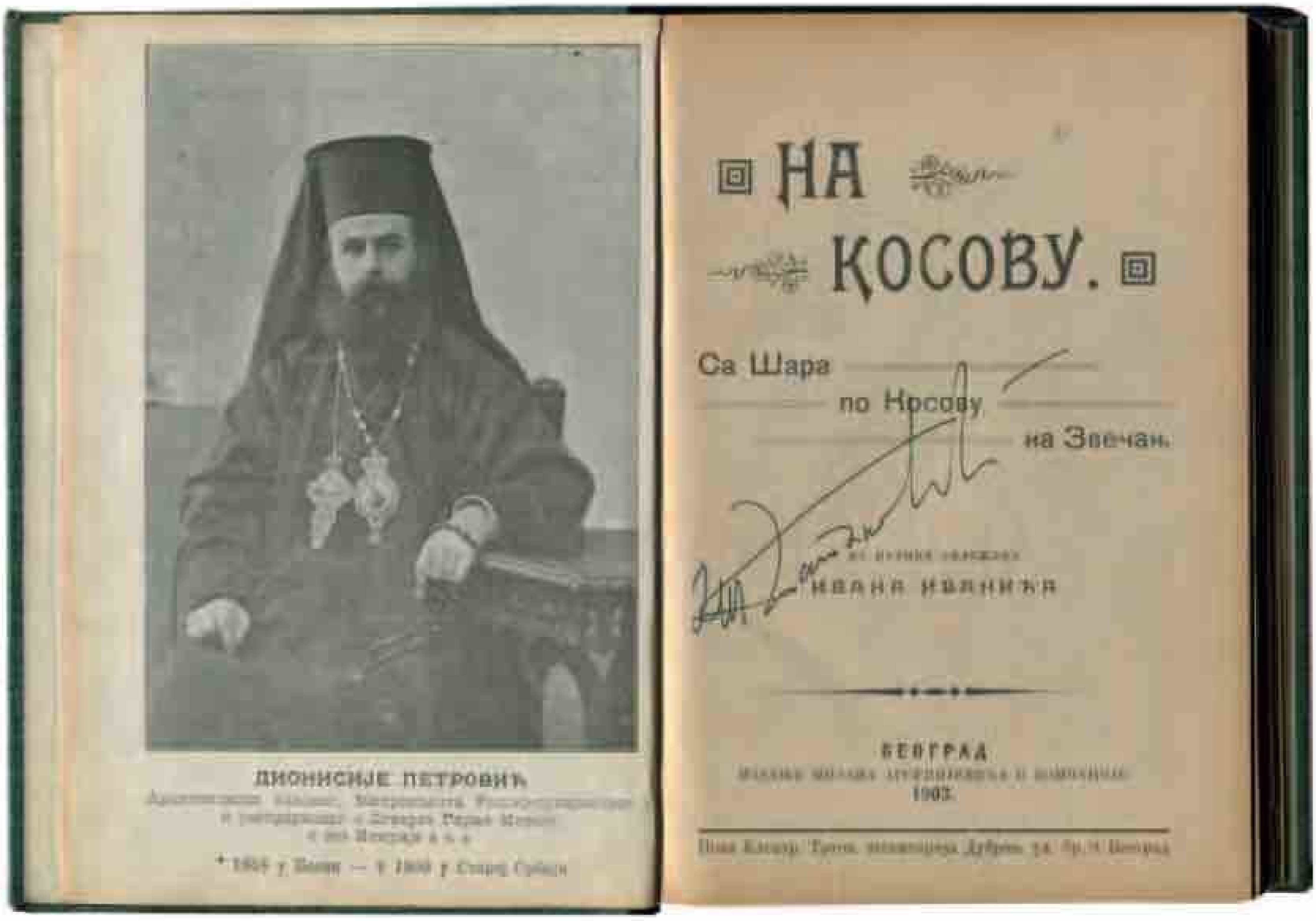
The Great Migration of the Serbs of 1690 led to a double tragedy for Kosovo and Metohija Serbs because the migration itself thinned their ranks, while those who remained, still as the majority population, suffered further abuse and mistreatment by both the Turks and the Albanian newcomers. Namely, after the collapse of the Christian Austro-Serbian army at Kačanik at the beginning of 1690, where the Turks were assisted by considerable numbers of Tatars and Albanians, came their revenge attack on the lands of Old Serbia, with the greatest destructive frenzies taking place in Kosovo. A total of 37,000 Serb families (or 185,000 to 200,000 souls) left Kosovo and Metohija at that time. These Serbs, who migrated to the north, significantly strengthened the ranks of the Serb population on the other side of the Sava and Danube Rivers, and took with them the living and unforgettable traditions of Kosovo and Metohija.

In the end, we must ask: Why should Kosovo, as the Holy Land of the Balkans, not be common land and district of Serbs and Albanians, Christians and Muslims, two peoples, two languages, two confessions, two cultures, just like—mutatis mutantis—the Holy Land for the Israelis and the Palestinians? This common life and coexistence is something the U.S. is advocating in the Holy Land. Why does it not advocate the same in this Holy Land, too, for the sake of God, for the sake of its people and nations, for the sake of its Holy Shrines, for the sake of justice and freedom?

Hadži Zaharije, abbot of the Dečani Monastery, early 19th century

Hadži Danilo Kažanegra, abbot of the Dečani Monastery, early 19th century

Metropolitan of Raška-Prizren, Nićifor Perić



Archsyncellus (Chancellor) Dionisije Petrović (1896–1900), the Raška-Prizren bishop featuring a book about Kosovo and Metohija

Sources and Testimonies

From the 13th to the 20th century*

FROM THE CHARTER ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SERBIAN EPISCOPATES, 1220

The Chrysobull issued by Saint Sava himself and his brother King Stephen the First-Crowned. The Serbian Episcopal seats are as follows: 1. Of Zeta, 2. Of Raška, 3. Of Hvosno, 4. Of Hum, 5. Of Toplica, 6. Of Budim, 7. Of Dabar, 8. Of Moravica.

Writings of St. Sava, pub. V. Ćorović, Serbian Royal Academy (SRA), 1928

THE DEATH OF SAINT SAVA THE SECOND, ARCHBISHOP OF SERBIA, IN PEĆ, 1271

He impeccably administered the God-given honor of the Apostolic Chair and fed his sheep well, and he lived under the title of archbishop for seven years. And, after that, he passed away and moved from this life to a blessed and eternal rest, and his body was placed in the home of the Holy Apostles (in Peć) where he is still remembered and glorified as saint in sublime and all-solemn prayers. And the memory of his blessed repose is celebrated on the eighth day of the month of February.

From *The Life of Saint Sava the Second* by Danilo of Peć

THE BOOK PENNED IN PEĆ, 1324

This Book of Epistles was transcribed in the days of the noble King Stephen Uroš the Third, king of all Serbian lands and the littoral, by order of Kyrr Nikodim, Archbishop of All Serbian Lands and the Littoral, by the hand of the wretched and sinful Monk Damian and, undeserving to be called as such but by the grace of God, Hieromonk, whose homeland is a grave and whose riches are—sins. And also the Octoechos and Parakletiki [were transcribed] in Peć, in the town called Zrelo, unto the glory of the Holy Trinity, in the year 7832 (1324) (...)

The note in the Šišatovac Book of Epistles: NI I, (54)

THE CONSTRUCTION OF ST. NICHOLAS' CHURCH IN PRIZREN, 1332

In the name of the Father (and of the Son) and of the Holy Spirit, I, Nikola, a servant of Christ, in the world [before taking monastic vows] once known by the name of Dragoslav Tutić, together with my wife Bela, endeavored to build the church of Saint Nicholas seeking God's help as we had no children (...) And I bought the land around the church and, together with all other lands that were my share of the estate, both the vineyard and the house as well as two mulberry orchards, I gave it all to Saint Nicholas. This church was built in the days of the pious King Stephen the Fourth (...) in the year 6840 (1332), of the fifth indiction.

The inscription on the stone in St. George's Church in Prizren, NI I, 27–28 (60)

Serbian Patriarch Jefrem—3rd Patriarch of Serbian Church (1375–1379 and 1389–1392), painted by Georgije Mitrofanović, 1620, Church of Saint Demetrius, the Patriarchate of Peć

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DEČANI MONASTERY CHURCH, 1335

Fra Vita, a friar minor (Franciscan) from the King's town of Cattaro, built this church dedicated to the Holy Pantocrator for Kyrr King Stephen Uroš the Third and his son, the enlightened and great and all-glorious Kyrr King Stephen. It was built in eight years. And the construction of the church was entirely completed in the year 6843 (1335).

The inscription on the Dečani Monastery church: NI I 28 (63)

* Published in *Zadužbine Kosova*, Eds. Atanasije Jevtić and Živorad Stojković, Belgrade, 1987, pp. 301–310 *et passim*. Translated by Aleksandra Stojanović and Nataša Šofranac.

THE BOOK PENNED IN DEČANI, 1336–46

By the will of the Father, commenced by the Son and completed by the Holy Spirit, in the days of Christ-loving and great King Stephen Dušan, this book was penned and dedicated to the Pantocrator, by order of the first Abbot Arsenije, in the place called Dečani, by the hand of sinful Dobreta (...)

The note in the MS of St. Peterburg Library: NI I, 34 (87)

THE COMPLETION OF THE DEČANI MONASTERY, 1346/47

(...) the church (...) of the Pantocrator was built and wall-painted and completed in the days of the most excellent, noble and holy first Tzar Stephen, the son of the most excellent King Uroš of all Serbian lands and the littoral (...) in memory and remembrance of Holy King Stephen Uroš the Third, in the year 6855 (1346/47).

The inscription in the Dečani Monastery: NI I, 36 (96)—corrected according to G. Subotić: "A Contribution to the Chronology of the Dečani Mural Painting", *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta*—ZRVI (Journal of the Institute for Byzantine Studies) 20 (1981) 124–130.

EMPEROR DUŠAN DONATES THE HOLY CROSS TO THE DEČANI MONASTERY, 1348

In the year 6856 (1348), We, Stephen Dušan, by the grace of God Emperor of all Serbian and Greek Lands and the Littoral, donate this cross which contains a particle of the Holy Cross on which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, to the home of Pantocrator named Dečani [Monastery]. Not to be misappropriated or taken away [from Dečani] in this life—as it was granted in the Chrysobull by my parent and me.

The inscription on the cross in Dečani: NI I, 36 (93)

WALL-PAINTING OF THE DEČANI MONASTERY THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF ABBOT ARSENIJE, 1348

By the will of God and with the help of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, this edifice dedicated to the Lord Our God Pantocrator in memory and remembrance of the God-enlightened and noble King Stephen Uroš the Third, the sovereign of all Serbian lands and the littoral, to whom may it be memory eternal, in the days of his pious and holy and glorious son Kyrr Stephen, the first emperor of all Serbian and Greek lands and the littoral and his son King Stephen Uroš, in the year 6856, of 11th indiction. May the Lord pardon Arsenije, the first abbot of the monastery, who took care of and made efforts in this holy place!

The inscription in the main church above the entrance door, in the Dečani Monastery: NI IV, 9 (6025)

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD IN THE VILLAGE OF VAGANEŠ (GNJILANE), 1355

This Church of the Holy Mother of God was erected by Dabiživ, Drobnjak's grandson, with his brother Hrana and with Bogoje, and with his father, a monk, and with his mother Višnja. In the days of Emperor Stephen, Dabiživ himself inscribed the following:—This temple of the Holy Mother of God was built by Dabiživ and Bogoje with their brother Hrana; [Dabiživ is] Drobnjak's grandson, in the days of Emperor Stephen, in the year 6863 (1355).

The inscriptions on the remains of the Church in the village of Vaganeš: NI I 39 (105–106)—Corrected according to G.Tomović: Morphology, № 44

THE GRAVE OF IVANIŠ ALTOMANIĆ IN DEČANI, 1372–89 (?)

This is the grave of Ivaniš Altomanović, Despot Ivaniš's grandson, a nephew of Prince Lazar, may his memory be eternal!

The inscription on a gravestone in Dečani: NI I, 55 (174)

THE FOUNDATION OF BISHOP SIMON IN GRAČANICA, 1383

(...) These sacred books shall belong to the Church of the All-holy Mother of God of Lipljan, in the village called Gračanica, by order of the Most Reverend Archbishop Kyrr Simon who endeavored a lot in this holy monastery, built everything from its foundation and adorned it and filled it with every proper righteousness, both exterior and interior (...) Please bless and pardon him who copied this book, even though he is unworthy to be called Monk Nikodim (...) This book was copied in the year 6891 (1383), of the 6th indiction.

The note in the *Menaion* of the Gračanica Monastery: NI I, 49 (155)

THE BELL FOR ST. NICHOLAS' CHURCH IN BANJA NEAR PEĆ, 1432

This bell of the Holy Father Nicholas was made in the year 6940, on August 11th. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise Him with the tuneful cymbals, unto Thee, O God, belongeth praise, praise Him all the angels, cherubim and seraphim. Thy faithful servant (...)

The inscription on the bell excavated in the village of Banja (Peć) in the vicinity of St. Nicholas' church and then reburied in the church for fear of the Turks: NI I, 84–85 (256)

THE BOOK TRANSCRIBED IN THE VILLAGE OF VITOMIRCI, 1434

[The book was] transcribed (in the month of January?) 6942, in the seventh year after the demise of the devout Despot Stephen, during the reign of the godless Turkish Emperor Murat-bey, in the area of the town of Skoplje, in the village of Vitomirci in the church of the Holy Ascension of the Lord our God and Savior Jesus Christ (...) This book was copied by sinful Aksentije, the thurifer of the great Metropolinate of Skoplje. May the Lord pardon Andra, brother of yours!

The note in the MS of the Book of Epistles of St. Demetrius in Suva Reka: NI I, 85 (261)

THE BATTLE NEAR PRIŠTINA, OCTOBER 27, 1448

(In the year 6957), in the month of October (27), on Friday, a multitude of people mustered [for fight] from the east and from the west: the Hungarian people [army] led by Janko and

the Hagarenes led by—Murat. And there was a battle near Priština and a large number of people got killed.

The note in the Manuscript of the old National Library of Serbia, № 227: NI I, 91 (290)

THE CHURCH ERECTED IN THE VILLAGE OF PEĆANI, 1452

This divinely beautiful church of the All-holy Mother of God and Ever Virgin Mary, dedicated to her Entry into the Temple, was built and wall-painted in the days of the devout and Christ-loving and most eminent and noble master of all Serbian lands and the littoral—Despot Djuradj and Despotess Jerina and their sons Kyrr Grgur and Stephen and Despot Lazar and Despotess Jelena, in the year 6960 (1452).

The inscription above the door of the ruined church in Pećani: NI I, 93 (299)

THE POGROM OF THE SERBS IN NOVO BRDO, 1479

And there was the slaughter of the Christian gentlemen. Tsar Mehmed had them beheaded in the year 69(87): Janja, the governor of Novo Brdo (...) four sons and their sons—twelve sons altogether... Unto the Glory of the Lord unto ages of ages, amen!

The note in the Cetinje Manuscript: NI IV, 75 (6365)

THE BOOK TRANSCRIBED IN THE HERMITAGE OF BELAJE NEAR DEČANI, 1494

This holy and divine book of Four Gospels was copied in the year 7002 (1494) in the desert of Belaje, in the home of the Most Holy Theotokos, in the days under the demonic Ishmaelites in the reign of Tsar Bayazit, by the hand of sinful Nikandar. It was transcribed by order and with the blessing of Elder Jevtimije. To our God be glory forever and ever!

The note in the Dečani Manuscript: NI IV, 36 (6187)

NIKANDAR TRANSCRIBES ANOTHER BOOK IN BELAJE, 1503

This book was penned in the year 7011 (1503). It was penned by Nikandar.

The note in the Dečani MS: Lj. Stojanović, NI IV, 38 (6197)

THE BOOK PENNED IN GRAČANICA, 1505

In the year 7013 (1505). And this book was completed in the month of February on the 4th day of the month. It was penned by sinful Monk Ilaryon.

The note in the Gračanica MS: NI I, 123 (396)

THE EVIL TIMES AND VIOLENCE, 1511

It was penned in the year 7019 (1511). Priest Peter penned it for our spiritual father and first priest Jovan. If anything is incorrect, you who are reading it, rectify it—for the paper was evil and the time was evil and there was violence, my brethren! It was completed in the month of March on the 26th day of the month.

The note in the MS of the Patriarchate of Peć, № 59: NI I, 126 (409)—corrected according to V. Mošin: *Manuscripts of the Patriarchate of Peć*, 64

THE BOOK PENNED IN THE HOLY TRINITY CHURCH IN PRIZREN, 1513

Glory to the Lord our maker who showed us the beginning and gave us the end. In the year 7021 (1513), on July 1. Fathers and brethren, pardon me, for I penned this book as a very old man and in sickness. Readers, bless and do not curse! Sinful Jovan.

The note in the MS of the Holy Trinity Church (Rusinice): NI I, 128 (414)

THE ARCHBISHOP OF OHRID VISITS JANJEVO, 1548

Prohor, through the mercy of the Lord, Archbishop of the First Justiniana, of all Bulgarians, Serbs and others. I write this in humility to make known how I came to the God-protected place of Janjevo, under the right reverend Metropolitan Kyrr Nikanor. And Kyrr Petar Gerzi (?) came to us and donated this book of Four Gospels to the Church of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel in Plakanička Mahala. And the above mentioned church shall have this book as its inalienable property. Therefore, we are writing this in order to provide every kind of protection and certification, in the year 7056 (1548), in April, on the 11th day of the month.

The note in the MS Chludov Library (Moscow GIM), № 24: NI I, 176 (547)

THE BOOK DONATED TO THE HOLY TRINITY CHURCH IN PRIZREN, 1560

This book was penned in the year 7068 (1560). I, sinful Monk Pachomius, penned this book named Menologion in the Monastery of the Holy and Life-creating and Undivided Trinity named Rusinica (...)

The note in the MS in the Church in the village of Dvorani, Old Serbia: NI I, 191 (611)

THE RESTORATION AND WALL-PAINTING OF THE NARTHEX IN THE PATRIARCHATE OF PEĆ, 1561

By the will of the Father and with the help of the Son and through the action of the Holy Spirit, we had had this narthex in the holy great Church of the Serbian Patriarchate built and wall-painted through the endeavors and ardor of the most reverend and holy Archbishop Kyrr Makarije, the first Patriarch after the second restoration of this throne of all Serbian lands, Western Pomoravlje and Northern lands, in the year 7070 (1561), Solar cycle 28, epact 5, indiction 9, golden number 8, temelion 28, on September 8.

The inscription in the Patriarchate of Peć: Lj. Stojanović, NI III, 158 (5609)

DIAK [SCRIBE] SIMON TRANSCRIBES A BOOK IN OVČAREVO NEAR KLINA, 1562

(...) And in that time Archbishop Makarije ruled over Serbian land and the littoral and other lands in the town of Peć. His seat was there and there he dwelled; good and meek man as he was. And then, Monk Maxim and his mother, who was also a nun, and Maxim's son Kyrr Rajić, who was a presbyter and priest, and his brothers with their wives, they all made efforts, may God have mercy upon them and pardon them (...) I transcribed this sacred God's book of Evangel [Gos-

The Council of St. Simeon Nemanja, narthex, nort wall, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1565

Calendar Scenes, vault of the narhex, the Patriarchate of Peć, 1565

Hadži-Ruvim's hand-carved icon representing the Patriarchate of Peć, from the year 1797; the inscription under the church reads:

This icon of the holy Slavic-Serb Patriarchate and Monastic community called Peć was carved with the support of hieromonk Isaija Pećanac in the year 1797. It was carved by Ruvim, archimandrite of the Monastery of Bogovadja, and donated to the M(onastery) of P(eć).

pel] near the church of Christ's saint and wonderworker Nicholas in the village of Očarevo near the River Klina, in the home of Elder Maxim and his son priest Rajić, may the Lord have mercy on them! (...) And it was a time of distress and adversity in terms of expenditure. But I tackled the writing enthusiastically and I wrote and completed the manuscript of this book (...) This sacred and divine book of Evangel was transcribed in the year 7070 (1562), in those bitter and miserable times, in the days of Sultan Selim, the butcher of Christians. I, full of sins and the least deserving of all people, Diak Simon transcribed this book with the help of God and all saints (...)

The note in the MS of the Patriarchate of Peć: NI IV, 61–62 (6316). Selim II reigned from 1566 to 1574; therefore, the year in the note is probably incorrect.

THE BUILDING OF THE CHURCH IN THE VILLAGE OF MUŠNIKOVO (SREDAČKA ŽUPA), 1564

By the will of the Son and with the help of the Holy Spirit (!), this divine edifice was built through the efforts [of its builders] and with the help of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in the year 7072 (1564).

The inscription on the walls of the church in the village of Mušnikovo, Sredačka Župa: NI I, 200 (642)

DIAK [SCRIBE] SIMON TRANSCRIBES A BOOK IN THE VILLAGE OF PREKAZI, 1567

(...) I completed the manuscript of this book with the help of God on January 31, on Saturday, at sunset (...) This holy book was transcribed at the Church of the Ascension of our Most Holy Sovereign Lady Mother of God and Ever Virgin Mary, the only Lady (...) I, Scribe Simon, full of sins and the least of all people, transcribed this book (...) I scribed in the days of Tsar Selim, the bloodshedder, fornicator, wine drinker. In that year, he had janissaries as well as travnina [a rent for tenancy of pastures] collected in all of his lands, and it was bitter evil (...) and numerous other evils in those bitter and hard times due to which I was not able to write properly. Forgive me! Amen!

The note in the manuscript of the Zograf Monastery: NI IV, 67–68 (6337)

THE WALL-PAINTING OF THE GRAČANICA NARTHEX, 1570

By the will of the Father who is unborn and with the help of the Son who was born and co-eternal and through the action of the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and rests in the Son, we had this narthex in the Church of the Dormition of the Most Pure Sovereign Lady and Ever Virgin Mary wall-painted by order of the most reverend Archbishop of Peć and Patriarch of all Serbs and those in the littoral and other lands Kyrr Makarije, through the efforts of the most reverend Metropolitan of Herzegovina Kyrr Andony, in the month of September, on the 8th day of the month. Christ is the beginning and the end. Glory to God the Perfecter of all things, amen!

The inscription in the Church of the Gračanica Monastery: NI I, 213 (688)

DIAK SIMON TRANSCRIBES A BOOK IN HAS ON LIM, IN THE VILLAGE OF ZAPOTOČAC, 1571

This holy and divine book of Four Gospels was transcribed in the year 7079 (July 4 =1571) by order and through the ardor and endeavor of the all-blessed presbyter Kyrr Radonja in those bitter and hard times, in the days of Sultan Selim. Oh, oh, such evil in the time of Hagarenes! [It was] abject misery and suffering for the people in those days! Oh, what upheavals! (...) Hark, reverend fathers and brethren and spiritual children, what I say: this book was transcribed in the land of Zagora, in a home in Has near the River Lim in the village of Zapotočce, near the Christ's church of Saint Nicholas in the home of priest Radonja—may the Lord pardon him for he made great efforts together with his wife and sons

and his entire family and servants. The book was transcribed by sinful Scribe Simon (...)

The note in the Dečani Manuscript: NI IV, 73–74 (6359)

PRIEST AVAKUM TRANSCRIBES A BOOK IN NOVO BRDO, 1571

By the will of the Father and with the help of the Son and through the action of the Holy Spirit, this divine book named Synaxarion was transcribed in the year 7080 (1571), in the month of September, on the 21th day of the month. And I, sinful and the least of all priests, most unworthy of all, Avakum transcribed it. It was written in the place called Novo Brdo, in St. Stephen's (...) And in that time there was great sorrow inflicted by the Turks and great famine all over the country, man against man to exterminate each other. From Thessalonica, they transported salt and exchanged it for grain, in the proportion: one measure of grain for the same measure of salt; but they did not want to accept salt for grain!

The note in the Cetinje Manuscript: NI IV, 74 (6362)

THE SUFFERING OF ST. PETER OF KORIŠA MONASTERY, 1572

In the year 1572, this holy abode became desolate (...) Monk Agatangel.

The inscription on a fresco in the Church of St. Petar of Koriša: M. Panić-Surep, *Kad su živi zavideli mrtvima* (When the living envied the dead), Belgrade 1963, 82–83)

THE PLIGHT OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, 1572

This holy and divine book called The Four Gospels was copied. It was penned in the village named (Kalanjevci) under the Right Reverend Bishop (...) Kyrr Maxim. And I, humble Paul, copied this book in the home of Scribe (*dijak*) Petko and I copied this soul-saving book for him in the days of Sultan Selim the Second, Ottoman emperor. That was the time of great sorrow for holy and divine churches, in the year 7081 (1572) Solar cycle 24, Lunar 12, golden number 15, temelion 15, epact 2, on November 25.

The note in the Dečani MS № 16, Fol. 289 v. Unpublished.

THE DONATION OF THE SERBS FROM KALANJEVCI TO THE DEČANI MONASTERY, 1572

This holy and divine book was purchased by God's servant Milosava from the village of Kalanjevci who donated it to Scribe (*dijak*) Petko for the salvation of her soul and the souls of her parents, may it be eternal memory to her as long as this divine manuscript endures. Lord have mercy on her parents as well, may their memory be eternal, amen!

The note in the Dečani MS № 16, Fol. 7 v. Unpublished.

THE TERROR (*ZULUM*) IN KOSOVO PERPETRATED BY ALBANIANS 1574

In the year 7083 (1574) Sultan Selim was succeeded by Sultan Amurat on December 5. At that time, intense terror and atrocities were being committed by Albanians, especially by Mahmudbegović in Peć, in Scutari by Ivanbegović, in Djakovo by Jelasupašić. Two thousand Christians were slaughtered in the vicinity of these towns. Woe to us! Lord, look down from heaven and behold and deliver Thy flock! Under the rule of Abbot Methodije; who was chosen for this appointment from the neighboring cell of St. Nicholas, in the month of March, on the 14th day. In the time when Monk Nestor was an econom [financial administrator] in the Dečani church.

The note in the Dečani MS (missing today!): NI I, 219 (713). Cf. Dečani № 24, Fol. 264 v.

THE BOOK TRANSCRIBED IN THE HOLY TRINITY MONASTERY NEAR PRIZREN, 1575

This holy and divine book named Menaion was copied in the month of October by the hand of Monk Pachomius, full of sins, in the region of Prizren, in the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Podgora Rusijska, in the year 7083 (1575). And in that time and in that year there was such severe famine and bitter violence and massacres inflicted by the Ishmaelites [Muslims, Turks and Albanians] that words cannot express such evil and maltreatment. This book was transcribed by Pachomius who donated it to the Holy Trinity [Monastery] which is called Rusijska, may the Lord pardon him! And may the Holy Trinity pay back to anyone who should try to take it away from this holy abode, amen!

The note in the Manuscript of the Holy Trinity Monastery in Prizren: NI I, 221 (717)

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHURCH IN THE VILLAGE OF ŠTRPCE (SIRINIĆ), 1577

By the will of the Father and with the help of the Son and through the action of the Holy Spirit, this divine church of the holy and glorious Archbishop and Christ's Wonderworker Nicholas was built and wall-painted in those miserable and sorrowful times under the Ishmaelites. And all of the following made efforts: Priest Paul, Novica, Radivoje and Raja Peyin and Stanko Dimitrov and Lazar and Jacov Jovanov, Ivan Jovanov and Lazar (...) in the year 7085, in the month of J(une), in the village of Štrpce. May the Lord pardon them!

The inscription above the door in the Church in the village of Štrpce: NI I, 224 (733)

THE FRESCO-PAINTING OF THE TOMB OF ST. JOANIKIJE IN DEVIČ, 1578

By the will of the Father and with the help of the Son and through the action of the Holy Spirit, this sacred tomb of our Venerable Father Joanikije was painted in the year 7086 (1578), on May 22. It was performed through the efforts of the humble Abbot Pahomije the Hieromonk and Hieromonk Longinus with the brethren.

The inscription around the image of St. Joanikije in Devič: NI I, 225 (736)

THE BOOK TRANSCRIBED IN THE CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS SIBOVAČKI IN ČIČAVICA, 1578

This divine and sacred and soul-feeding book, which is named Triodion, was copied by order of the Most-reverend Metropolitan of Vučitrn Kyrr Jo(a)saf, in the year 7086, in the church of St. Nicholas Šibavički in Čičavica.

The note in the MS in St. Mark Church near Prizren: NI I, 225 (739)

THE ACTS OF VIOLENCE COMMITTED BY THE TURKISH ARMY, 1578

In the year 6086 (1578) Solar cycle 14, Lunar 13, large armies of the thrice-cursed Tsar Mehmed Amir-Sultan moved westwards and they committed bitter oppression of Christians and [instituted] ferocious punishments. In those times, Kyrr Germanus, Archbishop of Hvosno, succeeded to the [Bishop's] throne and ruled.

The note in the Dečani MS № 57, Fol. 30 v. Unpublished

THE DONATION TO THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY ANNUNCIATION IN JANJEVO, 1581

In the year 7089 (1581), on March 9, upon the Feast of the Holy Forty Martyrs, Kyrr Djura Vladikin donated this book named Octoechos Tone Five to the Church of the Holy Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God in Janjevo, in the Mahalla of Sopot (...)

The note in the MS which was preserved in St. Prohor of Pčinja Monastery: NI I, 229 (754)

THE RUINATION OF THE SERBIAN CHURCH, 1591

Let it be known when Archbishop of Peć Kyrr Philip succeeded to the throne (...) in the month of July, on the 15th day of the month. In that time, there could be seen an utter ruination of churches just as it had been long time ago during the reign of the one who was named after a beast [i.e. of Emperor Leo the Iconoclast, 717–741].

The note in the lost manuscript of the Peć Patriarchate: NI IV, 86 (6429)

THE BOOK FROM THE MOTHER OF GOD OF LJEVIŠA METROPOLINATE IN PRIZREN, circa 1592

This book is from the Metropolinate of Prizren, of the Most Holy Mother of God of Ljeviša. And whoever takes it away from the [church of the] Most Holy Theotokos, let him be anathema! (...) Let this be known unto ages of ages!

The note in the MS in the old National Library of Serbia, Belgrade 428: NI I, 247 (845)

SCHOOL MASTER (*DASKAL*) DIMITRIJE FROM JANJEVO TRANSCRIBES THE DEČANI COMMEMORATION BOOK (FOR PROSKOMEDIA), 1595

This holy and divine Proskomedia [Commemoration Book] was penned in the year 7103 (1595) under His Holiness Patriarch Kyrr Jovan. It was done through the efforts of Prohegumen Kyrr Victor, under the abbot of the Dečani Monastery Kyrr Athanisus, the Hieromonk, in the God-saved place of Janjevo, by the hand of Kyrr Demetrius the teacher (*daskal*).

The note in the Dečani Commemoration Book № 109: NI IV, 89 (6455)

THE WALL-PAINTING OF ST. NICHOLAS' CHURCH IN BOGOŠEVCI, 16TH–17TH CENTURY

By the will of the Father, with the help of the Son and through the action of the Holy Spirit, this holy and divine edifice dedicated to our Holy Father Archbishop and Wonderworker Nicholas of Myrlikia was wall-painted when Priest Stojan was in charge of the church.

The inscription on the wall of the church in the village of Bogoševci: NI II, 471 (4647)

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE BELAJE HERMITAGE NEAR DEČANI, 16–17TH CENTURY

This book i.e. the Triodion—the first copy of the book, was transcribed through great endeavors of the very reverend and venerable kyrr and father Elder Hieromonk Arsenije to whom we are much indebted (...) above Dečani, for that desert is beautiful and, moreover, partly fertile; toward the south and on the sunny side, above the monastery in the distance of one paprishte [a thousand feet], there is an edifice, a church dedicated to the three Holy Hierarchs –Sts. Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom. Hence what is said with regard to this topic is enough. Let us return to the point: this book was transcribed in the Monastery of Dečani by the hand of sinful Hieromonk Grigorije and whoever will be in possession of this book—either a monastery or a man—you who will be reading and copying it, please mention Hieromonk Arsenije in your prayers and may the Lord remember you, holy fathers! This Triodion was transcribed according to the excerpts from Kostamoni [Monastery] (...)

The note in the lost manuscript from Dečani: NI VI, 10–11 (9395)

A DEČANI VIEW OF THE SERBIAN TROUBLES, 16TH–17TH CENTURY

(...) For that reason I wanted to provide this wonderful monastic community with the whole set of books according to the Typikon but was impeded by my poor and insufficient zeal. In that time, being versed in church services, I superintended the monastery scribes and so they copied The Comprehensive Psalter and three Menaions—in the course of October, January and February and for four mounts, they were copying the Menologion and the Book of Epistles on parchment, in those difficult and troublesome times which were only slightly better than (the times) of first persecutions of Christians. In those times people were praying for death, not life (...) The Abbot of the above mentioned monastery Hieromonk Jevstratije, a kinsman of Abbot Simeon of the blessed memory who was called Trčitul (...)

The note in the MS of A. Konstantinović: NI II, 107 (2692)

PATRIARCH JOVAN ON THE VIOLENCE PERPETRATED BY TURKS, 1602

I wrote in the year 7111 (1602) on November 17 in Peć. And in those troublesome years a Christian would have no peace anywhere, neither we, the sinful, could escape the violence committed by alien Ishmaelites!

The note in Božidar's Menaion, № 50 in Hilandar: NI IV, 96 (6498)

PRIEST JOVAN FROM ORTHODOX JANJEVO DONATES A BOOK TO THE DEČANI MONASTERY, 1615

7123 (1615): the donator of this book Priest Jovan from Janjevo in Kosovo, together with my flock in the village where

Serbian Patriarch Jovan II (1592–1614),
painted by Georgije Mitrofanović (1619–20),
Church of the Holy Apostles, north wall, the Patriarchate of Peć

all [inhabitants] are Orthodox Christians and I, Jovan, the most sinful servant of all people, the most wretched Hiereus, bought this holy and divine book named the Book of Epistles and donated it to the holy and magnificent monastic community of the Dečani Monastery (...) Amen.

The note in the Dečani Manuscript: NI I, 284 (1023)

THE ASSEMBLY (SABOR) IN GRAČANICA, 1620

In the year 7128 (1620), in the month of May, the assembly was convened. Amen!

The inscription in the narthex of the Gračanica Monastery: NI IV, 114 (6598)

THE ROOF ON THE GRAČANICA CHURCH COVERED, 1620

By the will of the Father and with the help of the Son and through the action of the Holy Spirit, this church was roofed by order of (humble Archbishop of Peć) Kyrr Paisios, in the year 7128 (1620).

The inscription on the dome of the Gračanica church: NI I, 298 (1086)

THE RESTORATION OF THE CHURH OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF PEĆ, 1634

By the will of the Father and with the help of the Son and through the action of the Holy Spirit, this holy and divine edifice was restored through the efforts and care of the Most Reverend Archbishop Kyrr Paisios and one dilapidated part was wall-painted—we did as best as we could out of love and zeal together with the all the brethren during the year 6142 (1634), of the 2nd indiction. That year, humble Paisios had the refectory covered as well, though [the Patriarchate was] in great distress. In that time, Kyrr Spiridon was in charge as ecclesiarch, while Kyrr Vasilije was the abbot and Kyrr Todor the spahee, and the rest of the brethren—may the Lord pardon them!

The inscription on the western wall above the entrance to the Church of the Holy Apostles, the Patriarchate of Peć: NI I, 327 (1259–1260)

THE ECCLESIARCH OF THE PEĆ MONASTERY SYLVESTER KILLED BY THE CLIMENTI, JULY 8, 1665

In the year 7173 (1665) in the month of July, Ecclesiarch Sylvester was brutally murdered by the cursed [Albanian clan of] Climenti [Kelmendi]. Ah, the bitter wounds! Hieromonk Sylvester departed this life in the month of July, on the 8th day of the month, being murdered with a rifle as a murder weapon by the cursed Hagarenes. May his memory be eternal.

The inscriptions on the western wall of Danilo's narthex in the Patriarchate of Peć

THE CLIMENTI MURDERED A MONK FROM THE PATRIARCHATE OF PEĆ, 1665

Let it be known that carpenter Stephen was murdered by the Climenti [Albanian clan], in the year 7173.

The inscription on the western wall of Danilo's narthex in the Patriarchate of Peć

THE ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND TERROR (*ZULUM*) PERPETRATED BY SHAHIN-AGA ARNAUTIN, 1680

I, Mitar, a scribe (*dijak*) from Crveni Breg, am writing this to make known that when I was a jazhdzija [scribe] for the sub-pasha of Crveni Breg Husain-bey under the duke Shahin-aga the Arnaute [Albanian]—the latter was an evil dog and the Christians suffered under a heavy burden of oppression and heavy shackles. In the year 7188 (1680).

The note in the MS in the old National Library of Serbia, Belgrade, № 126: NI I, 424 (1767)

PATRIARCH ARSENIJE III ON HARD TIMES, 1683

(...) And in those years, a great evil was inflicted by Amir Sultan Mehmed upon the entire country, and all Christian people were pressed by intense adversities, there were severe sürsats [sürsat—a form of food requisitioning with price controls] and high taxes impositions throughout the land and whether they sailed at sea or marched on the mainland all [armed] forces of the Ishmaelites like a winged dragon swooped down on the glorious city of Vienna. But God resists the proud, hence he (the Sultan) returned unsuccessful

and the Hungarians [Ugri] slew his entire army with the sword. And there came the great tribulation all over the land. I wrote this in the year 7193, and 1683 since the Nativity of Christ, on December 8, Solar cycle 21, Lunar cycle 10, epact 2, in the Monastery (of Nikolje under Kablar).

The note in the MS of the Nikolje Monastery: NI I, 433–434 (1824)

THE SERBIAN PEOPLE DISPLACED ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, 1686–87

(...) And then again under the reign of this emperor [Mehmed] and Vizier [Suleyman Pasha—who is originally from the town on the River Mileševa], the kaurs [infidels] occupied Budim and pillaged Blaška and Bačka and their troops came as far as the Danube in the year 7195 (1687). Woe to us! And fierce wars and bloodsheds and plundering were inflicted upon the Christian people by the cursed Turks and Germans. And the Serbian people were displaced all over the country. And we arrived here in this place named Szentendre [Saint Andrew's town].

The note in the MS of the Pakra Monastery: NI I, 442 (1871–1872)

THE PERILOUS TIMES OF VIOLENCE, 1689

(...) Those were the end times, the times of tribulations, difficult and violent times, because the Turks, a very vicious nation, rose against us and we suffered severely while they were destroying our holy churches all over the land and the sacred vessels in churches (...)

The note in the SASA (Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts) MS 26: NI I, 450 (1917)

THE LIBERATION AND RE-OCCUPATION OF PEĆ, 1689

This book belongs to me, humble Archbishop of Cetinje Visarion. It was brought to me from the place of Scutari in the year (7107=1689) when there was great joy and ineffable jubilation for in that year, by some kind of God's providence, it happened that soldiers and commanders of the Roman Empire came with mighty forces plundering and expelling God-hating people of the Empire of Ishmael and its pagan nation from the region of Kosovo and other surrounding places. And they came to the great Church of Christ the Savior which is called the Archbishopric of Peć, a coenobitic community that radiantly shines and illumines the entire Serbian land. And for a short period, it was under their rule. But then a Christ-hater and domestic enemy Mahmut-Begović [Begolli], from the place of Ipek [Peć], rose together with his army [against them] seizing the rule over this holy coenobium and his native town, the place named Peć. All that happened with God's permission because of our sins. And many other evils were committed by this barbarous God-hater against this holy abode; he pillaged everything and squandered all its possessions and goods it had acquired since its foundation; having almost demolished it, he seized all its property. Therefore, may God pay him pack according to his deeds. And in that time this book was brought to the town of Scutari by this holy [monastic] community (...) And this happened (in 1689).

The note in the Cetinje MS: NI I, 448 (1907)

THE PLIGHT OF THE SERBIAN PEOPLE AND MONASTERIES, 1690

In the year 7198 (1690) there was a great war and plundering all over the Serbian land. And the Germans progressed as far as Štip while the Turks ran away but they returned again and expelled the Germans forcing them to retreat across the Danube. Oh, oh, woe is me! The utmost terror and misfortune befell us: they separated mothers from children and fathers from sons, enslaved the young and massacred and strangled the elderly. It was the time when people were praying for death, not life! Oh, what bitter sorrow inflicted upon us by the cursed Turks and Tatars, woe is me! And as the Hagarenes seized the monastery, an immense dragon rose against the monastery—Pasha Gashli-Pasha, and he robbed the Abbot leaving him barely alive, and left the monastery in a state of utmost devastation. The Abbot was not able to recover and on the third day, Abbot Zaharije departed this life and presented himself to the Lord. Then Abbot Daniel the Hieromonk was installed. And you need to know the following as well: a great miracle was performed by Saint King Stephen upon that thrice-cursed Pasha: his body began decomposing while he was still alive, he lost all his teeth and his soul left his body, and all of his accomplices as well could live no longer than three years thenceforth. But the monastery, by the will of God, was not laid waste and was not abandoned!

The note in the Dečani MS № 97, Fol. 1 v.; previously published with errors in NI I (1934–1935)

37,000 SERBIAN FAMILIES MIGRATE WITH PATRIARCH ARSENIJE, 1690

In 1690, His Holiness Patriarch Arsenije of Peć, having heard that Grand Vizier Köpörilli had mustered a multitude of Turks and Tatars preparing to attack Caesar Leopold and his states, informed the Caesar of the intention of the Turks and appealed to the Caesar to allow him, together with the Serbian people, to migrate to his country. And the Caesar, in response to the Patriarch's appeal, allowed them to enter his country. Then, in the spring, the Patriarch gathered a multitude of Serbian people, as many as 37 000 families, and they committed themselves to military service in the Caesar's army (...) In the same war, there occurred vast plundering and pillaging of the entire Serbian land together with forced displacements of Christians. And thus our Monastery of Ravanica was totally ravaged as well (...) This was written by *Daskal* [master, teacher] Stephen, Hieromonk of the Ravanica Monastery.

The note in the Šišatovac Manuscript: NI III, 94–95, (5283, 5286, 5302)

36,000 SERBIAN FAMILIES MIGRATED TOGETHER WITH PATRIARCH ARSENIJE III, 1690

Arsenije [III] Čarnojević [Crnojević], Serbian Patriarch, sent Isaija Djaković [as an envoy] to Vienna and the latter, on August 21 1690, procured the Diploma (Charter) wherein [Emperor] Leopold promised protection to the Serbs as well as freedom of law and freedom to elect their own vožds (leaders), and he promised that they should be granted an organi-

zation in accordance with their wishes after the war. Having received this official guarantee, Patriarch Arsenije, together with 36,000 Serbian families, migrated to Srem, Slavonia and the area of Buda and Szentendre (Saint Andrew's town).

From the notes in Sima Todorović's booklet, a Zemun teacher, who started recording events in his notebook in 1808: NI III, 123 (5488)

THE OTTOMANS ARE ATTEMPTING TO REMOVE THE LEAD FROM THE ROOF OF THE PEĆ PATRIARCHATE

Let it be known when chaushs [officers or heralds in the Ottoman Army] came to remove the lead from the church roof but the attempt was of no avail; this happened in 1706.

The inscription on the eastern wall in Danilo's Narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć

THE STATE OF THE CHURCHES IN THE REGION OF PRIZREN, 1731

In 1731, in the time of the most blessed and the most enlightened men, Kyrr Patriarch Mojsej, came to Prizren on November 10 and appointed Isaija Dimitrijević as Metropolitan. And in that time, it so happened that, by the will of God, a lightning bolt struck a mosque and demolished it to the ground. I went to the village of Mushutishte and they did not receive me. I found a church devastated, the Holy Trinity Church. Then, again I came to the region of Koriša, to the Church of the Holy Apostle Mark the Evangelist and as there was no head [of the parish] and I appointed Kyrr Serapho (!) as abbot and administrator and entrusted the Holy Trinity Church to him as his skete to be his sign in the entire West and Serbian Illyricum forever and ever. Penned by the Metropolitan of Prizren Isaija Tucak, with his own hand.

The note in the MS of St. Mark's Monastery in Prizren: NI II, 87 (2583)

THE FLEEING OF [PATRIARCH] ARSENIJE IV AND THE SUFFERING OF KOSOVO, 1737

Oh, in the year 1732 AD [definitely in 1737!] there was a great turmoil when the Germans occupied Nish and progressed as far as the vicinity of Sophia, to the so-called Halkalj; for it was followed by Pasha Cuprili Oglu's attack on Sophia; he mustered up to six thousand soldiers in a mighty army that reoccupied Nish. In the same year, the Archbishop of Samokov Simeon was slandered to the above-mentioned Pasha through false allegations that he had encouraged the Germans to attack the Turks, hence having tortured him a lot, the Pasha had him hanged. In that time Serbian Patriarch Kyrr Arsenije the Fourth was forced to evacuate himself. Oh, the countless ways of suffering of the Christian people who could not escape a single form of torture and persecution! These days it is impossible to write about it for fear of the Turks. Kosovo is also being seized. What else should I say: It was not hard like this in the days of Diocletian for the Lord allowed this due to our transgressions. I, Petar Andrejić penned this.

The note in a printed book from the Patriarchate of Peć: NI V, 70 (7734–7737)

The Church of the Holy Mother of God Ljeviša converted into a Mosque, photo dated the end of the 19th century

MAHMUT-PASHA RAVAGES VASOJEVIĆI TRIBE EXPELLING ITS INHABITANTS TO METOHIJA, 1737

(...) And in that year, Mahmut-Pasha marauded [the area of] Vasojevići having its people either enslaved or expelled to Metochia, in the year 7246 (1737).

The note in the MS of the old National Library of Serbia, Belgrade: NI II, 114 (2725)

TATARS DESTROY SERBIAN RELICS, 1737

The relics of St. Jevstatije were taken to rest to another place, I think to Crna Reka. The relics of St. Arsenije were shattered and cut to pieces by infidel Sketes, barely had anything left of his head! O, Lord, ferocious peoples have come to our fatherland! 1737, March 21.

The note in the MS from St. Georges' Church in Prizren: NI I, 374 (1501)

THE REFUGEE CAMP IN RUGOVA AND THE RETREAT OF THE PEOPLE TOWARD BELGRADE, 1737

1737, on July 27, on this day, the Metropolitan of Belgrade Mojsej Petrović of the blessed memory reposed in the Lord in Belgrade. And today we have fled into the Rugova Mountains for fear of the Hagarenes for they, being expelled from their settlements and towns by German and South-Slavic Armies, wrought their anger and brutality at Orthodox Christians. They sought to commit some evil deeds against His Holiness Patriarch of Peć Arsenije the Fourth but he was delivered from their snare through the Intercession of the Holy Mother of God. Together we walked from Peć all night and came to Rugova where we stayed for the night in the homes of some Arbanasi [ethnic Albanians] who received us with hospitality. From Rugova, however, the Elder (i.e. the Patriarch) departed on the journey to Vasojevići while I, after three days, went to Shekularci and was dwelling in a cave there for two days (...)

The note of the Sindjel Partenije Pavlović in the Karlovac Manuscript: NI II, 112–113 (2720)

THE PERSECUTION OF HIEROMONK GERASIM IN THE MONASTERY OF DEVIČ BY ALBANIANS, 1741

In the year 7249 since the creation of the whole world and of the first-created man Adam, and in 1741 since the Nativity of Christ: I, sinful and unworthy to be called Hieromonk, Gerasim, have read this book; the fatherland of my wretchedness—the grave, and my mother—the ground; from the Župa Monastery as the place where I was tonsured, descending from the tribe of Nikšić. And then, I in my wretchedness moved into the Devič Monastery by my own will. And then I suffered numerous woes and attacks from the cursed Arbanasi fiends by day and night (...) I am writing this in the month of January, on the 1st day of the month, in Devič, moaning with deep sorrow.

The note in the MS from the Patriarchate of Peć 111: NI V, 81–81 (7807); corrected according to V. Mošin: Manuscripts of the Patriarchate of Peć, Antiquities of Kosovo and Metohia 4–5 (1968–1971, published in 1971) № 124

THE CHURCH IN PEĆ CLOSED DURING THE PRIMATESHIP OF THE PATRIARCH OF PEĆ JOANIKIJE III KARADŽA, 1742

Let it be known that the church was closed in 1742 during the primateship of the Greek Patriarch.

The inscription on the western wall in Danilo's Narthex, the Patriarchate of Peć

THE BOOK FROM THE GORIOČ MONASTERY, 1754

This holy and soul-saving book named Lazarevac, belongs to the Monastery Ogorioč (!), the church dedicated to Christ's Saint Nicholas the Quick Helper. Signed and penned in the year 7263 (1754), on November 14 in Ogorioč. Penned by me, Radoslav from the village of Istok, full of sins and most unworthy of all people (...)

The note in the Dečani Book: NI V, 121 (8046)

THE SORROW FOR THE MOTHER OF GOD OF LJEVIŠA

I, protopresbyter of the Church and Home of the Most Pure Mother of God in Prizren read this Commemoration Book, in 1756. O, woe is me for I have lived to see such a year! What a terrible year! And now the Turks bow end worship in that edifice and would not allow the Christians inside (...)

The note in the MS of the old National Library of Serbia, Belgrade, № 227: NI II, 190 (3109)

A MAN FROM PETROVARADIN SEARCHING FOR HIS OCCUPIED FATHERLAND IN KOSOVO, 1757

After having spent many years abroad, driven by the desire to see the traces of his fallen homeland and of pious living agreeable to God, the abovementioned resident of Petrovaradin, Vasilije Miroljub, came to the holy and imperial monastic community of the Dečani Monastery as an inquisitive researcher of antiquity as well as novelty, in 1757 on August 21, and was received with genuine Christian love.

The note in the Dečani Commemoration Book (Proskomedia): Lj. Stojanović, NI V, 133 (8115)

THE SLAYING OF PRIEST VELIČKO IN KOSOVO POLJE, 1760

Let it be known that Father Veličko was murdered in 1760; slain by cursed Hagarenes in Kosovo Polje.

The note on the wall in the Gračanica Monastery: NI VI, 135 (10299)

JOVAN GEORGIJEVIĆ LAMENTS OVER THE FATE OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PEOPLES, 1760

This sacred Evangelion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Son of God, I, humble Jovan Georgijević, Bishop of Karansebeš, Vršac, Logoš, Bela Crkva, Palanka, Mehadija, Horšav etc. presented as a gift to the imperial monastic community of Dečani, the Church of the Lord Pantokrator, for the forgiveness of my transgressions and for the sacred service in this holy abode for the salvation of the entire world as announced by our Lord Jesus Christ to all mankind, to those who believe in His name. The abovementioned holy Monastery of Dečani was built by the pious and most eminent sovereign Serbian King Saint Stephen [St. King Stefan Dečanski], who in the lineage of Saint Simeon ascended to the throne as Uroš the Fifth bearing the name of the Nemanjić Dynasty; the then ruler of Serbia, Bulgaria, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Albania, Macedonia and the entire Western Littoral, including also the Lower and Upper Mission in Illyricum. He had the monastery constructed with marvelous architectural art and enormous beauty endowing it with numerous villages and filling it with golden and silver vessels and sacred vestments for the service unto the Glory of the Lord and indeed his faith was adorned with good deeds and his deeds were sealed with faith! And his holy body has been resting in the kivot of this holy abode granting healing to those who come to it with faith, as it is sung in the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church of all the Serbs: "Stephen is my praise and my stronghold/strength!" Oh, these tears of mine! What a great all-glorious land and a pious Empire it once had been—[encompassing] Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian [lands] and other principalities, places visited by God, churches, holy sites–but there came infidels of the Ishmaelite people—the Turks, destroying the inheritance—the empire, desecrating the holy Church of God! Behold, you Heavens, and hear, you Earth! O, Lord, our Lord! Look down from Heaven and behold, and deliver this vine which Thy right hand hath planted, amen! In the year 1760 AD, in the town of Vršac, in Timisoara Banat, in our new Bishop's residence and in the Church of Holy Arch-strategists Michael and Gabriel which is situated in the Bishop's residence under the same roof.

The note in a printed book from Dečani: NI II, 201 (3165)

THE BOOK FROM DESERTED VOJSILOVICA IN GRAČANICA, 1762

In the year 1762, I came to the church in the Gračanica Monastery because the Monastery of Vojsilovica had become desolate, therefore, since that year, I have been in the church in Gračanica.

The note in the MS of the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Prizren (now belonging to the Diocese of Raška and Prizren): NI II, 208 (3204)

THE DILAPIDATION OF THE GRAČANICA MONASTERY, 1762, 1772

I am weeping and sobbing when I see the dilapidation of this church. Oh, woe is us in this time in the Empire of Hagarenes! It is when I, sinful and unworthy Hiereus Hristifor of Gračanica, signed this, I unworthy to be called (Iereus). In 1762, in June, on the 1st day of the month. And then again—in 1772.

The inscription on the wall of the Gračanica Monastery: NI II, 209 (3211–3212)

MONKS FLEEING FROM JANISSARIES IN PRIZREN, 1769

In the year 1769, on March 16, let it be known when we had to run away from Janissaries to a place called Kamen, near the river, and there we spent seven nights till the wrath of God passed.

The note in the MS which belonged to St. George's Church in Prizren and then to the old National Library of Serbia in Belgrade, № 431: NI II, 234 (3342)

THE TERROR (*ZULUM*) IN TRGOVIŠTE, 1770

Let it be known when the Turks perpetrated brutal terror [*zulum*]. The tevtish [controller] of Prizren together with Mrla-bey attacked Rožaje: the people of Rožaje would not surrender and the Bey with his army invaded Trgovište. The army ate grains and cheese and fat and they butchered oxen and cows and ewes and rams and the Christian homes become desolate due to this raid. The poor were fleeing in snow and ice weeping bitterly and profusely. And then, Trgovište was laid waste with terror [*zulum*]. And people were saying that the army numbered 7 thousand soldiers. And the army stayed there 4 weeks, in the year 1770; they arrived on the 3rd day of Decemebr and left on the 2nd day of January.

The note in the MS in St. Peterburg Library, № 28: NI II, 236 (3355)

THE METOCH OF THE DEČANI MONASTERY IN DJAKOVICA, 1770

In 1770, this holy and divine Liturgical Book of the Dečani Monastery was donated by Abbot Kyrr Danil from Paštrovići, in Djakovica, in the Metoh [a plot of land owned by a monastery] of the Dečani Monastery, for Christian service; and may the Lord pardon us!

The note in the MS of the old National Library of Serbia, Belgrade, № 856: NI V, 175 (8374)

THE GREAT TERROR (*ZULUM*) PERPRETRATED BY MUSLIM ALBANIANS, 1788

This holy divine Book of Epistles is from the Monastery of Crna Reka. It was repurchased from the Turks of Novi Pazar by Priest Stojan Dobrinac for ten groschen and donated by him to the monastery for the salvation of his soul. The Turks ravaged the Ljubostinja Monastery and torched it and enslaved a lot of slaves whom they sold. Our poor heart was weeping because of such terrible terror [*zulum*]! In the year 1788 since Christ's Nativity. And in that time, we suffered brutal terror and violence perpetrated by the Turks from Novi Pazar and Albanians (Arbanasi). The elderly were forced to turn Turk and convert to Islam, my heart was weeping, churches lay waste, monasteries dilapidated due to this *zulum*. My brethren, please pray for me for God's sake for I am much sinful!

The note now in the Archive of SASA (the legacy of J. Tomić): NI V, 223 (8681–8683)

THE SIGNS IN THE HEAVENS IN DEČANI, OCTOBER 17, 1794

Let it be known when Abbot Danil departed for Jerusalem in 1794, in August, on the 17th day of the month. And I, priest Sava, stayed to serve in the Dečani Monastery. And we saw the signs in the heavens and in the air: the fire above the church from the eastern side to the west as a large beam of light, moving as far as Plješa and then it thundered and the earth in Dečani shook and quaked, in the month of October, on the 17th day of the month, at 8 in the evening—some time around yatsi [bedtime or two hours after sunset] before St. Luke's Day: and the whole church was shining like the Sun. This sacred soul-feeding book, the Typikon, was given to me, the sinful priest-iereus Sava, the Saccellarius [church treasurer] of Prizren, as a present by a defrocked priest from Peć in 1794, on October 16.

The note in the MS of the old National Library of Serbia 727: NI II, 298 (3679–3680)

MAHMUT-PASHA PLUNDERS PRIZREN, 1795

In 1795, Prizren was plundered by Mahmut-Pasha. And I, Father Savo Saccellarius [the Treasurer], found this book in the village of Crnobrež, and I repurchased it and thus returned it to Prizren as an offering to Saint Nicholas's church, unto memory eternal.

The note pursuant to the printout made by P. Kostić: NI II, 303 (3703)

ŽIVKO BANOVIĆ FROM THE SERBIAN LAND OF KOSOVO, 1813

This note is being penned by Živko. Let it be known where he comes from, that he comes from the Serbian land of Kosovo, from the town of Priština; being descended from the Banović family.

The note in the MS in the Library of the Serbian Patriarchate in Belgrade: NI VI, 155 (10445)

THE PLEDGE OF ABBOT (HEGUMEN) DIONISIJE

In the year 1829, on January 3: Let it be known to the people that I, Hieromonk Dionisije, placed the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Mušutište, which was demolished, under the administration of the Monastery of St. Mark, if it be God's will to restore it, to be the metoh of [the Monastery of] the Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark, or to remain thus ruined. He who becomes abbot after me, shall consider this as a command and shall be the administrator of that place; and may he who breaks this vow and who disavows the pledge [changes this decision] remain unpardoned and unblessed, to him –let him be anathema, may he be bound up and tied in body and soul in this and in the age to come, amen! And I leave the letter from the honorable Mahmud-pasha and Emin-pasha, his brother, the Tahir-pashics, and the Synkelia [certifi-

cate, administrative act] issued by Metropolitan Zacharius of Dečani. [I am writing this] with my own hand, the abovementioned Hieromonk Dionisije Priest Savić, from Prizren.

In the year 1836, the holy abode of Rusinica dedicated to the Holy Trinity was restored in the month of August—the renovation commenced on August 17. Archimandrite Dionisije the abovementioned priest Savović (Savić), originally Gudović [Gudić], from Prizren, the ancient capital town.

The notes in the MS in the Holy Trinity Church in Prizren: NI II, 376–377 (4067–4068)

THE QUELLING OF AN ALBANIAN REBELLION, 1831

We are writing this note to make known that when the vizier was in Skoplje, there was a great tribulation due to the famine, one shinik [unit of measurement] of wheat cost 6 groschen.

As the Karadak was plundered, these Karadakian Arnauts were taken away and captured by the vizier from Stanbol in 1831. After that, it was peaceful, even too peaceful. Written by me, sinful Paun, with my own hand.

The note in the MS of St. Petersburg Library (today GPB, F, I 710): NI V, 307 (9195)

THE SUFFERING OF THE SERBIAN PEOPLE, 1857–58

In the year 1857, in the month of June, we began to cover the roof of the church i.e. the Holy Lavra of Visoki (High) Dečani with lead. We replaced the old lead roofing melting down the old lead and purchasing new. More than 4000 okas [1 oka=1.280 kg] was bought and we melted down all of it and covered the entire roof construction by the end of the year 1858, on August 1, through the efforts of Archimandrite Seraphim Ristić Tetovac [originally from Tetovo], Protohegumen Antim Sedlarević from Dragoljevce and Epitropos Agatangel Ristić Velesli [from Veles] and Epitropos Ćiril Andrejević from Belopolje near Peć and all of the brethren, both great and small, hieromonks and monks and all those who served in this holy abode, under the patronage of the most glorious *Pravitelstvo* (Government) of Serbia under the reign of Aleksandar Karadjordjević, the Prince of Serbia, and under the reign of Emperor of All Russia Aleksander Nikolajević and of Sultan Abdul Medjid in the Ottoman Empire. In these times there was intense suffering of the Slavic-Serbian and Slavic-Bulgarian and Greek peoples and, in general, of all sons of the Orthodox Eastern Christian Church. Woe is me! Oh, what suffering inflicted upon us by the cursed Turks, and most of all [by] Albanians (Arnauts)! Pay attention, you Heaven and listen, you earth, behold, you Europe, you who all believe in Christ [behold] and deliver the people who is groaning with pain! May the righteous and most-wise Creator have mercy on His flock of Christ! This was penned by me, humble and sinful
Archimandrite Seraphim.

The note in the Dečani MS № 64, fol. 8. Unpublished note.

THE ACTS OF VIOLENCE PERPRETRATED BY AN ALBANIAN NAMED DEMA, 1858

(...) Let it be known that when Dema (...) came to Visoki [High] Dečani Monastery, he perpetrated terror (*zulum*) with 20 of his men. Terrible things they did while staying in the monastery for ten days; there they ate and drank, there they committed *zulum*! May the Lord and the Holy King kill those who perpetrate such violence and terror! Thank God [for the protection]! They want to close the Holy Dečani [Monastery]. Thank God, may He destroy them with His hand and may He crush their force! Let this be known! In the year 1858; Djordje Mikailović; on the 5th day of the month of January.

The note in the Dečani MS № 88, Fol. 102, v. Unpublished note

ACTS OF VIOLENCE PEREPTRATED BY ALBANIANS IN THE DEČANI MONASTERY, 1858

Let it be known that when Rushit-bey Mahmutbegović from Peć launched an attack on the Montenegrin Army in Vasojevići, against Montenegro, against its ruler and prince Danilo Petrović of Montenegro, he perpetrated immense terror in Peć: marauding and all forms of violence; they even dared ravage and destroy the churches and monasteries. Had we not paid the ransoms [for the monasteries], we would certainly have experienced utter destruction, and we were forced to provide for 40 to 50 Albanians here in the monastery under the priorship of Archmandrite Seraphim, on August 12, 1858. Signed by Hieromonk Ananija Dečanac with Hieromonk Teofil Dečanac.

The note in the Dečani MS № 97, fol. 399 v. Unpublished note

ALBANIANS CONSPIRE AMONG THEMSELVES AGAINST THE DEČANI MONASTERY, 1861

Let it be known that in 1861 Albanians made a decision that they would not kill or steal any more. But after that there was a great commotion and sorrow in the monastery: they stole whatever they could, and after some time, they repeated the raid inflicting misery on the monastery, butchering the oxen and devouring whatever food they could find, inflicting upon the monastery all of the following: evil, bitter sorrow and misery!

The note in the Dečani Monastery MS № 132, fol. 80. Unpublished note.

SUFFERING OF OLD SERBIA

The Letter of Archimandrite Sava of Dečani to the dignitaries of the Congress of Berlin (1878)

Everything that is most precious, most sacred and most dear to one nation, everything that makes it different from other nations, makes it a strong, bright, independent and useful member of enlightened humanity, all that, including our own survival, is at stake for us now, the same as seventy years ago. That is the great sorrow and great shame of our contemporaries. Certain nations resemble persons who poison their own organism with selfishness, negligence and profligacy and after great sufferings, they become ruined and turn into dust. The lack of unity, faith, patriotism, a national idea and pride, lead certain nations to an unavoidable and shameful eternal death.

It is true that a small part of Serbia is now free, on the right coasts of the Danube and Sava, in the valleys of the Morava, but the Serbian Kingdom is still far from permanent safe sur-

vival in this limited. Without the valleys of the Drim and Vardar that we can call the Serbian Tibar, Seine or Thames, blessed and naturally rich valleys in the center of Serbian lands, which are unfortunately in foreign hands, the Kingdom of Serbia has not secured its survival. That is happening to the shame of civilized Europe. What is happening to those Serbian valleys? They have been transformed into the Asian slaughterhouse where plague and other political diseases have captured the Serbian body. Our brothers from Šumadija, sons of a free Serbian Kingdom, do not want to hear about this. Even if Ottoman Turks ate us all alive like birds eat grasshoppers in the fields, no one would turn their head toward us; as if we were Indian pariahs or Chinese-Japanese Manchus, children of some Samoyedic people from the Asian steppes. The Šumadija Serbs [in Principality of Serbia] unwillingly hears about misfortunes that happen every day in the valleys of rivers Vardar, Lim and Drim, as if something were offending him in those stories. About the events in the valleys of rivers Amur, Nile and Mississippi he gladly listens, writes and reads. When something happens elsewhere in the world, no matter how small or insignificant, our writers race with each other as to who will be the first to write and inform the public; while all the slaughters and arsons in the Serbian lands that border the Kingdom of Serbia remain without a word written or spoken in the Serbian state. Not a word about their brothers in blood, faith and interest.

From the following words we shall see how liberated Serbian people perceive themselves and their still oppressed and unconsolidated fatherland at this crucial moment. Better to say, we shall see how they cope with non-patriotism and antipathy in front of their enslaved brethren. Antipathy (lack of compassion) is the mother of all evil and root of all disaster, as much as bold brotherly love and sympathy (compassion) are the only salvation to a country or fatherland.

Woe unto us! The seed of poison, hatred and envy has been increasingly sown in the place of brotherly love and justice. Trickery has became familiar to us together with all kinds of unpatriotic hypocrisy. We see many ungrateful sons turning weapons against their parents and their entire fatherland with fervor and impudence, overlooking the defeat that threatens our entire fatherland and nation, only to realize some harmful fantasies of their own. This depraved direction has led us into a state where diligence has turned into laziness, working into waste of time, saving into luxury.

We too understand, gentlemen, what the freedom is that you write about in your newspapers. Freedom is the daughter of every truth, the mother of humanity. In the captivity in which we find ourselves now, man is but a conscious animal that anyone can slaughter. You had more luck than we did because you gained political independence and freedom. Unfortunately, you have used that sanctity of humankind for evil and you became true slaves of your fiery passions, indulging your personal desires and your harmful sophistry, which enslaved you.

In that way, oh you learned ones, you truncate people's rights gained by blood, ruin the traditions of your ancestors by foreign and corrupt journalism; you tread on your faith, language, and hearthstone, and you trample on what is most sacred to people. You shackle them in steel chains, you impose on them something they will not accept for some time and suffocate all domestic progress.

Archimandrite Sava Dečanac,
leader of the Kosovo Serbs, in 1878

We also know that a free press in the hands of patriots is the strongest foundation of human progress. The living word gets wings through it, wings to take the truth to the world, to serve the truth, to perfect humanity, to spread knowledge in order to make it the common good of all humankind.

Unfortunately, sinister Serbian men of letters betrayed this sanctity, too. We can see that many of them write who-knows--what praises with their own free hands, but their head is a slave chained by alien fantasies. They think that with their hands, they achieve the goals of the press, that they are spreading knowledge, but the head heated with foreign heat always goes off the track and instead of spreading knowledge, they deliver scandalous scolding in their scribbling, they curse and blaspheme all that is honest, holy and noble for Serbhood.

What harm has not been done by this scribbling, partisan, non-patriotic, unconscious and unreasonable press?! It has created horrible demoralization and plagued the spirit of our deceived nation. It has created an impediment to the internal development and external liberation and unity of all Serbhood. Such a press has created all that devours and erodes the social limbs of our national body, until we are wiped from the face of the earth. In one word, that press has done everything that is necessary to undermine the foundations of Serbian progress and survival, and everything that would help our enemies—the gravediggers of our tribe, better to say, all that hell could think against us, the Serbian press stoked it with fanatical enthusiasm. That could only happen in a country

where people betray freedom, do not have patriotic consideration toward gained freedom, civilian wisdom or virtue.

Therefore, it is your internal deficiencies and your coldness toward us who are still oppressed and with great pains in our soul, that is disturbing you. If this state does not change, we are doomed for disaster.

We will retell just one among thousands of cases in order to show you how the enemy slaughter us like hunted animals close to the Serbian border, reminding you that your papers have not described even one of those cases. Other nations, when someone gets hurt in your area, not only describe and inform the public, but also translate the account into all other languages for the whole world to know. All of you have the means and resources of your parties to have meetings, committees, even agents throughout Europe. You have all that, but do not forget that it is all Serbian and that you are Serbs. Still, you have not done anything for Serbhood with that. You have your reporters abroad, a free wing on the body of entire Serbhood in an oppressed land, but still you do not use that for the benefit of Serbhood. But when some accident happens, for example to African Zulus or to a brave Nile expedition in the deserts of Africa, like two months ago, you write vividly about it; about Egypt, slaughters in Alexandria, a large Bedouin army; you describe their sufferings and progresses, you glorify British energy and skill in battle, lavish rewards on those who have millions of dollars at their command, the great leaders of the land of the Pharaohs, Arabi-pasha etc. Your patriotic papers are full of these things, also of other piques and personal quarrels of yours that are being published every day or more precisely to say, poisoning your people and all Slavdom. About our lands, the sorrow and harm done to our people, your papers have not written a word. One would think that the Middle East or African deserts are closer to us than Kosovo, Priština, Bitoly, Ohrid, Thessaloniki, Peć etc., the places where hell has opened to devour Serbhood. You never wrote, not even as a joke, anything about our sorrowful leaders—Stevan and Kuzmin Šeparević, Mihailo Todorović, Nastas Matičević, Spasoje Janković, Stojan Milenković, etc. or about that old fighter for national rights Stojan Kovačević; not a word, not even as much as about an Arabian pasha, only a few words in some magazines…

Why, brethren, for God's sake? Why are you, our intelligentsia, so far from the contemporary needs of our people? Why don't you rise above yourselves, break your selfishness, and destroy a once imposed intrigue and confusion, and the rottenness of the soul that took root so deeply in you?

Today, more than ever, it is essential for you to have Serbian wishes, Serbian pride and honesty, Serbian ideas about patriotism, spread through your organs, a word about real Serbian virtues and needs, spread true, pure, uncontaminated thoughts of the Serbian soul, Serbian feelings and Serbian genius.

For God's sake, you who have more luck than us in every way, do not go so obviously into the hellish devouring jaws of the dragon, but establish real foundations in Serbian society, with God's justice, with pure morality and faith. That is what kept our poems in close spiritual kinship, and what is essential if all Serbs are to embrace each other in the political sense also, if God wills. Quarrels, divisions and hatred leave an opening for our external enemies who want Serbia to trip up on its own doorstep using you and your discord. Instead compete among yourselves in patriotism, virtues and courage with the raised flag of your fatherland. Please, do not forget the virtues of your grandfathers that raised the question about our unity and liberation, and that of other nations in the Balkans. Be careful not to become the feces of the world and freaks of your own nation. Do not forget that people remember and record; and history judges like God, eternally and justly. Remember that every evildoer is cursed by its progeny; negligence will be stigmatized by people, the negligence of those who had full freedom, the means and power over life and fate of its nation and then used it for evil. Eradicate, brothers, your mutual passions, those satanic gifts. Start focusing on national needs; above all be mindful of the liberation and unity of all Serbian people, with the blessing of God!

Excerpt from the preface of the report about "*Suffering of Old Serbia* (Kosovo and Metohija and Macedonia)" penned by Archimandrite and later Bishop Sava of Dečani (former monk of old-Serbian monastery Dečani), official representative of the people of Old Serbia at the Berlin Congress (1878), together with several leaders of Old Serbia (Kosovo and Metohija and Macedonia), on the day of Saint Demetrius (Mitrovdan), 1882—Ed.

AN ATTEMPT OF ASSASSINATION AGAINST A PRIZREN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY PROFESSOR

1.

Ivan Jastrebov—to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

№ 72 Constantinople, April 8th/20th, 1880

A copy of Jastrebov's report (to the Legation in Constantinople) from April 8th, 1880 for № 72 (Archives of b. Min. D. V.- A2 . № № 675).

On April 6th this year, at Sunday noon, 17 Albanians from Liuma, armed with „Martin" rifles, headed by the well-known Ramadan Zaskok, an obdurate murderer, were chasing down the street of the Christian quarter in order to find the professor of local Theological Seminary Petar Kostić and to kill him. Not having found him at home and in the Seminary's edifice, which belongs to the Russian honorary citizen Sima Igumenov, they started for the Consulate which I am responsible for. Someone allegedly hinted that Kostić was hiding at my place. The mob was trying to break into the Consulate by force; it is only thanks to my intrepid and cautious guards under my personal supervision and control that the whole affair passed without a bloody fight in front of the Consulate and inside.

Naturally, I did not delay informing the Mutesarif (governor) of what had happened. Ahmed Helmi Pasha stated that he did not know anything and he would take action in order to keep the situation at bay. Immediately after that I personally protested against the violation of rules of the Consulate and demanded that the three policemen who were directing the llumen without the knowledge of their superiors be punished and that the llumen leave the town.

Kostić spent all day locked in a warehouse, and I found him in the evening and took under my auspices. As it turned out, his guilt was in daring to write to his acquaintance in the town

of Gilan (Gnjilane), that Muchtar Pasha left this place and that redifs (army reservists) are leaving too, as well as that Albanians in Scutari (Skodra) were opposing Montenegro and the Sultan just like people here. That letter was kept by Ramadan Zaskok, prompted by a Christian rascal, because it was addressed to Serbia.

No investigation has been initiated. Kostić most probably cannot be convicted for a letter of innocent contents; Ramadan Zaskok, it goes without saying, will not be arrested; the authorities, in their weakness, are not even hiding the fear of touching upon an offender such as Ramadan, of whom I have once informed your Excellency. My English counterpart voiced his dissatisfaction with the Albanian attack against the Russian Consulate to the Mutesarif, and demanded that Ramadan Zaskok be arrested, just like I did, for he makes an authority sui generis here.

2.

I.S. Jastrebov—to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

№ 80 Constantinople, April 15th/27th, 1880

Having taken Professor Kostić under my auspices against the Muslim lynch mob, which I informed you of on 8 April № 72, thus saving him of imminent death, I forced the Mutesarif to send a letter to representative of the secondary authorities here, a type of commune that terrorizes the peaceful citizens, and that he be tried under the law. While questioning Kostić, the authorities saw for themselves the banality of the cause and meant to release him, but under the pressure of the local commune, who threatened to kill Kostić sooner or later, the Mutesarif then decided to move him to Bitola and avoid further inconvenience. Nobody dared even think to bring to justice the one who was impertinent enough to detain and unseal letters without the authorities knowing it (which is strictly prohibited by law), let alone to arrest the notorious Ramadan Zaskok, who wrought such havoc here.

The authorities reassured me that Kostić could go anywhere after arriving to Bitola, except for Prizren here, I advised him not to waste time and to go to Belgrade via Constantinople. I harbor high hopes that your Excellency will help him and that the Serbian Minister Mr. Grujić will not leave him unsupported, but will arrange an adequate passport for his journey to Belgrade.

Radoslav M. Grujić, "Two Reports of Consul Jastrebov on the Action of the Albanian League in Prizren in 1880", *A Collection for the History of South Serbia I*, Skoplje, 1936, pp. 403–406.

SERBS DISAPPEARING FROM KOSOVO

Vice-Consul Branislav Nušić to Dr. Vladan Djordjević, Serbia's Minister to Constantinople

Confidential, № 31 Priština, March 26th/April 19th,1895

I am honored to send you the list of all terror (*zulum*) and violence that have taken place in the past two years in the area of this Consulate, kindly requesting that you do all in your powers to hinder any further violence in this area. I am honored to also mention that, with spring coming, there are outlooks of even fiercer terror and the people are panicking and starting massive depopulation of the area. Unless swift and necessary steps are taken, we will be left without any Serbs in this whole territory within a shortest period of time. Why, there are no more than 1,100 Serb homes in the villages of Kosovo!

And when the Serbian population disappears, all educational propaganda will be futile, because schools and churches will be empty.

Especially gross violence takes place in the Gnjilane district and I believe that should Constantinople issue a strict order via Skoplje to the Gnjilane kajmekam (administrator) to catch the outlaws, who I mentioned in the report, the number of *zulum* cases would be at least halved.

Besides, orders to the Peć Mutesarif should be tightened, so he pay more attention to public security and terror, because the situation in Peć has become so horrific that unless there is a volte-face, our population will absolutely vanish from there.

In Kolašin, the situation is dire and people are fleeing, and it will stop only when, and if, Kolašin is annexed to the Vučitrn administration, because that is the only means to prevent further depopulation of that area.

The inhabitants of Kolašin have already submitted a plea to the Mutesarif of Priština and I am kindly asking you, Mr. Minister, to underpin their cause. I believe that terror will not cease even if orders from Constantinople are stricter, as long as the Mufti of Priština and Suleiman-Aga are here, as two greatest protectors of outlaws and terrorists, people whose influence upon the local Mutesarif and the administrators is so strong that they cannot break out of it. The Mutesarif here, Rauf-Pasha, though I could not complain about him in other aspects, is too lenient and there is nothing he dares do to stop the terror, because that would be against the will of the Mufti and Suleiman-Aga.

At the time when the Sublime Porte is struggling with the Armenian issue (though in Armenia not even half the things that take place here have happened) with Bulgarians reporting on the terror in Macedonia and Serbian press denying it, I think it would only be fair on the Serbian people to have energetic action (not only written orders) to eventually curtail this terror as it would be by far more inconvenient for the Porte to have foreign press learn and deal with the wonders that happen here.

Archives of Serbia, Belgrade, Legation at Constantinople, 1895 folder 51

A LIST OF VIOLENCE (1894–1895)

Consulate in Priština—to Dr. Vladan Djordjević, Serbia's Minister in Constantinople

Confidential, № 37 Priština, April 22th/May 4th,1895

Mr. Minister,

What is being done this spring in the area of Peć is a new and stand-alone example in the history of terror (*zulum*) in that area, where Serbian population is almost all displaced from by force. Now the terror is stepped up, so Albanians are forcing all village population to either embrace Turkish faith or to move away. However, they cannot even move, because Albanians are watching every step they take, so even emigration is prevented. As a secondary means of salvation for our population it is even impossible to enumerate all murders and violence done in the area of Peć now, but it can be

noted for sure that there is a formal war waged to extermination of the Serbian population. The authorities are doing absolutely nothing to prevent the terror, so no wonder Albanians already think that the Sultan is not in their way to finish the eradication of the Serbian population there.

The Mutesarif of Peć is but a coward who does not dare oppose the terror with his words, let alone prevent it with his authority and armed force. For, should he personally do anything about it, we would not have the situation in Peć where not a single day lapses without a Serb murdered or beaten up. It has even got thus far in Peć that Serbs have shut down all their stores and do not dare leave there houses.

These days, near the Patriarchate of Peć, a young man from the Vojvoda family (Albanian) grabbed a Catholic Albanian girl who loved him and did not resist going with him. [...]

(The Catholics) instead of revenge against Vojvoda, burnt down a nearby village Budisevci where grain and food worth 300 Lires got combusted.

Ten days ago, rumor had it in Priština that Albanians attacked the monastery of Visoki Dečani, besieged it, the monks ran away and the Abbot is hiding in Velika Hoča near Prizren. This was confirmed at the Consulate by a peasant from Velika Hoča. This information has not been confirmed, however, but it is true that Albanians nearby Dečani imposed a tax (1 mecidiye—white silver coin) to be paid by Serbs who want to enter the monastery and thus they force them to either get converted into Islam or to shun their own religion, being prevented from church-going. This was all confirmed by the Monastery's keeper and Father-Superior in front of the Rector of the Theological Seminary (in Prizren)...

ACTS OF TERROR (*ZULUM*) IN THE REGION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE CONSULATE IN PRIŠTINA

I. *The Kaza (District) of Gilan*

September 1st, 1894

Brother of Sulja Ašković, an Albanian, deathly wounded Dimitrije Trajković from Vaganeš for the following reason: The Albanian had kidnapped Dimitrije's sister and held her captive in the woods. She refused to convert to Islam, so her brother released her and took her away from the woods. That happened in September.

Etem from Vrabac, a kaçak [bandit, outlaw] now in Krmenat, together with three other kaçaks from [. . .] found a couple of oxen belonging to File Savić from Kostadinci on a pasture, tied up the shepherd and stole three oxen. Then, Etem and his accomplices blackmailed Fila as well as two other Serbs to pay them 50 liras as a ransom. When Fila complained to the Kaymakam of Gilan [district governor], the latter replied:

- So, what! You have enough oxen, it is no big deal for you to lose three oxen!

On the eve of the Holy Cross Day, four Arnauts (ethnic Albanians) attacked the home of Stojan Denić from Bratlovac. They tied him up and totally plundered the entire house and every chamber in it. They forced Stojan to carry for them all of the spoils and things they had robbed.

Ali-Aga, the son of Sajit-Aga from Gilane, came to the village of Bušince and stayed there four days. He wanted to rape a little girl named Margita Stevanović. She was hidden in the cellar and thus saved. Ali-Aga, then, stormed the house of Stamena Filić, who was having a guest—her daughter Stamena Kita, the wife of Milović from Boca. Aga broke into the house, together with the Albanians, and offered two white mecidiyes [Turkish silver money] for Kita. When her mother refused the offer, they pulled Martin rifles on her. The villagers ran to help and began to wrestle with the Albanians grabbing each other by the throat. In that commotion, Kita managed to escape and hid in the stream in the woods above the village where she spent several nights and then, together with her mother, returned to her husband in Boca. As an act of revenge, Ali-aga tried to kill Rade, Kita's brother, but the latter escaped to Serbia. The house is now empty and deserted...

October 2nd, 1894

Mustafa Sulejman—an agin from Gilane came at night to Strezovce to the homes of Jovan Trajković and Toma Milovanović demanding their wives. He fired at their houses 9 times with the rifle. The slaves hid into the woods while Jovan and Toma fled to an unknown location.

In the villagde of Gogoljevac, Jashar from Robovac tried to kill Giga Stojiljković having fired at him, but the gunpowder failed to ignite. Gigo fled to the woods.

On the Holy Theotokos's Day, at the sabor (synaxis, gathering) at the Church in Božurci, a lot of local peasants were present. On the way back, the Albanians attacked some 14 women and girls from Dajinovci, having chased away their escorts (three Serbs), took the females into the woods where they raped them and stripped off all of their clothes. The assaulters were: Sherif from Busovat, his brother Malja, Salim—a settler (muadzer) from Turkey etc.

On October 13th, Albanian kaçaks killed Kosta Arsić from Šipašnica, in a watermill near the village.

In Kmetovka, Albanians murdered Sava Nikolić on October 7th.

Fila Miličar from [...] the richest Serb in Kriva Reka was murdered in the village of Krmenat on October 20 while distilling brandy at the home of his friend Maxim. He was killed by Ferat Ašković, muhadzer [settler] from Krmenti, a kaçak. This summer, Ferat also killed Fila's nephew. Because of this murder, a certain Sulja Ašković was arrested, brother of Ferat, but was immediately released in Priština. Sulja is the major criminal in the District of Gilane. He is the abettor of all murders but so far has been condoned by the authorities.

On October 11th, Etem, a muadzer [settler] and kaçak from from Krmenci, killed Anta Arsić from Jasenovik. Anta was Killed on the road to bazaar to Gilane. The authorities do not even try to catch Etem even though he continues with blackmailing, stealing and killing.

Sulja Zeković and Amet Okshin from Makreš waylaid Cvetko Cirko Savić from Grizina who was riding by on a horse. They stopped him and rebuked him for not having dismounted from the horse when he saw the Turks. Then they beat him up and pushed him, together with the horse, into a chasm with water. Had he not got caught on a tree in the chasm, he would have been broken to pieces and drowned

by now. They previously beat him up with rifle butts. He is on his deathbed…

Sulja Zeković from Makreš, blackmailed Kitan Djoković from Rajanovac to pay him two liras: unless he was given the money until certain deadline, he would kidnap his fiancé Jelena, daughter of Fila from Miganovac.

On October 11, Sulja Zeković and Memed from Makreš beat Pera Djokoc from Grizina with clubs having ambushed him on the road only because he proposed to a beautiful Serbian girl, daughter of Marko Savić from Chukatica and was accepted while the above mentioned Memed wanted to take her for himself. Hence, none of the Serbs is allowed to marry this girl. Now her father is offering Memed 5 liras to allow her to marry a Serb, but Memet demands 10 liras.

Miljko Stanković from Miganovci fled from Albanian terror to Serbia having left his entire property.

November 3rd, 1894

Unidentified Albanians murdered Fila Marković from Lješter in the village watermill. Fila being a very prosperous man and respected in the entire district. People say that being the only motive for the murder.

On November 3rd, Feta Kokić and Mamut from Gilane beat up Trajko Stanković from Bušinica breaking his leg for having paid them the tithe in wheat as he did not have the money, while they demanded money by all means.

In Grizina, the above mentioned Feta and Mamut were selling wheat at the price of one oka per grosh forcing villagers to buy it even though they did not need it and it was superfluous for them. Anyone refusing to buy was being beaten up. Almost the entire village fled to the woods.

On November 4th, Sulejman Kokić and his son from Gilane pointed their rifle at Jevta Ivković from Bušnica. The rifle would not fire, hence Jevta managed to escape. They have been staying in the village for three weeks with their gang while villagers are obliged to provide them with food while they are forcing villagers to buy wheat at high price though it is superfluous for them.

On November 4th, Sulja Zekin from Makreš, captured Priest Arsa from Kamenica demanding that the whole village convert to Islam and turn Turk. Thus he kept him for 24 hours, torturing him and threatening that he would shave his beard and kill him. The priest barely escaped and only after he had given all the money he had to Sulja.

Stanko N. from Vitina let her younger daughter marry into the village […] A certain Sali-Bislja, a chaush, who is paid by the state as a state employee but does not go to work – leading a bandit's life with hajduks in the mountain instaed, kidnapped that bride for his brother. He was holding her captive in Gilan for 5–6 days, forcing her to wear Turkish national dress and taking her to the Ucumat [Turkish Court, Local Government's Office] to declare that she would like "to turn Turk" and embrace Islam. Her parents also being present there. She declared that she would not turn Turk. When Sali-chaush heard that, he killed […] first the father and then the mother of the bride doing all that before the very door of the Kaymakam himself [kaymakam –governor of a provincial district]. After that, he quietly descended from the third-floor of the ucumat, mounted his horse and left Gilane calmly and without any haste or rush. No one even tried to catch him although the ucumat was full of zaptiahs [police, guards] who could have easily caught him for Sali is lame and thus unable to run.—Petrija, the woman whose parents were murdered by Sali Bislah Chaush, is being guarded in a house which the property of the municipality, and is guarded by the very same zaptiahs who were actually Sali's accomplices. They are trying to persuade her to turn Turk threatening to kill her younger brother. The people of Gilan complained in a dispatch to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan himself. The valija of Skoplje [vali—Turkish governor of a vilayet] promised to come in person to investigate the murder and to arrest Sali-chaush but until today, March 20, he has not come.

Sali Bislja-chaush is an outlaw and bandit in the mountains but no one is looking for him. In the beginning of March, in 1895, he decapitated Toma from Mogila, a district in Gilane, with an axe when Toma was going to the woods to collect firewood.

An elderly woman named Zdravka, form Bušinica, went to Ajnovci to visit her daughter. On the road, in a field near Ajnovci, 5 nizams [regular soldiers of the Turkish army], from the border (the Svirci watchtower) obstructed her path, tied her up and three of them raped her. That happened around St. Dimitrius' Day. Since then, the old lady has been lying seriously ill.

December 4th, 1894

Džema Selimović fired twice from the hand gun at Marko N. from Robovac but missed him. Marko went to Gilane to file a complaint (make a formal accusation) but got lost somewhere on the road and, so far, has not come back.

Sulja Zeković from Makreš blackmailed Dima Stojković from the village of Čukarica. Dima did not have the money to pay and Sulja beat him up so ferociously that he is now on his deathbed.

Ali-aga Saitović from Gilan had beaten up and then tried to kill Djoka Stević from Čukarica. Djoka fled to the wood where he was hiding for 7 days. After having sent one lira to Ali-aga, the latter allowed him to freely return home.

Amet Ukshinov, a kaçak from Makreš, tied up Jevta Filipović from Carevac in the woods. He was trying to extort money from him but since Jevta had no money to give him, Amet beat him up ferociously.

January 5th, 1895

Mula Durak, a tasildar (tax-collector, a man of the Empire), the notorious zulumćar [perpetrator of *zulum*/terror/depredation/violence], who had killed Miljko N. from Ajnovci two years ago, this winter has also perpetrated terrible *zulum* while collecting imperial taxes.

For the tax in the amount of 16 groschen, he beat up and whipped Simeon Simeonović hitting him in the eyes so that the poor man went blind and who knows whether he has ever regained his sight. Simeon is from Bušinci. In the same village, Mula Durak beat Denča Djordjević to death, so the man is now on his deathbed. He also kept other villagers, who could not pay the tax, for [. . .] hours naked in the water or barefoot in the snow. Villages are in deep mourning due to the *zulum* committed by Mula Durak.

The entire village of Gogolevce was forced to flee to the mountain; the villagers, together with weak infants, spent up to eight days in the woods in the snow, deprived of any fire or food. The terrors [*zulum*s]perpetrated by Mula Durak are all enumerated below.

February 6th and March, 1895

Five families from Bušinci fled to Serbia due to the terror [*zulum*] and depredations committed by the imperial tax-collector Mula Durak, as follows herein: The households of Denča Djokić, Mita Stojković, Jovan N, Trajko Stolić and Sima N.—As they had complained of his misdeeds, he threatened to kill them all and that it should be better for them to buy poison for 10 paras [coins] and poison themselves. He had beaten up Denša Djokić, torturing him by putting a thick stake into his mouth and not taking it out for the next two hours. He tortured Denča, Mita, Sima, Jovan and Trajko forcing them to stand in the snow for 24 hours, thereafter they fled to Serbia.

Mula Durak, a tasildar [tax collector], tortured Pera Arsić, Jovan Petković from Gogolevac making them forcefully stand in the snow; subsequently, they fled to Serbia. In Migaonovci, he tortured Živko, Djordje and Arsa in the snow and they also fled to Serbia. All of them who fled to Serbia left behind their homes, their land, cattle and food. For the time being, only the males managed to flee while women and children have been hiding in the woods waiting for a suitable opportunity to cross the border as well.

There are 10 Serbian families in Bušince, 4 families in Gogolevac, 2 from Gogolevačka Reka, two from Robovac being ready to flee. Maksim Antić from Gogolevac has already fled.

The amount of fear which has reigned due to Mula Durak's terror is best illustrated by the fact that the entire village of Bušince wants to move out, thus, out of 47 Serb families only three of them are doing agricultural works in the field (plowing and sowing) while the rest of the families must not leave their homes and go to the field in fear of Mula Durak and Albanians.

Tajir-aha, a spahi [sipahi—Ottoman feudalist] from Gogolevac beat up an old woman Andja (Baba-Andja) pushing her so hard against the gate that he smashed her head and she lost consciousness. The old woman was beaten up to death and she is now on her deathbed.

The selfsame Tajir-aga is displeased that so many of his chivcijas [chivchija—serf in the lands of the Ottoman Empire] have fled to Serbia. Now he is interrogating those who stayed in order to find out who helped the former cross the border and flee to Serbia. During the investigation, he beat up Mitko Simić from Gogolevac in the kula [tower]. He forcefully imprisoned Kosta Mitrović from Gogolevac in the tower, tied him up beating him all night and, several times, even attempted to stab him with a knife. When he managed to free himself, Kosta escaped to the wood with the intention of fleeing to Serbia.

Zekin Sulja from Makreš blackmailed Stajko Bojković from Gogolevac to give him one revolver and two ducats. The latter was not able to give him that, so Sulja fired at him but the shot missed him. Stajko escaped to Serbia.

Sulja Zekin from Makreš tied three fisheks to the tail of Stanko Filić's mare (Stanko Filić from Gogolevac) which means he is blackmailing him to either pay three liras or to receive three bullets in the chest. Stajko is now selling his livestock to pay the blackmail.

Etem Vrabca, a kaçak, blackmailed Jevta Stankov, kadzabasha [village headman] from Bušinci into paying five liras of fine. Jevta entreated him to accept two white mecidiyes [Turkih money] which he offered instead excusing himself for not having to pay that sum of money.

Mitar Paunić from Miganovci has a beautiful daughter. On March 3rd, Nua, a field-guard, from Busovat wanted to take her away by force. The parents of the girl fled to the wood, while females and children stayed driving Nua away with bludgeons.

In the district of Gilane, the terror [*zulum*] is the most intense and the most severe. There exists an entire Albanian Company which provokes, prepares and executes forced displacement of Serbs. One group of the Albanians have set as their task to scare, beat, blackmail and kill Serbs, the other group of the Albanians follow the Serbs to the border while the third group ambushes them and robs them on the border.

The worst *zulumćars* [perpetrators] of violence and oppression in the District of Gilane are as follows:

Mula Durak, imperial tax-collector in Gilan; Sali-Bislah Chaush, (an outlaw) in the mountains simultaneously working and being paid as a zaptiah [police officer, sentry]; Sulja Zekin, a kaçak from Makreš; Etem Vrabca, a kaçak from Makreš; Shaban-bey from Zajčevac; Isko from Kačanik; Sulja Ašković from Krmenti; Tajir-aga from Gogolevac; Ferat Ašković from Krmenti; Jashar from Robovac; Amet Okshin (Ukshin) from Makreš; Kokić Feta and Mamut from Gilan; Alit-aga, the son of Sajit-aga from Gilan (Ali-aga Saitović); Sulejman Kokić and his son from Gilan; Dzema Selimović from Bušovat; Nua, a field-guard from Busovat.

Some of the above mentioned are mere executors of orders issued by instigators of these acts of terror [*zulum*], blackmails and murders. Both groups share the common loot. They are a well-organized gang of thugs and looters. Until all of them are caught and sentenced, there will be no peace in the District of Gilan (Morava) while the Serb population there will be exterminated in two or three years.

II. *In Kosovo*

September 1st, 1894

The Albanians Bajram Jakub and Muftar Adem abducted Staka, a thirteen year old son of Krsta Janković from the village of Gornje Nerodimlje taking him to Priština to the Mufti. When Krsta, the father of the child, came to the *hucumat* [District Government and Court] to ask for his son, he was arrested and beaten for two nights by *zaptiahs* [guards]. Then, they let him home thus viciously battered. This is how they resolved his complaint.

Nevertheless, the Albanian abductors found out about his lawsuit and consequently shot him dead with a rifle in the center of the village on October 9th. The murder was committed in broad daylight but the authorities did not even summon the murderer for interrogation.

Ignjat and Cveja Petković went to the wood to collect firewood. They were attacked by the Albanians who stripped them of their clothes and sent them thus naked back to the village. Today, 10 oxen have been stolen from Gračanica. No one can go to the mountain to collect firewood in fear of the Albanians.

Two Serbian families fled from Novo Selo to Prejace in order to avoid the terror perpetrated by Albanians.

The village of Sušice has been attacked by the Albanians every night for three weeks now. On September 13th, an open clash broke out. The gunfire lasted for several hours and some were wounded.

On September 16, in the middle of Priština, sons of Jusuf Fetah beat up an old ethnic Serb N. from Priština for refusing to carry for them sacks full of salt for free.

On the night between September 15th and 16th, a gang of Albanians attacked Laplje-Selo (Kadikej), an hour's walking distance away from Priština, intending to murder Djordje (Antush), a *mehandžija* [tavern owner] of Serbian nationality but the villagers prevented it. The entire village of Laplje-selo has been sleepless for eight days now due to incessant Albanian strikes occurring every night.

Albanians in Babuš murdered one Serb of unknown identity.

On September 17th, the Ottoman police [zaptiahs] forced several Serb families to return from Batusa wherefrom they intended to flee to Serbia in order to avoid the terror which had already caused the displacement of the entire village population. All of the Serbs were arrested. However, the Albanian terrorists though being true culprits and instigators of emigration are still at large.

To illustrate Albanian disrespect of the imperial authorities, the following case is worth noting: on September 12th, it was announced via the telal [town-crier] that whoever carries a revolver or a knife in town shall be sentenced to one month's imprisonment and fined with two ducats. Now, even those Albanians who, until now, have not been carrying weapons (e.g. merchants) started carrying revolvers in public—even two revolvers in one belt.

Kajtas, an Albanian from Radevo across Sitnica, wants to forcefully expel several Serb families, which are the only remaining Serb families in Radevo. The major victim of his assaults being Živa N. of Serb nationality to whom he offers to personally take him to Serbia. The latter does not want to leave his home and land which would be immediately appropriated by the Albanians pretending to be true owners. The self-same man, Kajtas, forcefully evicted two Serb families from their homes forcing them to move to Serbia having confiscated their houses and property.

In the village of Batusa, Albanians forcefully evict Serbs population from their houses forcing them to flee to Serbia. They also force the Serbs to do agricultural field works for the Albanians on Sundays and without reimbursement. On September 19th, the daughter of Nicko N.—who had fled to Serbia—was forced to turn Turk and convert to Islam.

On the nights of September 19th and 20th, there were shootings in front of the Serbian Consulate in Priština and there was loud banging of the rifle-butts on the windows of the Consulate as a mere provocation of the kavazes [guards].

During the month of September, the following numbers of Serb females were forced to turn Turk and convert to Islam: in Dobridub 1, in Alaš 2, in Rušce 1, in Batusa 1.

In addition to that, the following Serb females have been forced to turn Turk: Dajina Bobica from Prepolac, Marija N. in Sjenica, Stefanija from the village of Crveška (the District [District] of Sjenica).

A group of unidentified Albanians have torched the lime-pit belonging to Vasa N. from Priština. That lime-pit is used for state buildings and is guarded by a *zaptiah* [guard] who was afraid to react when the arsonists were setting it on fire.

When Serbs complain of cattle and oxen raiding to bimbashsa, Commander of the Gendarmerie in Priština, he usually responses as follows:

- So, what am I supposed to do?! There are thefts as well in the center of Priština. Or, perhaps you want me to send a zaptiah to guard each and individual house in the village.

With villagers' complaints being treated and answered in this manner, no one wants to complain any more having lost all their faith in the government.

October 2nd, 1894

Alija Skopče from Priština has beaten up to death and trampled upon a 70-year old elderly named Kosta N. in his vineyard; Kosta is now lying on his deathbed.

In Priština, Turkish children attack and beat Serb children when going out from school. In addition to this, they throw mud and snow at Serb priests and their escorts.

When the Serbs of Priština filed a complaint to the Mutesarif, he did not want to either investigate the incident or to arrest the assaulters but rather summoned all the Serbs, signatories of the complaint, for interrogation, intimidating and questioning them about who wrote their complaint in Turkish language.

In 1894, at Bairam, Albanians dragged a Serb schoolboy from the street inside a building where he was raped by many. His parents' complaint has remained unresolved until now with the family being forced to flee Priština in fear of Albanians seeking shelter in Serbia (Jovan Lipljanka).

On October 11th, Albanians beat up an old woman, Baba-Božana, in the charshija [business district and market place]. With the same intensity, they beat up to death Djordje Vasiljević, a quilt-maker, alson known as Tače Jorgandzija, on his way to work; he was beaten up in the middle of the ucumat.

On October 15th, Albanians shot at Stojan Aritanović from Priština. Now, he is afraid to leave his home and has hired an Albanian to guard him. (Subsequently, Stojan also fled to Serbia).

Nikola Sičan from Priština hired an Albanian man to bodyguard him and keep him company in the shop protecting him from the Albanians.

In the village of Vrbeštince, in the Sirinćka Župa, Albanians slew a 16 year old boy, the only son of Janićije N., an ethnic Serb.

In Mitrovica, Albanians killed a tavern-owner (mehandzija) N., an ethnic Serb from Veles.

Sima Andrejević Igumanov

Sima Andrejević Igumanov (1804–1882) is one of those patriots from Kosovo of whom Patriarch Paul (Pavle) says that he dedicated not only all of his wealth, but all of himself to the educational and humanitarian goals through which he became a great benefactor of the Serbian people.

This merchant, living ascetically and giving himself totally to God, who earned his wealth working in Constantinople, Odessa and Kiev, Belgrade, donated to the church, monasteries, orphanages, schools, student homes, singing societies, while also helping the sick and handicapped, and providing stipends for students.

Mourning the death of his son Manojlo, who died in 1865, Sima Igumanov "adopted all the youth of his region". He decided to establish a Serbian Orthodox Seminary (Bogoslovija) in Prizren in 1871. This was a great event, not only for Serbs who were not yet liberated in Old Serbia, but all Serbian people.

Through Sima Igumanov's hard work and savings he did good, which, through his testament, he left to eternally bear the desired fruits. Thus, the endowment which bears his name would become one of the most fruitful establishments of that kind among the Serbian people. The mission of the Seminary, as it was written in the Project of its structure, was "to prepare the youth of Serbian nationality and Orthodox faith in the Ottoman empire to serve as priests and teachers for the people."

The archives of the Sima Igumanov Fund were in disarray in the Historical Archives of Belgrade, but through the efforts of Patriarch Pavle the endowment renewed its work, implying the return of the mansion in central Belgrade, built in 1938.

After the exodus of the Serbian people from Kosovo and Metohija in 1999 the Prizren Seminary was temporarily moved to Niš where a new, immense building was constructed for the education of future Serbian priests, built exclusively through the funds of the Igumanov endowment. Only in recent years has the Seminary, after being renovated, partially returned to Prizren.

December 3rd, 1894

Marinko Djordjević from Dobrotin owed 10 gorschen for the taxes when two zaptiahs came from Priština to collect taxes in Dobrotin. Marinko did not have the money to pay asking them to wait until tomorrow intending to pay the tax tomorrow. Neverrtheless, they took the cauldron with boiling water from the fire and spilled it on his daughter Andjelija thus burning her legs. The girl is now crippled.

At the end of December 1895, there came three Albanians to buy tobacco in the store of Milan Simin in the village of Kuzmin, in the District of Priština. They took the tobacco but refused to pay for it. A brawl erupted and the Albanians opened gunfire at the Serbs killing one Serb. The brother of the victim, who himself was under attack, fired his revolver in self-defense killing one of the Albanian assailants. Then the Albanians wounded him as well. None of the Albanians got arrested; only the wounded Serb Filip Simin.

February 4th and March 1895

On the eve of Ramadan, it was announced via the telal [town-crier] in Priština that shooting shall be prohibited as the custom prescribes. Nevertheless, the Albanians totally disregarded that announcement having fired 2,000 gunshots on that very eve. On that occasion a Turk child was shot dead and two men were wounded. Although the whole town knew that the perpetrators ought to be sentenced to imprisonment and fined, all of the detained were released. 70 Turks were arrested for the shooting incident but they were immediately released and got away with it. And as regards the crime of shooting a child, a Serb peasant Marko N. from Čaglavica was arrested and held responsible for it though he neither had a gun nor was involved in the shooting incident at all.

On February 26th, in Priština, a store owner Pota Ilijić, Gačkić, a greengrocer, was smoking in the premises of his shop. It was during Ramadan. An Albanian, who found himself in the shop, verbally assaulted Pota accusing him of smoking during Ramadan [smoking is prohibited during Ramadan]. Pota replied that he being a Serb was allowed to smoke in his own shop. The Albanian pulled out a knife and wounded Pota heavily in the leg. The Albanian was arrested that night but was immediately released undisturbedly leaving for Mitrovica unlike Pota Stanojević, an ethnic Serb, who happened to be in the shop at the time of the assault and who prevented the murder taking the knife from the Albanian—he was arrested and imprisoned for the whole month. He is now accused of wounding Pota Ilijić.

A *tasildar* (tax-collector) named Mustafa Pashina, chaush from Suva Varoš, came to Donja Gušterica to collect taxes. He summoned 70 peasants, taxpayers, demanding money from them. 50 of them who had enough money, paid the tax, while he was beating and trampling for two hours on those who could not afford to pay; then, he forced them to take off their coats and having soaked the coats in the river, forced the peasants to put on the coats thus soaked with cold water driving them out in the wind "to dry off". Many of them fell seriously ill due to this torture.

Not a mere investigation has been taken against that civil servant and overt terror-monger. The peasants are afraid to complain against him in fear of revenge.

In the Sanjak of Priština, usual anarchy is nothing new. In addition to the acts of terror [*zulum*] inflicted upon the Serbs, of which not even half were listed herein, the Albanians often resolve their internal conflicts in bloody showdowns.

Thus, in the lawsuit filed by the Mufti and Sulejman-aga against former Mutesarif Mehmed Muharem-Efendi (who is now in Sjenica) it is stated that the major evidence of his inefficient service is the fact that 192 Albanians were killed in the sanjak by the hand of their fellow Albanians in only 4 months of his public service.

And in only 16 days in the month of January, only in Lab, 18 Albanians were killed by the hand of their fellow Albanians!

The authorities are absolutely indifferent as regards all the terror and murders committed.

III. *The Sanjak of Peć*

The most intense terror [*zulum*] is perpetrated in the Sanjak of Peć with the Serb population there being on the verge of extinction. Emigration is enormous. It is impossible to count all the crimes of *zulum* inflicted upon the Serbs in this region. They are, to a certain degree, listed in the Petition signed by the Serbs Peć which was sent to the Ministry enclosed in the letter of this Consulate dated August 17, previous year, Conf. № 77.

Europe would have been horrified had it only heard of a half of the atrocities from the last couple of years in the Sanjak of Peć. All that happened in Armenia is nothing in comparison with barbarities and atrocities as well as countless murders happening here.

From the most recent events known to the Consulate I record only the following ones:

- In Peć in the middle of charshija [business district, market place] Milovan Rakić's brother was murdered. Milovan fled to Serbia.

- In the village of Grabovac, in the District of Peć, two Serbs were murdered; the victims remained unidentified.

- In the middle of March, the Albanians attacked Blago N., a Serb, in the town center, more precisely on the bridge over the river. Having stabbed him with knives first, they shot him dead and threw his dead body into the river.

- Serbs in Peć are afraid to even step on the street in fear of terror [*zulum*] and violence.

- Albanians are forcing Živko N, a chorbadzija [rich merchant] from Most, from the Peć District, being a very prosperous Serb, to turn Turk and convert to Islam. Živko has a large family with five daughters and wants to save them at least. He himself would also flee but must not, his every step being watched by Albanians.

IV. *Kolašin (Mitrovica)*

Ever since [Ibarski] Kolašin, with its 400 Serb families strongly aware of their Serb nationality and speaking the purest dialect of the Serbian language in entire Old Serbia– has been excluded from the region under the authority of the Vučitrn Kaimakam [District Government] and annexed to the Mitrovica Kaimakam, there followed the most horrible atrocities and terror [*zulum*] impossible to enumerate herein in their entirety. Ever since, the Serbian population of Kolašin has suffered enormous tribulations, hence it is no wonder that they are now appealing for their town to be annexed to the Vučitrn administration (Kaimakamia). Unless this happens, soon there will be not a single Serb left in Kolašin.

Inhabitants of Kolašin have been exposed to violent attacks committed by Albanians of Drenica and Peć and in addition to that, they are the victims of extortions committed by their fellow hajduks [oulaws who fought against the Turks] and they are terribly tortured by imperial tasildars (tax-collectors) from Mitrovica. This winter, there were numerous cases of torture committed by tasildars who forced all the villagers to stand in the snow for 24 hours (people who were barefoot) when they could not collect taxes from the poor.

In recent years, the following victims from Kolašin have been killed by the hand of murderous Albanians:

1. Dobrija Radenković from Brnjak, killed on the River Drenska;
2. Rale Radosavljević from Brnjak, on the Drenska River;
3. Avram Lazović from Brnjak, on the Čečevo River;
4. Stevan Aleksić from Orašac; at home;
5. Milenko Prodanović from Čečevo—in Ribarici;
6. Jovan Andrić from Čečevo, in Perkovac;
7. Milenko Andrić from Čečevo, in Perkovac;
8. Živan Jovanović from Čečevo, murdered in his own home;

Except for the victims from the Brnjak villages, the following were also murdered:

9. Maksim Lazović from Ugljari;
10. Mirko Rakićević from Varag, slain with an axe;
11. Mileta Radovanov, from Varag; killed next to a stable;
12. Radašin Ljutin from Velji Breg;
13. Radenko Radašinov from Velji Breg (mortally wounded);
14. Miloš Avramović from Zubin Potok;
15. Stevan Marković from Gazivode;
16. Dobrosav Milisavljević from Rezak;
17. Dobrija Jovanović from Lučka Reka;
18. Radisav Milosavljević from Bub;
19. Vukadin Filipović from Crepulja;
20. Knez (village leader) Radisav Radosavljević from Zagulja; slain;
21. Rade Tijanić from Zagulja, slain;
22. Vukojle Despotović from Zagulja, slain;
23. Janićije Vuksanović from Strumica;
24. Jako Vuksanović from Strumica;
25. Miljko Vuksanović from Strumica;
26. Manda Milićev from Dobroševina;
27. Vićentije Radenkov from Prevlaka;
28. Stevan from Oraška (Shaban Kopriva and Koshutov Jusen—the murderers).

The Wounded in the above mentioned attacks are as follows:

1. Djordje Milenković from Oklaci;
2. Vukosav Radisavljević from Oklaci;
3. Sretko Nićiforović from Oklaci;
4. Marko Velimirović from Ugljari;
5. Vukoman Andjelković from Ugljari;
6. Radule Savović from Velji Breg;
7. Draže Rakićević from Pridvorica.

Besides these murders, Albanians who are overt oulaws (Shaban Kopriva, Jusen Deliq from Košutovo, Kučica etc.) and the rest of the Albanians ("citizens") in the meantime have stolen 142 oxen and cows; 84 horses; 295 goats and sheep; and in addition to all this, a couple of carriages, countless amount of quilts, *džamadans* [sleeveless embroidered jackets, vests], fisheks blackmailing and extorting money from the Serbs in the amount of more than 50 liras! Rade Korpirović from Zubin Potok paid them 16 liras as a single amount. The outlaws killed two zaptiahs and captured a girl from Vasova Knežina [Knežina—knezlik, a settlement corresponding to a village or District].

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THE PETITION OF THE SERBS FROM THE DISTRICT OF PEĆ

To his Eminency Mr. V. Djordjević, Royal-Serbian Minister to Constantinople

Undergoing utter tribulation and persecution, we are forced to address You once again via this humble request, asking of You, who are our representative and the greatest protector of all Serbian people, protection and entreating You to save us, by all available means, from these evil, enraged and extrajudicial Albanians to whose mercy we are being left, having no one to take care of us, hence some time ago they began to exterminate us in such a way that we have become their victim.

In spite of our best hopes that we shall also, at the end of the 19th century, enjoy at least a little freedom and the minimum of human rights granted by our gracious Sultan, then quite to the contrary of our expectations, evil and unruly Albanians in most of the cases: take away our lives, persecute our faith, attack our honor, capture our wives and children, seize our movable and immovable property etc.etc. So, to summarize: they intend to exterminate us.

Of all of the above You can assure Yourself and ask confirmation from Your representative in Priština and in Skoplje as well as from Your envoy Mr. Živko Šantrić, who will deliver this appeal to You.

What atrocities and violence and suffering local Albanians here have been inflicting on us, especially upon the Serbs in the District, it is simply impossible to describe; for if we should describe it, then an entire history will be exposed which would horrify and shake every man who is even remotely capable of emotions and it would serve as a sharpest rebuke administered to the contemporary enlightened and educated Europe—that in a time when all nations in the world are free to enjoy the rights granted by their states—we are undergoing an ultimate disaster.

Therefore, being also the sons of our gracious Sultan and Serb brothers of the same blood with You, we entreat You most humbly and ask You to swear to God that You will not leave us in this position anymore; for we have been left no other choice but either to convert and renounce our faith or drown ourselves in muddy water as we have nowhere to flee to; so, we have to choose between these two evils as it is absolutely impossible to survive and endure this anymore.

We also addressed the honorable Vali pasha [governer of the vilayet of Kosovo] in Skoplje in our appeal dated April 29th of the current year but, unfortunately, so far it remained unanswered.

Harboring high hopes that You will respond to the appeal herein, we are the humblest sons of Your Excellency:

November 5th, 1895
in Peć.

Abbot Sofronije, Efrem G. Šantrić, Sima Nastić, Dima Maksić, Jovan T. Andjelković, Andjelko [...], Mateja Filipović

A list of few major and recent facts as regards atrocities perpetrated here:

1. It has been a year since Duc Aliq, from the village of Drenovac in the District of Djakovica, prohibited the Serbs from using the path to the church; the same prohibition was reiterated by Asan Ajri Sejfiq and Zec, Tafa's son, from the village of Dečani, thus the same prohibition is still valid and the Serbs of this region are forbidden to use the road leading to Visoki Dečani, which is their place of worship (parish church) being half an hour's walking distance from the village.

2. Kadrija Ferizoviq from the village of Crnce abducted the wife of Živan Vošić forcing her to turn Turk and convert to Islam while coercing Živan into promising that he will not sue him. His brother Redzhep abducted and imposed conversion on a ten-year-old child, son of Milosav Djuković, from the village of Šumice, the child being stepson of Nika T. Biorkić, a local taylor, who demanded the child's return before the court but, unfortunately, his appeal was rejected.

3. In the village of Podgradje, on July 2nd, Nik Ilja, a Latin, slew Vučko Jovanic's two children; Vuchko being an ethnic Serb from the same village.

4. Sulja Redzhep Topalović Šabović, on July 4th, wounded Filip Brandić, a local merchant, and on September 13th he wounded Lazar A. Panović as well.—It is impossible to present here all the cases of abuse and murder that evil Albanians perpetrate against the Serbs in the District but the most recent case from the District is as follows:

5. Jusuf Isljamović from the village of Učka, on September 12th of the current year, attacked the reapers working for Djordje Batanović from the village of Džakovo, abducted his daughter and forced her to turn Turk and convert to Islam. On the same day, the Albanians from the same village abducted the daughter of Stevan Bolarić from the village of Shtupelj who was engaged to marry the nephew of Sava Ristić in the village of Drenovac but she was also forced to turn Turk. On Novemeber 7th, Djema Kabash from the village of Djurakovac wounded Živko Hamanin from the village of Mojstir, who has been forced to pay large amounts of money until now only to have his life spared.

6. Besides numerous other abductors and malefactors, the most insufferable are the sons of Ali-aga Kuchuk Alic and Sulj Kurtulj, a chaush, with brothers, who extort money from almost every well-off Serb; e.g. from Jovche Djakovche whose winery they burnt down causing 70,000 groschen damage; from Toma Popadić, Spiro Savić, Milija Lovomanin, the Garić brothers etc., Veselj and Tahir Lapteroviq from Rugova,

with their accomplices, began to overtly snatch the merchandise from Serbian shops and in one of those robberies beat up Risa Vasić (Jevrić) who thereupon fled to Serbia this very morning.

7. Ajradin Stojković from the village of Loćani apropriated by force Mladen Krstic's field on April 25th. And on the 15th of this month [November], Kolj Biba, a Latin [Catholic Albanian], from the village of Kruševo, forcefully expelled servants of the Monastery of the Patriarchate of Peć from the territory of the Monastery wood proclaim it his property.

8. The son of Ajdar-aga Mulla Isić, who is a neighbor of our school, took out from the ground several crosses and gravestones in our ancient cemetery Cenaca, situated in front of the school, doing that with an intention of appropriating that place as we are not allowed to mark the boundary between our property and his. That happened on November 4th.

9. In addition to our numerous and endless tribulations which are impossible to describe herein, moreover, this very morning Jashar Mulla Dauti has beaten up Jevrem Zanfirović, with a Martin-type rifle breaking Jevrem's arm and all this happened in the center of charshija, overtly and in public.

As regards the above-mentioned as well as many other facts, the Court pretends to be deaf and blind.

November 19th, 1895, in Peć Abbot Sofronije, Peć

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A NOTE OF THE SERBIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE OTTOMAN PORTE

Stojan Novaković, Serbia's Minister to Constantinople, to Tefik-Pasha, Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs

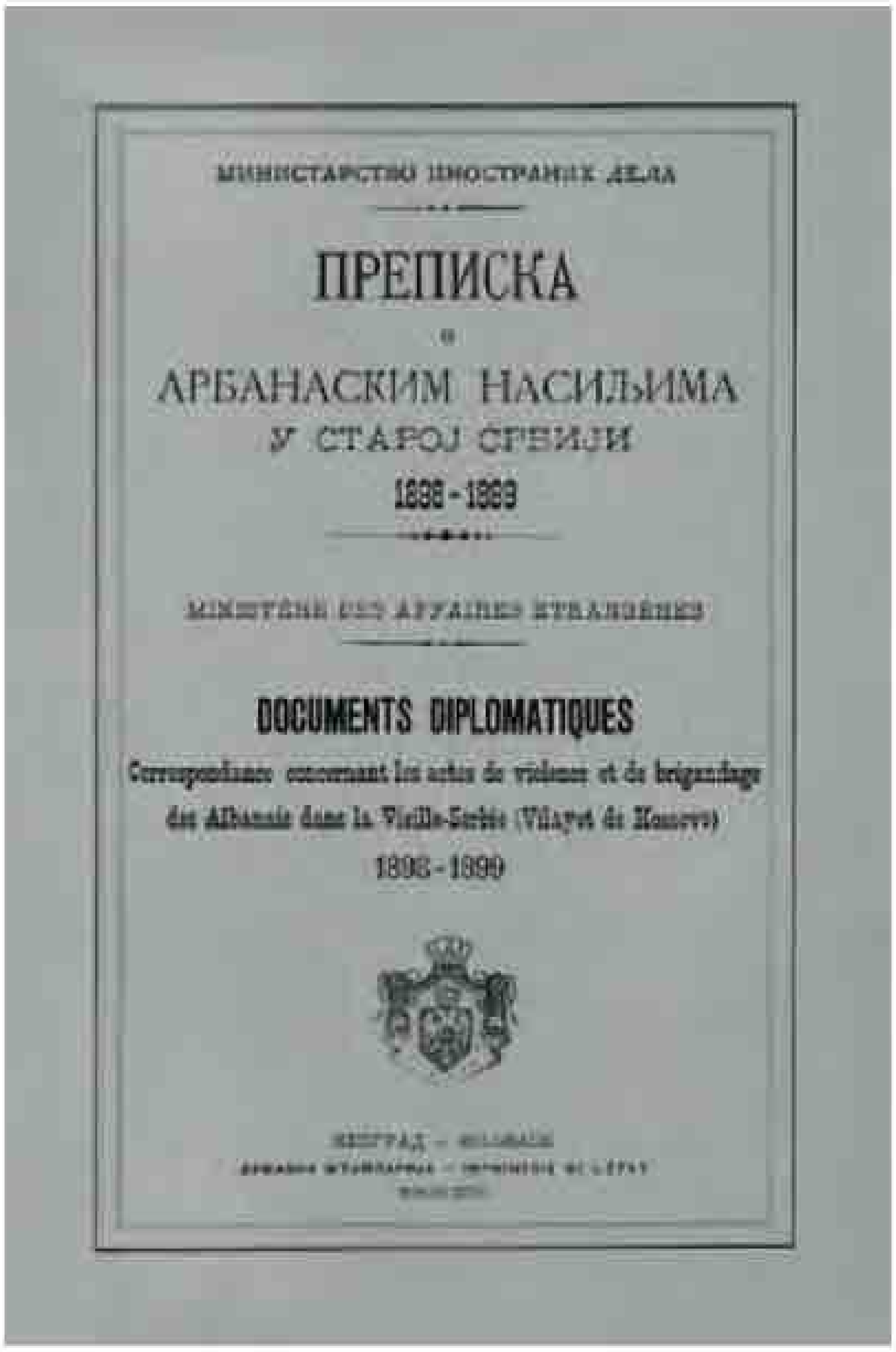
Constantinople, May 14th/26th,1898

Mr. Minister,

In the past four years the Royal [Serbian] Government has been forced several times to draw the attention to the Empire's Government to disorders and incredible and numberless cases of violence incessantly perpetrated by the unruly and undisciplined Albanian population, both at the border between Serbia and Ottoman Empire and in borderline sancaks (districts). These crimes and attacks are targeting solely Christian population of Serbian ethnicity, and they appear to have the purpose of exterminating the population from these areas. [...]

However, especially since the Albanian volunteers returned home after the war on Greece, unrest, murders, arsonry and all sorts of violence are on the rise so much that they cause concern and agitation in all the area, spilling over to our side of the border where—to remind your Excellency well—an array of bloody conflicts happens day in, day out, getting ever more serious and bringing many casualties to both sides.

The investigation committee, assigned by both governments, noted that the conflicts were caused by attacks of Albanians who were passing our border and killing our gendarmes insidiously, as written in the protocol drafted in Vranje 10th/22th August last year.


МИНИСТАРСТВО ИНОСТРАНИХ ДЕЛА

ПРЕПИСКА

О

АРБАНАСКИМ НАСИЉИМА

У СТАРОЈ СРБИЈИ

1898 - 1899

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES

DOCUMENTS DIPLOMATIQUES

Correspondance concernant les actes de violence et de brigandage des Albanais dans la Vieille-Serbie (Vilayet de Kossovo)

1898 - 1899

Correspondence concerning the acts of violence and robbery by ethnic Albanians in Old Serbia (Vilayet de Kossovo): 1898–1899;
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Belgrade, 1899

The Royal authorities punished adequately the protagonists of these attacks and repelled them from the Kingdom's borders.

However, the fear of the Royal Government is not alleviated. Credible reports keep coming, on Serbian population in borderline areas exposed to attacks and unheard of atrocities. Albanians, well armed and, in particular, sure that they will not be punished, have unleashed their brutal instincts, as nothing is in the way to their fanaticism and uncontrollable hatred. Crimes and theft happen on a daily basis, and not only do the culprits remain unpunished, but the authorities do not even prosecute them.

The number of expellees passing the border to save their lives is enormous and incremental.

According to the data the Royal Government has, in a short period of a few months, last summer and winter, in the sancaks of Priština, Novi Pazar, Peć and Prizren more than four hundred criminal acts were committed, such as: murders, arsonry, felony, desecration of places of worship, rape, abductions, robberies, raids of complete herds of cattle.

This is just a part, one fifth to say the least, of everything that has actually happened, as we do not even come to learn about most crimes, since the victims or their families dare not even complain.

Suffice it to present only a certain number of such misdeeds, so the Emperor's Government could see in what dismal condition the Serbian population of the Western parts of Kosovo province is. In the appendix to this note, there is a list of crimes that the Royal Government has learnt about and established the authenticity of them.

It should be added that not a single perpetrator mentioned in the appendix has been accused or punished. Such a situation, which prevents the survival of the Serbian population in these areas, is untenable, unless it causes uprising which is very detrimental to good relations of the two States, and very dangerous for good law and order at the border and inside the Kingdom, and as the population that seeks salvation and assistance in Serbia exposes the Royal Government to a lot of inconvenience and expenses, besides the information on suffering and violence of our compatriots in the Empire, regardless of age and sex. Therefrom the agitation in the public opinion here, putting the Government of His Royal Highness in a very unfavorable and difficult position, causing harm to its reputation and exposing it to complications the seriousness of which cannot be fathomed (...)

Correspondence on Albanian violence in Old Serbia (Vilayet of Kosovo) 1898–1899, BELGRADE, Ministry of Foreign affairs, 1899, pp. 15–17

A LIST OF THE ACTS OF VIOLENCE PERPETRATED AGAINST THE SERBS IN 1897 AND 1898

Murders

1. Two Albanians: Ajdar Uskoković from the village of Busovat (the District of Gilan) and Suljo killed a Serbian national named Gavril Kušliovac wounding heavily his brother Sava. This murder occurred in the month of March, near the village of Boževac where the two brothers lived.

2. On April 19th, two Albanians killed a Serb peasant Gika Denić and misappropriated his oxen as well as all the livestock which belonged to his friends Janko Tomić and Cana Stanimirović from the village of Čaglavica.

3. In the month of January, an Albanian named Bajram, son of Ismail Adza from Novo Selo (the District of Peć) killed Vuča Jeremić from Goraždevac having fired 5 revolver bullets at him, in Filip Brandić's shop, in the main street of Peć.

4. Two Albanians from the village of Kabaš, notorious for their crimes, Mustafa and Adem, killed Djordje Katančević from the village of Vitina (the District of Gilan).

5. Albanian Sali Bisla killed one Serb and his wife—the parents of the daughter whom he had previously abducted—in broad daylight and in the building of the Local Government's Office in Gilan! And instead of being punished for this crime, he was, during the Greco-Turkish War admitted into the Imperial Army as volunteer!

6. At the beginning of the month of May, Albanians attacked the home of Vukosav Dragutinović whose daughter they intended to abduct. Yet, Vukoslav accompanied by his men managed to resist the attack. And as they could not take his daughter, they killed his wife instead. After some time, they repeated the attack on Vukoslav's home and this time they killed both Vukoslav and his son Vukota.

7. On July 20th, on St. Eliah's Day, Sulcha Hasanović, an Albanian from the village of Busovat, went to the village of Gogolevac (the Gilan Kaza) to the home of Giga Stojiljković, forcing him to send his workers to his estate to reap for him without being paid. Since Giga refused that as it was the feast day, Sulcha fired a gun and shot him dead.

8. On July 24th, a field-gurad from the village Brsja, an Albanian named Bajram wounded heavily Stanislav Stanojević, one of the most prominent inhabitants of the village of Ugljare. Seven days later, Stanislav died of that wound. No steps were taken by the local authorities to detain the murderer though lawsuits had been filed against him by the relatives of the victim.

9. On June 26th in Kolašin, Ashin and Pashe, Albanians from Drjenovići, murdered a Serb Živko Simeonović from Kijevac.

10. On July 28th, Albanians killed Pera Radenković from the village of Sisovac (the District of Vučitrn).

11. Four Albanians killed Stanko Maksimović, an ethnic Serb, near the village of Končul.

12. On August 25th, some Albanians from the village of Ajvalovo, killed Salija Zejnilović and his friend, both from Priština.

13. In the vicinity of the village of Babljak (in Kosovo Polje) and next to the railroad, three Albanians attacked Nisa Stanisavljevic, an ethnic Serb, who was herding his cattle there. One of them fired at Nisa with a gun and shot him dead. Nisa's family and neighbors ran to help him. The killers started to run and being chased they were shooting at the crowd killing Nisa's son, an eight year old boy.

14. Vukašin Mitrović and his companion, both ethnic Serbs from the village of Jašinac (the District of Prizren), while passing through the Gatnjan Wood, spotted from afar a group of Albanians whose leader was an Albanian from the village of Sopotnica, near Kačanik. Being afraid that these Albanians might rob them, the Serbs began to run but the Albanians chased them and having caught Vukašin, they cut him to pieces. Vukašin's friend managed to escape.

15. At the beginning of the month September, Albanians killed Vukašin Dimić from the village of Jašinac.

16. On September 14th, Osman Dražanin, from the village of Voćnjak, killed Milija Jeremić, an ethnic Serb and a very respectable and well-known man from the same village.

17. On October 3rd, a Turkish soldier was beating up with rifle-but and kicking a twelve year old child, son of Šina Maksimović from Gilan.

18. The son of Omer Ashan from the village of Zabela, an Albanian, torched the chaff of Zdravko Nišić from the village of Babljak thus destroying all of his hay. Last summer, the self-same Albanian killed Zdravko's father Nisa as well as his brother Nestor. He threatened Zdravko that he would torch his house and burn down his whole family; and indeed, he was constantly lurking and following Zdravko from the field of Babljak, in order to ambush and kill him when the latter was passing by. This criminal committed all these crimes against Zdravko because Zdravko would not yield to extortion and fleecing which he wanted to impose upon him.

19. On October 5th, Zuka Imerov, from the village of Bjater accompanied by twenty other bandits attacked the home of priest Nedeljko Krsmanović from the village Popovac. Zuka killed priest's wife deathly wounding Sava Jovanović, priest's nephew. The rest of the family members closely escaped assassination.

20. The notorious criminals from the village of Kabash, Adem and Mustafa, together with their gang of bandits, on October 9th sometime around 9 a.m., killed four peasants from Vitina whose names are as follows: Marko Dajić, a certain Sava, Vesa Nikolić's brother and his son Petko. The families of the victims were stricken with utmost poverty due to the deaths of heads of families.

21. On December 17th, Belokalemberović, an Albanian, killed Blagoje Šogić, an ethnic Serb from the village of Suvo Grlo (the District of Peć).

22. Urged by his master, Subaša Šerifović murdred Blagoje Petrović in the course of the same month.

23. On March 20th, Albanians ambushed and killed Rista, who was originally from Poljan, in the District of Peć, somewhere between Peć and Mitrovica. These Albanians reside in the village of Shubrelija in the same District.

24. Bahtir Repe, an Albanian, killed numerous Serbs near the Serbian border and committed a lot of criminal acts in Turkey. In spite of all that, he got away with it and is leading an undisturbed life in his vlilayet being highly respected among the Vučitrn Turks.

25. Isa Rushitović, an Albanian from Popovo (Vučitrn), though he killed three Serbs, strolls freely and relaxed down the Vučitrn marketplace.

26. On December 20th, 1897, Albanians killed Mićadin Vukosavljević from Glavičica in the District of Peć. This crime was committed in the home of the victim.

27. Sima Jeremić from Voćnjak in the District of Peć was brutally killed in front of his house.

28. On January 15th, Albanians killed Jovan Stojković from Vlobuka from the District of Peć in his watermill.

29. On the 24th of the same month, Albanians killed Toma Marković from Gradjenik in his own home.

Plundering of churches

1. In the month of October, a group of Albanians demolished a church in Hoča having looted everything they could find inside.

2. Albanians also demolished an old Serbian church in Končulj situated on the road between Gilan and Bujanovac in the area of Priština. At the moment they are building houses for themselves using the material of the demolished church.

3. On April 6th, Albanians plundered the church in Raovac, in the Sanjak of Prizren.

4. On December 20th, Albanians attacked and plundered the Holy Trinity Monastery in the vicinity of Prizren.

Rapes and abductions

1. Malja, an Albanian from Ljubižda raped the wife of Cvetko Marković from the village of Vrbovac in the District of Gilan. He demanded her forced conversion to Islam and turning Turk but she succeeded to escape and now lives with her husband in Gilan but must not return to her village. Not even in Gilan are they allowed to go out in the street in fear of meeting Malja.

2. A couple of Albanian malefactors lead by a certain Jashar from Dobrotin took away by force two daughters-in-law of Stojan Kolar named Krsjana and Kita in the village of Tirinac (the District of Gilan). The Albanians held both women at their homes for two nights and one day and during that period raped them a couple of times.

3. Two shepherds from the village of Piran, one of whom is the son of Bajram, intercepted on the road from Piran to Ločište the daughter-in-law of Krsta Stanoje Trecak, from Ločište, and raped her there.

4. On June 10th, Albanians from the village of Bilinac (the District of Gilan) took away by force the daughter of Gavrilo Panča from the same village and raped her. After that, she was taken to the Gilan Local Government's Office where she stated that she had been dragged away by force. The authorities ordered that she should be returned to her parents but failed to prosecute the assaulters who threatened the parents with death for having dared to complain.

5. Omer, an Albanian, from the village of Glavotina abducted Saveta, the daughter of Djordje Nedeljković, an ethnic Serb, and took her to the house of Etulaj Sejdinović, his uncle from the village of Streoce, and raped her there. She consequently filed a complaint to the court in Vučitrn.

6. Albanian Ali Basha who lives in Glavotin, in the District of Kosovo, forced the Serbs in this village to work for him for free every Sunday and feast day. Furthermore: he rapes their wives and daughters. Not a single woman or girl dares go to the field to work fearing his assaults. His nephews Omer and Kamber commit the same crimes every day. The authorities, to whom numerous complaints and lawsuits have been filed, allow them to get away with it and continue with crimes.

7. Gendarme Nezir, who joined Hasan Popov, a chaush, raped two Serbian girls in Sirinić last spring: they are the daughters of Staniša Jovanović and Staniša Dejanović from the village of Štrpce. Dejanović's daughter has been long ill due to this assault.

8. In the town of Priština, where the headquarters of the Priština Sanjak authorities are located, a group of Turks took away by force Živka, the daughter of Rista Marković, on September 6th, in the evening.

9. Albanians abducted Cveta Maksimović, a girl from the village of Rajanovac (the District of Gilan), holding her captive for four days in the wood where she was repeatedly raped.

10. On November 14th, Zejna Jusifović from the village of Busovata, accompanied by a gang of thugs, abducted Marija Antić, a girl from the village of Draganac, taking her to the wood.

11. On November 15th, two Albanian criminals: Tifa from the village of Dobrosinje and Husein from the village of Karačevo accompanied by his entire gang of thugs, seized Djordje Stojanović and his brother from the village of Bojevac (the District of Gilan) and took them to the wood by force. Two days later, they took Djordje away to the mountain leaving his brother with a message to bring 12 Turkish liras to pay the ransom for Djordje threatening him, his brother and

their whole family with death in case he should fail to pay the demanded sum.

12. At the end of October, Albanian criminals from the village of Domonek (in the District of Prizren) took away by force the daughter of Djordje Tomić from the same village, who was married to a Serb from the village of Movljan, and she is still being held captive.

13. In the year 1897, Rajin, an Albanian from Boževac, took away by force a girl named Cveta Maksimović but by order of the Turkish authorities she was subsequently returned to the Municipality of Gilan. This self-same Rajin later murdered Aleksa, Cveta's brother; and on February 10th, 1898, he abducted Drenka, Cveta's sister, and took her to the mountain. This crime was committed in broad daylight and in the presence of many witnesses. So far no information has been found on that girl; it is believed that she is being held captive somewhere in the District of Peć.

14. On March 25th, Albanians took away by force Vetka, daughter of Arsa Štrbanovski from Bobovac, from the District of Gilan as well as the wife of Pepa Filić, from the village of Golovshe, who went there to visit her father.

15. Stevan Jović from Makreš (the District of Gilan) who was forcefully taken away to the District of Djakovac or Peć by a group of Albanians, has not been released yet. Legal steps have repeatedly been taken by his father who complained to the Mutesarif and to the Vally of Skoplje on numerous occasions but yielding no results.

16. On January 24th, Albanians abducted and imposed conversion upon the daughter of Sava Čakagaš, from the village of Štubaš in the District of Peć, coercing her into turning Turk. The girl was engaged to be married to Kosta Vuković.

17. Ibish Jakubov, an Albanian from Kabaš in the District of Gilan, broke into the house of Sava Kostić from the village of Vitina and raped his wife.

18. Bolja Arachanović, an Albanian from Kabaš, raped a twelve-year-old daughter of Aleksa Vesić from Vitina.

19. Albanian Jakub Mehmedović with his two accomplices from Kabash raped Sanda, the wife of Mitar Stanković from Vitina.

20. On February 12th, Albanians abducted and took to the wood a girl from the village of Rajanovac, in the District of Gilan.

Attacks, robberies, felonies

1. On April 23th, the sons of Ukshin and Djerish from the village of Donji Makreš, wounded Simeon, the son of Periša from the same village (in the District of Gilan) heavily: his legs being riddled with gun bullets.

2. Bajram, the son of Ismail Adzha from Novo Selo (aforementioned herein) and his son Binak from the village of Radovac, demanded from each house in the village of Goradjevac the amount of 750 groschen threatening to the inhabitants of the village that they would be banished from there unless they paid.

3. During the wedding celebration of the son of Kosta Putić from Vitin (the District of Gilan), Mustafa, an Albanian from Karabsh, demanded one Turskih lira and a pair of socks from Kosta and Kosta gave him that. But, as Kosta failed to bring his daughter-in-law to Mustafa to kiss his hand, Mustafa attempted to abduct her several times as well as to kill Kosta. Due to this, Kosta left his entire estate and, on June 8th, 1897, together with his family, fled to Gilan where he permanently resides now.

4. Inhabitants of the village of Vitina (the District of Gilan) are in constant fear of Albanian tyranny; they especially fear certain Adem and Mustafa, from Kabash, who constantly impose all kinds of forced taxation on them. For instance, when someone is getting married he must pay 4 liras; the same amount is demanded from a bride. Every day here, Albanians impose kuluk [corvee labor, forced and unpaid labor] on villagers.

5. In the month of May, Albanians Feta Verich and his relatives and companions expelled an old Serbian family—the Ahandzic's, a very highly esteemed and respected family—from the village of Majstir (the District of Peć) confiscating their home and estate.

6. On July 14th in the evening, near the village of Kosovica, a group of Albanians fired a few shots at Sima Djokić from Carevac breaking his right arm.

7. In Kolašin, each Serbian home is forced to provide the Albanians with workers at their own expense being obliged do it every day. The workers must cultivate their land and do agricultural works for free; every Sunday and feast day all of the inhabitants, men and women, are obliged to do the kuluk [unpaid labor]. Numerous complaints of the poor people have been ignored by the authorities remaining unanswered.

Similar misdeeds occur every day in the entire Old Serbia, especially in the District of Gilan.

8. In a devastating attack committed by the Albanians four Serbian homes were plundered and laid waste in Peć: the homes of Jovan Djak, Petar Dimić, Spira Savić and Nikola Miladinović.

9. An Albanian from the village of Jelač (the District of Gilan) went to Gogolevac (in the same District), in the first half of the month of September, to the home of Rista Ilić where he searched all the rooms in the house looking for Rista's wife and sister. He found them in the granary but Rista refused to open it for him so the Albanian beat him up with rifle-butt and left him half-dead. While the Albanian was beating Rista, Rista's wife and sister escaped to the neighboring wood; they were so traumatized which resulted in serious illness. Due to this attack, Rista was forced to leave his home and his land and to flee, together with his whole family, to another village and find shelter in the home of one of his relatives.

10. On October 31th, more than 20 Albanians attacked the home of Maksim Batićevac in the village of Drenovac (the District of Gilan) demolishing the stable in order to steal his livestock. Maksim, from his room, fired a shot in the air to scare them away. In reaction to that, the Albanians opened fire from all guns shooting at the windows and doors wounding Maxim and raiding his 4 buffalos.

11. Two brothers Zuko and Airo, the aforementioned Albanians from the village of Batajir (the District of Mitrovica), committed the following abductions and thefts in the month of October:

a) They raided two horses from Kosta Aksentijević and Jevrem Milovanović from the village of Rudnice, two oxen and a cow from Vandić from the village of Pridvorica. (Vandić chased them and managed to take back his cattle but was wounded on that occasion;

b) 7 heads of draft cattle from Mienko Urošević, also from the village of Pridvorica, (Ali-Aga Čamilović met the thieves and forced them to return to Milenko all the cattle they had stolen).

c) They robbed the home of Panta Aleksić from the village of Crveni and killed Panta.

12. Unidentified Albanians committed numerous robberies and thefts in many villages of the area of Priština in the months of October and November. They stole: 11 horses, 9 oxen, 8 cows, 150 sheep, 27 goats, 11 beehives. The embassy possesses a list with the names of all the owners who were robbed with all the details with respect to the robberies.

13. On November 14th, the Albanian criminals–the aforementioned Tifa and Husein—broke into the house of Rista Stanković from Drenovac (the District of Gilan) demanding 6 Turkish Liras and threatening to kill him instantaneously unless he delivered the money. Rista, as he did not have the money, gave them all the jewelry his wife had and two pairs of socks.

14. On October 28, Albanians rustled two cows from Andjelko Stojković from the village of Glogovac (the District of Gilan), on November 12th, two oxen from Stojan Petković, from the same village; on November 11, one ox and two cows from Nasko Mladenović, from the village of Rapotovo (in the same District); and from Anta Tomić from the village of Čarakovci one mare and all that was in the granary.

15. Arsa, son of Mitar Lazić from the village of Gologovac (the District of Gilan) married Mladena, the daughter of Stevan from the village of Robovačka Reka (in the same District) on Novemeber 13th. After the wedding, an Albanian criminal named Shakir Korpan fom the village of Jelača, who is now living in the village of Robovac, broke into Arsa's home demanding from the latter to either give him his wife or 12 Liras, threatening to kill every member of Arsa's family whom he could find. As Arsa refused to pay the blackmail, Shakir again stormed into his home on November 28th, this time accompanied by 4 outlaws. They tied Arsa's arms and inflicted various forms of torture upon him: burning him with fire, stabbing him with sharp objects—all in order to force him to either hand over his wife to them or to pay 12 Liras of blackmail! His entire family fled into the mountain while Arsa was being subjected to horrible tortures. His father Mitar rushed to Gilan to complain to the authorities; they told him to return to his home and promised to send someone to investigate the case on the spot but did not take any action at all. Consequently, Arsa and his whole family were forced to flee abandoning their home and all of their property.

16. On December 3rd, a group of Albanian criminals attacked Veličko Pešić from the village of Božovac (the District of Gilan): they beat him up, burnt his flesh with fire and exerted various forms of torture upon him attempting to extort money. When his wife started to cry, one of the Albanians beat her up with the rifle-butt.

17. On December 2nd 1897, Kosta Milivojević from Raden and Milojko Bojović from Tvrdjen were ambushed by a group of Albanians while leading their horses loaded with flour to Novi Pazar; the attack happened in the vicinity of Novi Pazar, in the place called "Sviba" in the evening that day; Kosta was killed while Milojko was forcefully taken away together with the horses.

18. In the mountain of Ženjovac, in the Kaza of Priština, there live 40 Albanian criminals who, with threats, robberies and all sorts of crimes, terrorize Serbs of the Kosovo Province and District of Gilan to such extent that they must not refuse to hand over whatever the Albanians demand and, moreover, must not even complain to the authorities against the criminals for the latter are threatening with all kinds of atrocities to anyone who would dare file a lawsuit against them.

19. With the intention to prevent the Serbs of the Province (Vilayet) of Kosovo from feeding their livestock and thus force them to abandon their homes and move out of the Kosovo Province, Albanians decided to cultivate the fields situated in front of the very villages in which the Serbs resided and which served them as pastures on which their livestock grazed. This process was first initiated by: Mufti Mustafa Effendi, Sulejman-aga (now a pasha), Ali Effendi Nufuz Naziri and other Turks from that region. Encouraged by these examples, the Albanians confiscated the best lands which belonged to Serbs in the following villages: Laplje, Čaglavica, Livadja, Dobrotin, Gušterica, Matičani etc. etc.

20. In the village of Donji Dol, in the District of Peć, there are 7 Serb homes left, two of which belong to Mihailo Savić and Maksim Hristić. Albanians seized their lands causing them to sink into abject misery. Among these remaining Serbian homes the most notable is the house of Stanisha Bogićević whose lands the Albanians also intend to appropriate and, moreover, they threaten to kill him. They set his house on fire and the entire furniture and his belongings were burnt down together with all of his livestock. This family which once consisted of 20 members and has been, until recently, the richest family in that place, has now been brought to the utmost poverty without even enough bread to eat.

21. On April 8th, some Albanians wounded from the shotgun Djordje Vučetić, a teacher from the village of Gotovuša and Kosta, an innkeeper in that village.

22. On March 25th, some Albanians from the village of Budril, in the District of Gilan, attacked Arsa Milenković intending to kill him but he defended himself wounding one of the assaulters and ran away. Then the Albanians collected all the Serbs from the village and took them to Gilan beating them all the way. In Gilan, they handed them over to the gendarmes who also beat them and put them in prison.

23. Kosovo Serbs must not go alone into the mountain to cut firewood. They have to be escorted by Albanians to whom they pay such service.

24. Two of the most esteemed Serbian families: the family of Staniša Bogićević from Dobri Dol (the District of Peć) and the family of Miloš Vučić from Gora Nedaša (in the same District), who could not endure any more all those acts of violence perpetrated by the Albanians, left their homes fleeing to Serbia.

25. On March 29th, the Albanians from Mavrić stole 12 rams from Milenko Savić from Gojbulja in the District of Vučitrn.

26. Ariton Velić, merchant from Vučitrn, being constantly harassed by the notorious criminal Rifat Osman called Macunca, was forced to sell all of his real estate for a mere trifle and leave Vučitrn.

27. On April 16th, a group of Albanians broke into the house of Father Arsa, a priest from the village of Kamenica, and began to torture him in order to extort some money from him but having assured themselves that he had no money, they stole some smaller items. On the same day, in the evening, these robbers broke again in the same house and since the priest, having noticed them beforehand, left the house together with his son, they tortured the females demanding money from them; nevertheless, they were forced to run away seeing a group of peasants whom the priest summoned for help.

28. On Holy and Great Wednesday this year, a criminal Shakir Kopran extorted 10 Turskih liras from Petar Simić from Godilovac in the District of Gilan. This sum was handed over to the aforementioned villain through the mediation of Rama Lapaštica from Kupište, the District of Gilan, who acted as a go-between.

29. Criminals walk freely and undisturbedly through the villages in the District of Gilan; they fire shotguns fearing no one.

30. Sulja Zekim from Makreš beat up Stojan Djokić and Mihailo Trajković from Čukarica, in the District of Gilan. That happened 4 days before Easter holidays.

31. Following the robbery of his house and death threats uttered by a group of Albanians, Vasa Gardžić from the village of Magilj was forced to move to Gilan.

32. In the month of Decemeber 1897, Albanians rustled 4 goats from Janko Mitrović from Domorovci; 27 goats from Vasa Ivanović from Korminjani; 4 goats from Mihajlo Filipović from the same village; 6 mares from Jovan Djordjević from Bostan; 2 mares from Lunaf Falić from Tručevac. All the villages are located in the District of Gilan.

33. The notorious criminal Rashid Degerle from Lablanj, notorious for his crimes and brutal atrocities forcing more than 20 Serbian families to flee their homes, was admitted as a guest, together with his gang of 10 accomplices, in the home of Maksim Milošević, a serf from Papalovo in the District of Gilan. Before leaving the house, this outlaw beat up the aforementioned Makism so brutally that the latter almost died due to this abuse.

34. Nikola Andjelković who had settled in Priština 40 years ago was forced to leave this town receiving serious death threats from the notorious criminal Bećir Aga from Vučitrn; Andjelković was forced to abandon all of his incomes and all of his immovable properties in the total amount of more than 1,000 Turkish liras.

35. On December 23th, a group of Albanians forcibly entered the home of Djoka Filić from Bušince in the District of Gilan, tied his hands and burnt his flesh with fire to extort 20 Turkish liras. Had it not been for his brother Kosta who rushed there with a couple of peasants, the Albanians would have killed Djordje for certain. And as the Albanians threatened to Kosta as well, he was also forced to leave the village and seek refuge in Gilan.

36. The same Albanians repeated their attack on Djordje's home with an intention to kill his brother Kosta but not finding Kosta there, they tied Djordje and robbed the locks on all the chests searching for money. In the end, as they could not find money, they stole all the clothes and dresses they could find.

37. On January 23th, an Albanian named Bajram from Vitina, struck with an axe Zdravko Staničić from the same village. Zdravko almost died due to the attack.

38. On January 5th, a group of Albanians attacked Jovan and Stevan, the Milivojević brothers as well as the sons of Stano Milivojčić from Sivci (Kosovo)—while they were cutting firewood in the vicinity of the village.

39. A very strange custom has been established of late in the town of Peć: Whenever the telal [town-crier] communicates some official announcements to the people, he always finishes his announcement with the following words: "Woe unto him who is a Christian"!

Correspondence on Albanian violence in Old Serbia (Vilayet of Kosovo) 1898–1899, pp. 18–17.

A NEW NOTE OF THE SERBIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE OTTOMAN PORTE

Stojan Novaković, Serbia's Minister to Constantinople, to Tefik-Pasha, Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs

Constantinople, Julz 16th/28th, 1898

Mr Minister,

With reference to my Note dated May 14th of the current year, № 744, I have the honor to draw the attention of Your Excellency to new atrocities and acts of violence continuously being perpetrated against the Serbs in the Province of Kosovo.

Murders, rape and all kinds of banditry, being incessantly committed, can be treated no more as individual crimes and without consequences for they apparently indicate—of which I had the honor to notify You in my previous Note—that the Albanians have decided beforehand to totally exterminate Christians, especially ethnic Serbs, from that area.

Your Excellency will find it easy to assure Yourself of the accuracy of this statement if You would only give a cursory glance on the appendices to my Note, wherein we have recorded, in a very brief period of time of only a couple of weeks, some ten cases of murder, the same number of rapes and abductions and even more cases of banditry, excluding other misdeeds such as: acts of violence, torture, thefts, corvee, to which Serbs are exposed day in, day out and which coerce them into leaving their ancestral homes and moving to Serbia, being deprived of safety with respect to their estates, their lives and their honor. Allow me to say, Mr. Minister, that such state of affairs is pitiable indeed. And what is even worse is an ominous helplessness of the local authorities leaving unpunished most atrocious misdeeds which are being perpetrated, so to speak, before their very eyes. That impotence and condonation on behalf of the authorities leaves Albanians not only open space to further inflict tortures and abuse but even encourages them on that path. [...]

Correspondence on Albanian violence in Old Serbia (Vilayet of Kosovo) 1898–1899, BELGRADE, MDCCCXCIX, pp. 35–36

VIOLENCE CONTINUES (1898)

Murders

1. On May 15th, an Albanian named Elijas, the son of Salih Dzungula from the village of Bresije, murdered with his gun Jovan Simić, from the same village, in his home because the aforementioned Jovan could not compensate Elijas for a Turkish Lira which he was sentenced to pay, some time ago, as indemnity to Jovan for having beaten him up in the most brutal way.

2. On May 17th, Ramiz Sadiković [Sadiku] from Dobrotin (the Kaza of Gilan) broke Djordje Ivanović's arm; Ivanović is from Ranilug (in the same Kaza). Ramiz's uncles killed Čevo Ristić from Petrovac two years ago.

3. At the beginning of May, Nuh Mehmedoviq, from Busovat, shot dead Senta Ljubić from Ajnovac (the Kaza of Gilan) with his rifle.

This self-same Nuh, is now demanding 12 Turkish Liras from the victim's father-in-law, threatening to kill his son this time unless he pays the blackmail.

As he was also repeating death threats to Anta Miljković, for having arranged the marriage of one peasant girl, the above-mentioned Anta was forced to leave his village and settle elsewhere.

4. On May 9th, Musli Selimović, an Albanian from Rakitnica (the Kaza of Vučitrn), shot dead Milovan Spasojević with his rifle while Milovan was working in front of his home.

This self-same Musli went to the village of Chechovo (in the District of Kolašin) blackmailing every Serbian home into paying him one Turkish lira each, uttering death threats.

Stojan Novaković, Serbian Minister to Constantinople

On May 19th, this very man, Musli, accompanied by his friend Adzaj, forcefully took two horses from Cvetko Simić and Nestor Filipović from the village of Razal.

5. A military fugitive named Shulic, an Albanian, who killed Muktar Riga from Gogolevac (the Kaza of Gilan) last year, is threatening with death to Arsa Mirković unless the latter pays a certain amount of money which he previously demanded.

6. A group of Albanians murdered Arsa Petrović, head of several families who lived in zadruga [agricultural community, cooperative whose members are usually consanguineals] in the village of Tomajić (in the Kaza of Peć). The murder was perpetrated for the purpose of overtaking their lands and estates; nevertheless Maksa–Jovan Petrović, Arsa's heir, continued with agricultural works and cultivation of land, hence the Albanians, extremely infuriated, started threatening him and Maksa was forced to abandon the estate and move, together with his family, to Djurakovac (the Kaza of Peć), to a certain Catholic's home. However, unfortunately, Maksa and his family could not find peace and safety not even in their new shelter with the Arbanasi Halil, Bajram and Nuh, from the same village, constantly disturbing them with blackmails demanding 6,000 Groschen and forcing them to turn Turk and convert to Islam if they want their lives to be spared. As there were 7 men in that zadruga who were capable of carrying a rifle, the wretched men had to keep guard every night in front of the house fearing that they might be suddenly attacked.

7. On May 13th, Ilija Novaković from Gručarevo (the Kaza of Novi Pazar) who went to Sjenica for the purpose of selling cattle, was killed on his way back by a group of ethnic Albanians who also robbed him of all the money.

8. On May 14th. an Albanians murdered Djoka Virtunić from Vičnjevo (Novi-Pazar) in Djoka's watermill.

Plundering of churches

9. On May 28th, a certain number of Arbanasi attacked and plundered the church in Lapljan (in Kosovo).

Abductions and rapes

10. Bajram Zekirović, a railroad guard, has been terrorizing the entire population of the village of Skulanovo, perpetrating all kinds of evil deeds, taking away by force wives and daughters and detaining them for more than 15 days in his guardhouse. Thus he took away by force Neda, the wife of Trajko Krstić from the same village. He is now lusting for the wife of Stojan Milić and it is highly probable that he will soon abduct her as well. He often uses death threats as a means to coerce wives and girls into converting to Islam.

11. Nail Nimunović from Bamcha (the District of Rožaje), accompanied by his accomplices, attacked the home of Janicije from the same village. Not finding him there, they beat his wife and son so brutally that the two will hardly stay alive and took away by force his daughter Jelena who was engaged to marry. Nail ran away taking away the girl with him to the village of Sušica where they are still staying in the house of Redzep Husejin.

12. On June 1st, a Turk named Adil Sulejmanović, from Priština, raped an eight-year-old girl, daughter of a certain Cveja Saf, in the vineyard in the vicinity of the town. The girl is now on her deathbed.

13. Halil Latifović, originally from Gegovac, who resides in Paralovo, accompanied by his accomplices—brothers Zajnel, Azis and Nezir, attacked the home of Pesa Simić from the same village and raped his daughter-in-law. This happened on May 28th. Furthermore, these villains also attacked the home of Maksa Petković-Čakić taking away his daughter whom they detained for 24 hours. The unfortunate girl is now held captive in the house of a Turk in Bresnica (Giljane).

14. On June 11th, Ali Bajram, an Arbanas (ethnic Albanian) from Donje Nerodimlje, and his two accomplices forcefully took away a girl named Spasenija, daughter of Andreja Marković from the same village, while she was weeding the corn. She was forcefully taken to the mountain near the village of Butakovo and could be heard screaming for more than an hour.

15. On June 7th, the Arbanasi (ethnic Albanians) took away by force Tata, the daughter of Marko Milić, to Priština intending to coerce her into turning Turk and embracing Islam.

What Arbanasi (ethnic Albanians) most frequently when they abduct a girl is to rape her first and then to try to force her to convert to Islam threatening her or her parents with death.

There were several cases that young girls were forcefully converted and turned Turk in this way.

Assaults, felonies etc.

16. On April 27th, a group of Albanians robbed Giga and Aca Radosavljević from the village of Sočanica (the Kaza of Mitrovica) having beaten them most brutally.

17. Sulja Zemni, an Albanian from Makreš (the Kaza of Gilan) brutally beat Arsa Filipović as the latter coul not give him the sum of money he demanded. In addition to this, this criminal who terrorized inhabitants of Milanovac, lives at the expense of these poor villagers who supply him with all kinds foodstuffs and whatever he needs. He, on the other side, perpetrates various misdeeds in the village and forces the peasants to reap his fields for free. Since he set his eyes on the daughter of a certain Marko Savić, from Čukarica, he has been threatening to kill anyone who would dare to take her for a wife.

18. On Easter Tuesday, a group of Albanians attacked and pillaged the home of Lazar Krstić from Bresje.

19. The Binjanić brothers Tahir and Mehmed from Bocnjak (the District of Peć), on May 25th, captured Jovan Stojanović, a 17 year old youth from the village of Dragojevac (in the same District). So far, he has not been released.

20. Stevan Jović, from Makreš (the Kaza of Gilan), who was also captured by Albanians and taken to the Kaza of Peć last year—has not been released yet. The legal steps his father took addressing the Baliya [District governor] have been of no avail so far.

21. An Albanian named Hasan as well as his father Kurd Ali from Gilan perpetrate various evil deeds in the village of Ranilug (the Kaza of Gilan), abusing men and women and coercing them into assorted kuluks—unpaid work. Among others, Sultana, the wife of Nidža Milošević and a peasant Djordje Zlatanović were brutally beaten up. This very Hasan also plowed and sowed the village pasture so that the peasants are now prohibited from grazing their livestock there.

22. A group of Albanians from Kosanić, in the Kaza of Peć, blackmailed Nikola Kokić from Grebnik into paying 40 Turkish liras, threatening to kidnap his son or a member of his family unless he paid the sum within a set period of time.

23. On May 21st, three soldiers and one gendarme caught Simjan Mladenović in the wood near the village of Bušljaci (the Kaza of Gilan), in the place called Patošim, and after beating him up, they robbed him and stripped him off his clothes. Hence, Simjan was forced to return to the village stark naked. The peasants who chased these soldiers hardly managed to recover Simjan's stolen clothes.

24. On May 15th, a group of Albanians wounded Filip Džida from Brnjica (Novi Pazar).

25. On the night between the 12th and the 14th of June, Albanians Sajo Rustović and Elez Habibović from the village of Brejan (Novi Pazar) torched the house of priest Maksim Balšić from Shabi. The priest and his family, being homeless, at the moment are dwelling out in the open field.

26. Albanians raided the following livestock:

On May 25th, a pair of oxen from Jovan Denić from Batushac; On June 5, a horse and a mare with a colt from Sima Trajić from Lipljan;

On June 7th, two oxen from Jovan Mirić from Nerodimlje and a cow from Toma Popović, from the same village;

On June 10th, two oxen from Noka Jović and Petar Denić from Lapušnik; one horse from Vasa Ristić from Lepina;

On June 13th, five mares from Vasa Milić from Skulanovo.

27. On June 16th, a group of Albanians took captive Branko Mitrović from Lepine taking him by force together with his two oxen into the mountain near Lapušnik. Until now, Branko has not returned.

28. The village of Lapina has become a battlefield for numerous atrocities perpetrated by Albanians. It has been, so to speak, under siege and not a single Serb can go out to work in the field. Those who dare expose themselves to danger are usually taken captive and robbed. If Albanians cannot extort money from the person they seize, if he has no money, they blackmail his family demanding an enormous amount of money to be paid and only after the payment do they allow the captive to return to his home.

29. Jakov Vujić has been brutally beaten up by the following perpetrators: Shakir, the brother of Mustafa-Efendija–police commissioner in Priština; Vel Sula Ali, a sergeant, Onka, a gendarme and some Albanians. The blows were so brutal that the man fainted with blood gushing from his mouth and ears. In spite of his severe health condition, he was taken to prison where, in all probability, he is soon expected to die.

30. On June 17th, Balija Mustafić, an Albanian from Makresh wounded Djoka Stamenković from Bušnica (the Kaza of Gilan) shooting at him with his revolver and there are no chances whatsoever for him to stay alive.

31. On June 18th, the notorious brigand Abulrajim Munišević from Vučitrn attempted to forcefully break into the home of Stevan Rolić intending to rape Stevan's wife. Stevan's mother, who was blocking the door to prevent him from entering, was heavily wounded in both her arms being struck with a knife. The lawsuits filed to the authorities have yielded no results whatsoever, as is always the case.

Correspondence on Albanian violence in Old Serbia (Vilayet of Kosovo) 1898–1899, pp. 36–39.

THE RAŠKA AND PRIZREN DIOCESAN ARCHIVE (from 1899)

[...] As with the beginning of 1866 the administration of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren, and in the autumn of 1897 the administration of the Skoplje Diocese as well, have passed into the hands of Serbs, I, as a representative of Serbia in Constantinople wanted to acquire the exact data as regards the state of our population, our churches etc. in these two dioceses.

The first person to respond to my request was the late Metropolitan Dionisije of Raška and Prizren. He underlined in the first place that his predecessor, the late Metropolitan Melentije, used to report a smaller number of parishes to the Patriarchate than really was the case for the purpose of presenting himself as a poorer Metropolitan. Following that example and for the same reasons of course, the priests did the same as regards their parishes. Metropolitan Dionisije, therefore, points out that according to this, the number of homes within a parish is regularly minimized and is much smaller than it really is. A friend of ours actually demonstrated to us that there were really 900 Serbian homes in Kolašin whereas the survey of Metropolitan Dionisije presents only 335 Serb homes. The same friend, who is very well informed, emphasized to me that the same case was with Sirinić and with Gnjilane. Apart from this, the data on the number of persons per household is very unreliable. How to determine the exact number of members of one household? My friend says that in Old Serbia households with 5 members are very rare while households with average size of more than 20 members are very frequent. The state practice in Turkey, in accordance with old tradition, to levy taxes and charges on households (rather than on individuals), was conducive to the establishment of cooperatives. Hence, my friend's assertion that an average household in Old Serbia consisted of 8–10 members and should be counted as such was legitimate.

This distrust about statistical data and censuses in Turkey as well as the fear that statistical surveys and censuses are carried out purely for fiscal needs and that they would inevitably entail increase in taxes and charges, are the phenomena noticed by many. *Carte ethnographique de la Turquie d'Europe et denombrement de la population grecque de l'Empire Othoman.* Par A. Synvet. Paris 1877, says the following as regards statistical data in Turkish reports from the Province and Greek diocesan reports: "In order to protect their compatriots from taxes and charges, the serfs were wont to record fewer houses than it was the case, omitting also those houses that could not afford to pay."

My strong recommendation that only reliable data and data corresponding to the actual state of affairs ought to be sent, without any uncertainty and political chauvinism, which has dulled the sense of truthfulness on the Balkan Peninsula, gave rise to new debunking of the misleading statistics.

In the areas of Macedonia where the conflict between Serbs and Bulgarians is smoldering as well as between the Exarchate and the Patriarchate, the poor truth will still have to suffer due to numerous troubles. The same situation is with Greeks and Macedonian Romanians (Tzinzars).

Sending the Diocesan Archive of the Diocese of Skoplje, on January 31st, 1900, the late Metropolitan Firmilijan, wrote to me as follows: "Trying to provide as accurate as possible data, I have put herein the exact number of our homes in the diocese. It has already been known so far that we have almost 12,000 homes, which I must underline." I for my part must underline that the tables enclosed with the letter indicate the total number of 8,197 homes under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate in the Diocese of Skoplje.

In memory of the late Metropolitan Firmilijan and being convinced that only truth ought not to be feared, I am, therefore, having these data printed in the same form as they were sent to me. They indicate the situation in the year 1899 together with those data that Metropolitan Dionisije sent me for the Diocese of Prizren. They will become a point of comparison for our national and religious progress or regress in those dioceses.

It can be seen, therefore, that when the national cause and struggle are concerned, even the fear of taxes subsides and each nation tends to present itself as numerous as possible, believing that that would help them. So, how can we trust the statistical reports submitted by Bulgarians, Greeks or Romanians? It is well-known that they suffer from the disease of chauvinism to a greater extent than Serbs.

Therefore, as Turkey cannot count the population and nations in its own empire or does not know how to do it, as it is impossible to rely on the reports submitted by representatives of religious communities though only statistics could help untangle the knot of national identities in Macedonia – international diplomatic means still ought to be sought in order to carry out population census and to count the inhabitants of the disputed area! Isn't this a moral picture of Turkey and its antagonists?

Here, however, we present to the world these surveys and reports which were not intended for publication by its authors but were only privately sent to us for the purpose of familiarizing us with the situation.

Stojan Novaković, *Balkan Questions*, Belgrade 1906, pp. 518–520 (in Serbian).

Church of Saint Lazar, Donja Gušterica, 1906, Historical Archives, Belgrade

VIOLENCE IN KOSOVO, SUMMER 1900

An attaché of the Serbian consulate Nastas Dj. Nastasijević to Aleksa S. Jovanović, President of the Ministerial Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Confidential № 184 Priština, August 16th/29th, 1900

Mister Minister, President,

I am honoured to kindly inform you that for this short period of time, in the province of this Royal Consulate, besides other individually accounted terrors, the following have taken place:

I. *In the District (Nahi) of Peć*

On the June 19th of the current year, the infamous villain Colj-Sokol, a Malesian (Albanian) from the village of Borje, captured a 65-year-old man Radojko N. from Kos and ransomed him for 50 lires. The dismal Radojko, tortured by all kinds of hardship, is whining in slavery, and poor villagers cannot help him. On the same day, the Albanians over there drove away two bulls and five goats from Nedeljko N. from Stropac, this being all his assets.

They burned down the silage to Mitar Tijanić from Crkolez and took 8 lires from Ivko Ašanin.

On July 23th, on his way through the woods the self-same Colj-Sokol met Panta H. Šantrić, a varnisher from Peć, who was heading to the neighbouring villages with his apprentice Ilija to do the work there. Colj was accompanied with four armed Albanians, so they seized his revolver and drove him into their tower, asking for 100 lires as ransom money and for the rank of sergeant that he wanted Panta to arrange for him with the Ottoman's governor.

Panta and his apprentice boy spent 15 days in captivity, tormented in various ways. The following night, they untied their arms and Colj went after new prey with two friends, leaving another two to watch them. So, when the guards fell asleep, they opened the door and escaped from the tower into the woods, roaming for three days and three nights, without food, to finally reach Peć. The horse carrying all the things remained with them in the tower of Colj Sokol. Panta complained against this both in spoken and in writing form to the Peć Mutesarif (administrator), and, instead of getting the justice administered and himself protected, he got the following reply from the Mutesarif: „Return the four "Martin" rifles to Colj Sokol or else you are destroyed". Panta swears not to know anything about this and it is very likely that he only wanted salvation, so it could not possibly occur to him to look for Colj's guns and steal them. Turkish stuff, it's always Serbian fault. He begged the Consulate to transfer him to Serbia, but Panta is a bright, energetic and reputable man and he paid what he had to so they told him to find refuge in Mitrovica until the ominous situation is defused.

On July 26th of the current year, some Albanians stole from Živan Simić, from the village of Banja, a mare, a cow and a steer from the pasture near the village, in day time. He says he has not even complained to the Mutesarif, having heard that he is also pressurised by Albanians, so he cannot move from Ucumat (court council). Rumour has it that he will be replaced soon.

On July 28th, Rista Rakić from the village of Kijevo came to the Consulate premises saying that the Albanians: categorically ordered that all Serbs from Kijevo (and there are about 20 Serbian houses with more than 300 family members) should either embrace the Turkish faith or move away, otherwise they would take all their property and exterminate them. He complained about this to the famous Zeynel-Bey Mahmudović, who said „There is nothing I can do to help you for our bandits and terror-mongers; you should complain to Consuls, or Vali or the Sultan Himself, for small authorities cannot help you (...). He said he would fight the villains until they are all dead, but he woulnd't leave his property.

The abbot of Visoki Dečani monastery submitted that in Peć and Djakovica districts more than 100 people were left without any food for the terror of the bandits; he was imploring for help, not knowing what to do as he used to, as they cannot move their homes and go earn a living somehow.

On the 2nd of this month, Albanians broke into the house of Živko Popadić, merchant from Peć, taking all his belongings.

II. *In the District (Kaza) of Gnjilane*

Some Albanians from the village of Vele Glave captured a girl, daughter of Kojica Crnogorac (Montenegrin) from the village of Grgovac, at the borderline near „Kitka" watch-tower, and made her go with them.

Vasa Djordjević, worker from Đomorovac village, informed us that on last year's St. Elyah's Day, people got together in front of St. Elyah's Church in Domorovac, and when the feast was in the full swing, 300 Albanians from the settlements of Adamovac and Blato, armed with rifles, ran into the crowd firing, so the people ran for their lives and the church was left without its only annual income.

In the same way, Albanians drove people away in the village of Šipašnica, on St. Paraskeve's Day last year, in front of St. Paraskeve's church.

III. *In the District of Vučitrn*
15 days ago, unidentified Turks broke into the store of Stavro Nikolić, shoe-maker in Vučitrn, and took his revenues of 2,000 groschen. He complained to the authorities, to no avail.

Isa Feratagić, from Mitrovica, passing through Vučitrn with wedding guests, entered the yard of church and its school with bursts of gun fire, so the whole neighbourhood ran away with fear; and Najazi Rušid Čaušević mutilated the wreath on the church door.

IV. *In the District of Priština*
On the 8th of this month, Albanians stole 3 bulls from Nića Stanković in Čaglavica, and that was all he possessed. 15 days ago Iba Qaja, a local Turk, hit Jovan Tanacković from Presjane with his gun in the head, inflicting a serious injury on him. In other villages there are also fights, robberies, bloody heads and blackmails of 700 groschen each; especially in the village of Lipljan, as of late, there has not been a night without a robbery attack against a Serbian house. It is the hardest situation for the Royal Consulate, as they don't know how to advise, help or comfort the suffering and dismal people. Just now, when I was about to put the last full stop as final, Vasa Ristić from the village of Lepinja, Priština district, rushed into the Consulate office, all in sweat, and said, shedding tears: "Here, brother, this morning Rama Omerović, settler from Glinica, came with five armed Albanians and by force drove away 1 bull, 1 cow and 1 buffalo (alas, all I had).

We, villagers, chased him but with bare arms, nobody dares come closer to them.

I advised him to complain to Mutesaraf, but he said "if I do that, he will destroy me together with my family and my house. If I manage with the Royal Consulate, that will be good, if not, that's it".

All these people, for all the troubles and grievance they have, refer to the Royal [Serbian] Consulate first, asking for justice. They seek advice, instruction and manner to reach the goal; and, understandably, they don't forget asking for material assistance. In a word, they do not trust the Turkish authorities. The Royal Serbian Consulate is everything to them.

Archives of Serbia, Ministry of foreign affairs, Belgrade, Legation at Constantinople, 1895 folder 93

MURDERS AND THEFTS

Vice-consul Ivan Ivanić to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Confidential, № 2915
Skoplje, September 26th/October 8th, 1900

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

On the terror of Albanians in Peć and the Peć district, which has been going on without intermission against our unprotected population, I have learned about some more recent cases that I have the honour of presenting to you:

On the 16th of this month, the villains killed Beg Simonović and Petko Perković, both inn-keepers and grocers by profession. One evening vegetables were stolen from Beg's garden, so he called Petko to wait for the thief the next evening. Thus, waiting, they were attacked and Beg was murdered there, near his store, while they brought Petko to the village of Goraždevac, killed him and threw him into the mud there, where he was found on the 19th this month. The murderers are unknown.

On the 18th this month, Adem Zajim, a Turk, blocked the road in the village of Istinić and stopped Tomče, a merchant from Prizren, released the cart from bars and let the cows and bulls go.

This same Adem attacked Vasko Spasić, a merchant from Peć, and meant to kill him. Jaća Zdravković came to his rescue, asking Adem for Vasko as a gift, to which he acquiesced on condition that Jaća pay 25 lires. Vasko escaped to another quarter, and, in order to redeem his life, Jaća announced that Vasko's house was for sale and now he is declaring it out loud through the village."

I have also sent a copy of this letter to the Royal Embassy in Constantinople.

Archives of Serbia, Ministry of foreign affairs, Belgrade, Legation at Constantinople, folder 93.

NEW OUTBREAKS OF VIOLENCE (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1900)

Nastas Dj. Nastasijević to Aleksa S. Jovanović, President of the Ministerial Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs
Reg. № 205 Priština, October 6th/19th, 1900

Esteemed Mr Minister-President,

In accordance with the previous correspondence, I am honoured to inform you, Minister President, of the following terrors:

I. *In the District of Prizren*
On the September 23rd, about 60 Albanians—from Luma—attacked the village of Sevce, seized and drove away 140 heads of cattle, 160 goats and 100 sheep; they burnt down the barns of priest Stevan Bogdanović and during the kidnapping of Stojan Milosavljević in the village of Ježice, they wounded a 14-year-old girl Jovanka, killed Stanko Nikolić, and Jefta Djordjević from the village of Sefce is missing and thought to have been taken hostage by Albanians, to be ransomed later.

II. *In the District of Priština*
On September 23rd, Jašar Bolukbashi (captain) ordered his guard Jusuf to beat up a Serb from the village of Brljice, which he did, only because he did not have the remaining 60 paras for his toll. The guard even reached for his revolver against the poor fellow, but he was saved by Stanislav Rakić who grabbed the gun from the guard's hand.

On September 19th, the guards who were guarding the village od Babljak, abducted a maid from Petar Basarac's home to take her somewhere by force. She managed to snap out of the kidnappers and run back home, as her her hand was promised to a boy from the village of Babuš. The guards threatened the boy's father and the bethrothal was broken up.

In the village of Crvene Vodice, Mekit Bajram, Albanian, stole two bulls from Zaka Marković on September 30th.

On October 3rd, Ibrahim Pajsić, a settler here in the field, 20 minutes from the town of Priština, hit Ćeka, a local, five times with a knife in his breast and he died immediately. The reason was that Ćeka's cattle, allegedly sick, was near his cattle.

III. *In the District of Kolašin*
Last month Cubovi (Tsubs), Albanian villains, stormed into the house of Stojan Radović in the village of Varak and stole all their belongings. The females in the house acted heroically, they even fired at them, but shot nobody.

They stole two horses from Sima Stanić from Okalce; two bulls from Spasoje in Pridvorica; one horse from Jevrem in Kovača and from Obrad in the same village also one horse; from Sima Djordjević from Dubin Potok also one horse; they also stole several horses and bulls from Čečevo, Oklace i Brnjaci.

Košutovci—Albanians, grabbed a girl from the village of Kamenica and imposed Turkish faith on her; they also kidnapped another girl from that village.

IV. *In the District of Vučitrn*
On September 13th the infamous villan Dibrak Kukorivica stole 4 horses from Radisav Ignjatović from the village of Mošnice. Also, our informant says that rifles are imported from Serbia and he urges that this should stop otherwise Albanians will exterminate Serbs. Milutin Slavković and Radosav, the Kocić brothers from the village of Kučija, set out for refuge in Serbia with their families, for the unbearable terror, but they were stopped and driven to Kučija (Drenica), so who knows how they will end up.

V. *In the District of Mitrovica*
On September 29th unknown thieves attacked the house of a Serb in Mitrovica and drove his four horses away.

Hussein Feratović and Šaban Kopriva attacked two merchants at midnight and when they had already started robbing them, they were saved by two men who were passing by.

In the village of Korito, they attacked a Serb; in a village of Desetak, they stole five horses that belonged to (...) from the same village.

From Simona, a widow in Kamenica, they stole three bulls; from Stojana, widow from the same village, four bulls; from Ilija in Meki Do 20 goats; from Milun in Kamenica, they took all his property away.

On 23rd of the previous month, a Muhamed Mustafić from Mitrovica entered the inn of Laza Velešanac and, having got himself drunk heavy, he unclogged the barrel and let all his *rakija* (brandy) leak out. He beat Laza and his errand boy fiercely. Laza went to Kajmakam to complain, and for a string agitation he got brain stroke and passed out.

Isa Boletini is constantly making Serbs work for free and the informant says that the scale of terror in Mitrovica is unheard of and beyond description.

VI. *In the District of Peć*
In the night of September 15th of the current year, Albanians attacked and killed Vučko Milošević, an inn-keeper from Peć and took his errand-boy Perko Herković with them. Perko was released by the mother of some of those villains, so he returned home.

The informant says that Adem Zajim, the notorious villain, is constantly keeping the road from Peć to Djakovica and Prizren blocked. In the beginning of the previous month, he attacked hodmen from Mitrovica and took their seven pair of buffalos, two bulls, several boxes of gas and sugar and two "Martin" rifles. Jaća Zdravković, guarantor of Vasilije Šotić, gave Adem 15 lires of fine and settled the matter with him. This was mentioned in the previous report. The same guy exacted the 150 liras fine for Serbs only.

The villagers of Grabnik, Dolac and Drenik are groaning with pain of terror.

On September 14th, Tafil Šaban Kajtasović from the village of Kijevo, abducted the daughter of Zdravko Belić from the same village, and upon the girl's shrieking and bemoaning, Tafil Uka from the same village took and handed her over to her father. Now Kajtasović is threatening Zdravko with murder unless he delivers her.

VII. *In the Novi Pazar Sanjak*
Unknown Turks have stolen: 2 bulls from Aksentije in Letovac, a cow from Mladja in Dubrava, 3 bulls from Rista in Plakaonica, 4 horses from Jablan in Mošnice, 5 horses from Vukman in Leposlavljevići, 1 horse and 1 bull from Miladin in Desetak, 2 horses from Aksentić in Desetak and also 2 horses from Dobrica in Kruševo. Šaqir Grbović from Novi Pazar blackmailed priest Andjelko Krsmanović out of 10 lires of fine.

VIII. *In the District of Gnjilane*
On the eve of the Holy Assumption, unknown Albanians stole two bulls from Mita Djelić in Ajnovac; two mares and a bee-hive from Dena in Merošina; in Kostirevo the local Albanians took all the property from Trajko Marković from Kostanca and they also robbed everything from Arsa N. in Mačar. From Ćela Barilović in the same village they stole two bulls.

Omer from Priština stabbed Mitko from Gogovac, and against Zafir Stojiljković from the same village he rattled his rifle three times to kill him, but it wouldn't fire, so he ran away. All this for no reason whatsoever.

From Marija in Rajanovac Albanians stole two bulls a month ago. From Kaca in Izvor, ten days ago, they stole two bulls worth 12 Turkish lira.

Two months ago, Isllam, Albanian from Kosovac, targeted three times with a rifle a Serb from Boljevac, but luckily he did not shoot him. 6 days after, he grabbed his wife, imposed Turkish faith on her and married her. The little child stayed with its father.

On August 14th this year, Albanians killed Anta Arsić from Mošnice; on 2 August they stole two bulls from Sava Šumaković in Triniševac.

All this has been submitted. And there is much more that has not been submitted. The authorities turn a blind eye to this terror. The ever more frequent terror against Serbs must have been instigated by a powerful factor.

A copy has been sent to the Legation in Constantinople.

I am honoured to be called your servant.

Archives of Serbia, Ministry of foreign affairs, Belgrade, Legation at Constantinople, folder 93.

DECOMMISSIONING THE WEAPONS IN IBARSKI KOLAŠIN

Consul Sima Avramović to Dr. Mihailo Vujić, President of the Ministerial Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Confidential, № 195 Priština, July 8th/21th, 1901

(...) With my encrypted cable, on the 3rd this month, I reported that Yildiz (Sultan's palace) sent a note to the gathered Albanians imploring them to leave and not to strike Kolašin, and he would order the Army to go there and have another raid. It was only necessary that I leave Mitrovica to execute it. Now that I have received your report, and in order not to wait for Mr. Mashkov to come to Mitrovica, I am back in Priština upon Mr. Nastasijević's previously agreed hint.

On the same morning, on July 3rd, when I was leading for Priština, at the behest of the authorities and upon the proposal of Priština's Mutesarif and Hamdi-Pasha, who had been in Priština a few days before, the infamous Isa Boletini was sent, Albanian fis (tribal) chieftain Shalla in the quest of weapons. He got 30 soldiers from regular troops and a Binbashi, to whom he added his 30 Albanians and a squad of zaptiahs (policemen) with their Yuzbasi (commander) Redžep-Aga. So, the authorities entrusted such a sensitive operation to an Albanian chieftain, who has until recently been an outlaw and bandit, as he recently killed the Emperor's captain and gendarm who attacked his tower couple of years ago. And to this outlaw, who has never been punished for murders of so many Turks, the authorities are now conferring both the Emperor's regular Army and the gendarms with their officers, under full control and power, to beat Serbs up and to decommission their weapons. When it is against Serbs, even such Albanians come in handy to Turks!

And while the Vali of Kosovo was telling Mr. Mashkov that Isa was sent with his army to *protect* the Christian population, Priština's Mutesarif told Mr. Mashkov in Mitrovica that Isa was sent *only to show the way to the army*!

As you know from the reports of my predecessors and mine too, Isa was known as a friend and protector of the Serbian population in the district of Mitrovica. However, he only protected Serbs while he needed them, and he needed them as long as he was a *kaçak* (outlaw) and in the authorities' bad books. He aspired to win the benevolence of Serbia and Russia through Christians, in order to get their protection, which is exactly what happened. Now that he is on good terms with Turkish authorities and that everything is forgiven to him, he wants to pass himself off as a good Turk too, mostly because his foes (and he has got so many of those!) suspected him of being Serbian and thus a traitor of the Empire! The same thing that Isa had desired to achieve through Serbs and Serbian King in Constantinople, to become a Zaptiahs' Yuzbasi (captain), he now realised he can have thanks to the Emperor's men themselves. That rank was promised to him by Hamdi-Pasha himself, when he was in Mitrovica, only to motivate them to turn against Serbs. Hence he has become thus arrogant toward Serbs. In order to confirm and attest to his loyalty to the Emperor as well as his hatred toward the Serbs, he insisted on going to Kolašin swearing on his own life that he would find plenty of rifles and thus humiliate

Archmandrite Miron, Patriarchate of Peć, 1909, Historical Archives, Belgrade

Shemsi-pasha who was in quest for weapons but found nothing as well as police commander (bimbasha) who could only find a couple of rifles. It was easy for him to claim this as he was previously well acquainted with the information who of the Serbs had received the weapons on our border. He continued his correspondence with Aleksa Bogosavljević-Kelški and the Serbs, especially with villagers from the Mitrovica district, who did not conceal from him that they had been supplied with rifles from Serbia which he had, as their friend, approved.

Isa could not have found better opportunity to ingratiate himself with Turks and thus he did his best to use the situation to his advantage to the fullest. As the saying goes: "Turks are men of fickle faith". However, in spite of this he was resolute being encouraged by promises of Hamdi-pasha, the mutesarif Ismail-bey and Mufti of Priština, who wanted to prove to the whole world, on behalf of the Turksih side, that Serbia was furnishing Christian population on the border with arms for the purspose of uprising and in this way they intended to justify all the attacks and reprisals on the border executed by the Turkish authorities as well as the terror and atrocities inflicted by Albanians upon the Ottoman Serbs.

Isa, accompanied by soldiers and zaptiahs (police officers) additionally assigned to him, started to conduct an investigation and search first in Serbian villages. He would apply the following procedure: As soon as he arrived in a village, he would ask a serf whether they had guns. If the latter would not admit, Isa's soldiers would knock him down on the ground and while two soldiers were holding him, other two would brutally beat him up with a stake until he totally lost consciousness. If he would still not admit, then they would tie him thus battered for a tree pointing guns at him and threatening to kill him. Apart for heads of villages, Isa would brutally beat up those for whom he knew that they had guns. While he was comitting these brutalitities, the soldiers and policemen (zaptiahs) were present letting Isa do whatever he wanted as they had been put under his command.

In this manner, he managed to collect up to 30 rifles from different sources of supply (which means that not all the rifles were delivered from Serbia!) delivered to the Serbs in the villages of the Mitrovica District. He conducted his search in the following villages: Sendon, Doljane, Rujište, Padine, Jagnjenica, Žeravica, Vojmisliće, Matica, Lokva, Lovac, Banjištanska Reka, Kozarevo, Kobilja Glava and Vrba.

In the village of *Doljane*, he found 2 Martin rifles beating up to death a serf named Vukadin Marković.

In *Sendol*, he beat up Žarko Jović's son finiding one Martin rifle.

In *Rujište*, he found two Martin rifles having brutally beaten up Bogosav Radojković, a serf and Kosta Radojković.

In *Jagnjenica*, he beat up Pavle Radenković and David Bogosavljević, leaving Pavle half-dead.

In *Ladike*, he beat Tomica Radojković, Lara N. and Miloš Stevanović finding 10 rifles there.

In *Kobilja Glava*, having beaten up a serf and a couple of villagers, he could barely find a few rifles.

In *Vrba*, he beat up Trajko Mićanović and found 2 rifles.

In *Kozarevo*, he beat up a couple of peasants finding no weapons.

In *Vojmislić*, he also beat up people finding only a few rifles.

In *Banjištinska Reka*, he brutally beat up a certain Vučin N. but found no rifles.

While he was searching for weapons in the villages of the Mitrovica area beating up Serbs to coerce their false confessions about where they were allegedly hiding rifles, the Albanians for their own purposes invaded Kolašin without him and tortured the villagers to betray where they were hiding the weapons. Together with Albanian outlaws under the command of Mihrak and Beram from the village of Košutovo (the latter had ambushed and attacked, accompanied by his gang of thugs, First priest Vukajlo) struck the villages *Ugljare and Varage* beating and tying up villagers while seeking for the rifles and assaulting the females, so that the wretched people were forced to flee to the gorge to escape this unheard of violence.

A certain Arif, an Albanian from Banjska, accompanied by his gang, struck again Lučka Reka and in all the villages of that area he persecuted, tortured, tied up and beat Serbian peasants.

In the village of *Junake*, Adem Čauš from Novi Pazar, beat up to death Milovan Miletić seizing from him two Martin rifles.

In the district of Brnjak, in Kolašin, there is a monastery named Crna Reka whose patron saint's day is celebrated on St. Demetrius's Day. On the feast day, Ferat-bey, son of Ali-Draga-pasha from Mitrovica and Abdul Amzović, Albanian chieftain from Ribari, accompanied by 50–60 armed Albanians stormed the monastery. They occupied the monastery, ate and drank to one's heart content threatening to and attacking Serbian peasants. When a priest named Pavle Stakić confronted them in order to protect the peasants, the Albanians tied him up, beat him and tortured him putting rifle pipe into his mouth threatening to kill him. Priest Pavle barely got released that day after much entreating and imploring on his behalf by the present peasants and he escaped to Novi Pazar leaving behind an abandoned parish hall and a church without a priest.

Having completed his mission in such a brutal manner, Isa Boletini was on his way to Kolašin.

He arrived in Kolašin on the morning of July 5th commenicing with his investigation in the village of Lučka-Reka where he committed the same bestialities as in the villages of the Mitrovica District. As soon as Serbian population in Kolašin heard that Isa was coming with the army, they immediately fled to the mountain preferring even to commit suicide rather than to be shamefully beaten up with poles by Isa's terror-mongers.

While that was happening, the messengers from Kolašin reached Mr. Mashkov and me in Mitrovica asking whether they could resist Isa with arms and prevent the search in Kolašin with rifle fire. Had Isa attacked Kolašin acting in his own behalf or together with Albanians, they would have certaintly resisted him with arms without asking for permission but the problem here was that Isa was coming as a "man of the Empire" accompanied by soldiers and policemen. Turks would hardly wait our resistance to showcase how Serbia furnished Kolašin Serbs with weapons for the purpose of revolutionray movement. Its aftermath would be ruthless destruction of Kolašin. Therefore, Mr Mashkov and I advised the Kolašin Serbs to refrain from armed resistance but to hide the weapons properly. However, they had all already fled to the mountain. Only women, children and the infirm elderly remained in the villages.

As soon as we arrived in Mitrovica and heard of Isa's misdeeds in that area, Mr. Mashkov demanded from the Mutesarif, during his first visit to him, that Isa be withdrawn. Djemal-bey, fabricating an explanation that Isa was sent there only to show the way to the army (!) promised Mr. Mashkov that he would order Isa to come back…

Rumour had it in Mitrovica that Isa retorted to the recall that he would not come back until he performed memorable wonders in Kolašin even if Russian Emperor himself had come instead of his consul.

Mr. Mashkov immediately telegraphed this to the Russian Embassy in Constantinople which was definitely the reason, together with his reports on the pitiable position of the Serbs, why Muri-pasha came to Mitrovica the following day as an envoy of the Sultan to put an end to this evil.

Informing the Embassy about his arrival, Mr. Mashkov humorously observed that the only flaw of this envoy was that he was a cousin of the Priština Mutesarif Džemal-bey! However, Isa triumphantly returned on the same day (July 5), in the morning, accompanied by his ethnic Albanians (Arbanases), carrying the seized rifles as his trophies. The army and police stayed in the ransacked Kolašin.

Isa brought approximately thirty rifles of different calibres, some of which were, by all odds, planted on the Serbs. He loaded the pack-saddle on a horse with the rifles taking the horse through the center of the town and directly before the army barracks where the Mutesarif, Mufti and the army-commander Sali-pasha had been waiting together with some office workers.

No sooner did we start to rejoice as the people in Kolašin could finally sigh with relief and return to their homes be-

lieving than Isa would not come back anymore, than the Mutesarif visitied Mr. Mashkov asking his *permission* (?) for Isa's return and his going back to Kolašin in order to resume his search for rifles as he was claiming that there were 150–200 more rifles hidden!

Surprised at this request, Mr. Mashkov replied to Djemal-bey that he had no rights whatsoever to give or not to give permission for such a thing as he was not a mutesarif but if they asked his opinion, he would advise and *entreat* them not to allow Isa to return to Kolašin anymore after all the violence he had committed there...

To this the Mutesarif replied, trying to protect Isa, that Isa did nothing improper but Mr. Mashkov interrupted him saying that he was detailedly informed about all the violence and atrocities perpetrated by Isa, thus silencing the Mutesarif who could no longer deny it. The Mutesarif promised that Isa would be sent to Kolašin but that he woul be allowed to stay there only three days and that he would not commit any violence.

"If Isa does not go to Kolašin now, the Albanians could rebel and strike the town thinking that we have given up the intended quest for weapons in Kolašin under foreign pressure", said the Mutesarif.

Mr. Mashkov insisted that he was not entitled to grant any permission whatsoever for something like that but that he was kindly asking them not to send Isa back to Kolašin.

On the question of the Russian Consul why Serbs do not have right to carry weapons while all Albanians, in this state of general insecurity, are allowed to carry guns overtly being condoned by the authorities, the Mutesarif answered that neither he nor the High Porte has anything against if Christians as well possessed weapons (!) but they could not allow that Serbia, as a foreign country, was arming their subordinate citizens and that they wanted to prevent that.

As the evidence that Serbia was supplying the population of Kolašin with arms, Djemal-bey produced one Turkish Martin-type rifle which had Arabic numbers on its visor while the rifles belonging to the Empire had Turkish numbers; this was because, said he, Serbs found those rifles in occupied Niš and changed the visors!

I don't know if this is the truth but knowing this malicious, vile and fanatical companion of Mufti's, I tend to believe that this is a lie.

To justify the mayhem and violence inflicted upon Kolašin, Hamdi-pasha, Mutesarif and Mufti needed to find guns from Serbia and Isa's method proved successful in finishing the commenced action. In order to improve Isa's quest, the authorities invited Keća, zaptiah's chaush and long-time guard of Kolašin, and priest Arsenije Matović, representative of prince and governor of Kolašin to Priština thus depriving Kolašin of its leaders.

Zaptiahs' commander fiercely attacked and criticized Keća chaush, accusing him of being a traitor to the Empire as he allegedly knew that there were rifles from Serbia in Kolašin but did not want to report that to the authorities!

At my request, Mr. Mashkov telegraphed to the Embassy urging them to demand that Keća and priest Arsenije be returned to Kolašin as soon as possible. Isa Boletini was especially furious at these two. He threatened he would burn them alive when he caught them. Scared for the lives of these two, the Turks had them evacuated evidently feeling pity for them!

Serbian Priests in Peć serve the funeral above the beheaded Serbian Josa Radić from Šekular village, whom the ethnic Albanians from Rugova killed; they played with his head for two days on the village streets, after which the priests were able to propitiate for its funeral

When I have recently sent a kavaz to Mitrovica, Isa told me that Father Vukajlo Božović was the leader of the Kolašin Serbs and that he was distributing rifles to them and that he would have skinned him alive if he could catch him.

As I informed You in my coded telegram dated 7th this month, Mr. Mashkov is determined to personally visit the villages in the region of Mitrovica and investigate the atrocities commited by Isa Boletini. From there he will proceed to Kolašin and then to Novi Pazar. I urged him, and this time encouraged him, to definitely do such a thing this time.

I was willing to accompany him on this trip, but he asked me not to do it in spite of the fact that I would be very helpful to him. The reason was that he had been instructed to avoid all foreign agents and taking joint steps with them.

As You instructed me to travel with Mr. Mashkov if he did not object to it, I returned to Priština to inform You of the development of the situation in Kolašin.

It was sufficient that Mr. Mashkov and I appeared together in Mitrovica spending three days there. It had a strong impact on our compatriots in Mitrovica which instantaneously reverberated through the entire province of Kosovo and districts of Mitrovica and Kolašin. And while the Turks were confused, our compatriots regained their composure, the panic giving way to self-confidence and hope. There was powerful Russia standing behind Serbia and both countries were taking an interest in poor Serbs and their plight in Kosovo and they were willing to defend them from terror-mongers—this was met with loud acclamation over the hills and valleys of the sorrowful Old Serbia, revivifying it and restoring its smothered life.

Serb festivities in Visoki Dečani on the Feast of Dormition

The special unit of nizams (Ottoman soldiers) in front of the Monastery of Visoki Dečani

The visit of the Russian consul from Prizren to the Visoki Dečani Monastery was secured from Albanian outlaws by the special Ottoman units—nizams

The attitude of Mr. Mashkov was fraternal indeed and his intercession on behalf of the Serbs as well as his encouragement and support are really worthy of praise and of our acknowledgement [...]

AS, MFA, Political and Educational Affairs, 1901, f-1

THE UNBEARABLE POSITION OF KOSOVO SERBS

Dr. Mih. Vujić, President of the Ministerial Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Stojan Novaković, Minister to Sankt Petersburg

Political and Educational Affairs, № 3027

Belgrade, August 16th/29th, 1902

Since spring this year, terror in Old Serbia has assumed such proportions that the life of our compatriots has become desperate and insufferable. Not a single day can pass without the Ministry receiving reports from various parts of Old Serbia on most abominable and atrocious crimes. It is typical that this year, more than ever, Albanians are targetting the honor and integrity of Serbian women and girls. And it is even more symptomatic that Albanians—an example occurring seldom amongst the chronicles of Albanian crimes before—are striking at Serbian sanctuaries, churches and monasteries. Turkish authorities have demonstrated an utter indifference to Serbian complaints. There have even been cases of plaintiffs brought to court and severely punished for complaining against bogusly innocent people. If there has ever been an investigation, it was conducted and procrastinated in such a way that all substantial evidence finally disappeared or the accused escaped or the authorities exerted pressure on the plaintiff to drop the charges. So, it is natural that such an attitude of Turkish authorities—which is nothing but complicity in all the crimes of Albanian of terrorists—encouraged not only the known criminals but also ordinary Albanians to perpetrate crimes in the light of day in all parts of Old Serbia, in towns and villages. For instance, I will mention the fact that in the past twenty days three respectable Serbs have been murdered: Tasa Jović from Dragovac, some Pašković guy from nearby Mitrovica and Anta Jeličić, a serf from Novi Pazar municipality.

The complaints and grievance of the population that is starting a massive exodus to Serbia have now assumed quite a categorical nature. It openly gets across the message that the situation in Old Serbia is untenable and, should it go on like this for a while, without us standing up for them, all the remaining people will have to embrace another religion, meaning Turkish or Catholic, as these two are spared the Albanian wantonness for well known reasons. According to the assurances of our Consule in Priština, Rector of Theological Faculty and customs officers at the Javor and Raška, the local population is determined to free themselves of the unbearable situation at all costs (...)

THE DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE OF THE KINGDOM OF SERBIA I, 1933, pp. 272–273

NEW INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCEY IN GNJILANE, THE PROTEST OF THE SERBIAN GOVERNMENT PROTESTED

Vasa Antonić, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Sava Grujić, Minister to Constantinople

Political and Educational
Affairs № 4048

Belgrade,
October 16th/29th, 1902

Although the competent authorities in Porte and Yildiz appear to be willing to meet the requests presented by my predecessor in the PEA №3051, the reports sent by the Priština Consulate show not only that the situation in Old Srbia is not getting any better, but moreover that the circumstances are deteriorating and ever more insupportable. Just about the same time when Shemsi-Pasha was after the followers of Mustafa-Aga in Drenica, in Gnjilane and its vicinity events were taking place that inspired the local population with fear and horror. Interestingly, fights and murders take place in Gnjilane in the midst of day, while Albanian terrorists are being chased around Mitrovica! And this circumstance becomes peculiar in those parts given one more fact: only one attempt to use of the Army against Albanians, without any conflicts or bloody consequences, was enough to scare the notorious Drenica Albanians and to make them succumb and pay taxes regularly, which they had not done in twenty years, from the time they demolished a building of the court council built in their community and repelled the envoyed Turkish clerks. This is to show that it would not be difficult or dangerous to make them subordinate to the laws and authorities, if only those in Constantinople really wanted this. Now that the infamous Isa Boletini has brought himself to declare obedience to Shemsi-Pasha on this occasion, you can imagine what it would take for less important and less audacious Albanians, who are arrogant in crimes against Serbs only because they are condoned, so a feeling that they are allowed to exterminate the Christian population. If only the authorities were in place in this case, fatal events known to you would not have happened, the most conspicuous being the murder of Nikola Djordjević, the best, most corageous and most honest Serb, a long-standing member of the local community.

From the report of the Serbian Consulate in Priština, you are familiar with all the details preceding and during this murder. Due to them, fear and panic have overwhelmed our compatriots in Gnjilane and the surroundings. As early as the day after Nikola's murder, Serbs shut down their stores for protest and selected a delegation of six most respected amongst them to furtively go to Skoplje via Bujanovac, to complain directly to the vali (main governor of vilayet of Kosovo) against the Albanian terrror and the kaimekam (administrator) Gemal-Bey who is their instigator, who has so far stood out as declared enemy of everything that is Serbian. Members of this delegation, that arrived exactly when the Vali was about to leave for Branja, also went to see the Russian Consule, Mr. Mashkov, who cordially welcomed them and as they spoke sent a detailed note to his Embassy about the situation in Gnjilane. The delegation waited in Skoplje for the return of the vali, who received them very abruptly, malcontent with the text of their complaint submitted. He advised them to go back home and reopen their stores, and he would—he promised—send his officer to see how the land lay. And so the delegation returned to Gnjilane, and two days after a judge from Priština came to investigate. However, as I was informed by one of the delegation members who went to Belgrade to seek protection there, this judge never asked to see any Serb. Even worse, the murderers, although known to evreybody, freely walk the town of Gnjilane, to the horror of desolate Serbs, who righteously fear they might end up like the late Nikola Djordjević. Instead of the murderers, four innocent Albanians were detained, only to be more easily released, and four Serbs whose grounds for imprisonment are being fabricated, to be used to declare them guilty in any case.

After the murder of N. Djordjević, soldiers carried on terrorising Serbs: they beat up Klepadin Dženetović, a grocer, Pera Todorović, a rope maker; they were chasing Dušan Ganić and Toma Popović, and they are vociferously threating to kill: Vasiljko, Tinka Katanić, Nasko Jovanović, merchants, and Trajko Kovačević, school principal in Gnjilane.

Influenced by the fear that has thus overwhelmed Gnjilane, Sava Katanić with his family escaped to Vranje, and Mita Ascepović is also biding his time for escape. Fear on one hand, and such examples on the other, have an effect of contagion, so many Serbs are getting ready to escape to Serbia. And that was exactly the goal of these events, caused and done by a plan. So, the experience of Mitrovica is in store for Gnjilane, until recently free from Albanian terror. After this, Serbs are not likely to ever hold their heads up, unless energetic action is taken to hinder this terror, which could not have happened in the first place without the favouring of authority representatives in Gnjilane.

Mr. Minister, you are familiar, from PEA №3027 and 3051, with the motives that made Mr.Vujić recommend that you take energetic action to draw the attention of the Sublime Porte to all the material and moral plight that the events that happen in the Kingdom expose the Royal Government to vis-a-vis the Turkish neighborhood, so I deem it unnecessary to familiarise you with all the unpleasantries the Government faces due to this anarchy, precisely at the time when in certain parts of Macedonia war is being waged between the regular Ottoman Army and Bulgarian troops supported by numerous peasants. Indifference would be more than a gross error in this case, it would be an unpardonable sin which we, taking heed of the future of our people, must not receive upon our souls.

The events in Gnjilane, by ways and forms and time in which they take place, are very symptomatic and characteristic of the Ottoman attitude toward Serbian people and Serbia, so they can serve as a good test of sincerity of statements given to you by Tahsin-Bey, on behalf of the Sultan himself, as you cared to inform me in your letter P.P. №1065. If these statements are distinguished from others by sincerity, then it should not be hard for you to convince the Sublime Porte and other competent factors that such an anarchy is dangerous for well understood interests, given the attention in Europe drawn to the poor condition in the Ottoman Empire. And precisely because the Royal Government is committed

to maintenance of good neighbourly relations with the Ottoman Empire, it is fully entitled to demand from the Sublime Porte measures that will efficiently put an end to this anarchy in Old Serbia and, especially, in Gnjilane, wherefrom most those who seek refuge and substantive assistance in Serbia come, due to the terror. So, not only do they expose us to great material losses, but in its form and appearance, this is a rebuttal for all the friends of good neighborly relations with Turkey and they give rise to resentment in public opinion, which is very hard to resist for the Royal Government. (...)

THE DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE OF THE KINGDOM OF SERBIA I, pp. 317–320

THE DISSATISFACTION OF THE SERBIAN GOVERNMENT WITH THE OTTOMAN INTERVENTION IN KOSOVO

Sima Lozanić, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Milosav Kurtović, Serbian Consul in Skoplje

Political and Educational
Affairs № 203

Belgrade,
January 19th/February 1st, 1903

It is with genuine interest that I followed your reports on the work of Hilmi-Pasha, inspector for Rumeli (Western) provinces of the European Turkey. We cannot be satisfied with his work or with the measures he takes either. His work is focused only on one part of Kosovo province and that being the one that reforms are relatively less needed than in other parts. The main ailment of the Rumeli areas are the Albanian anarchy and the terror of Muslims. That evil is the strongest around the Kacanik area, in Kosovo and around it. So, it would only be natural, if one truly wants to exterminate evil, to start there. Once order is restored there and the Christian element freed from terror and terrorists, then one can move on with other parts of the Empire. This would be not only natural, but also needed, fair, wise and political. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Hilmi Pasha ordered that in the provinces outlaws should be caught, as well as army deserters, unpunished thieves and offenders. The best way to illustrate his proceedings is the capture of the two exhausted old outlaws that others had to take down from their horses when they were brought to the court council (hucumat). While this is being done, reports are coming to me about the terrors perpetrated by Turks and Albanians against Serbs from the other side of the Šara Mountain. For instance, from Novi Pazar, I get information that 1) the Askeri (imperial army) cross the routes of people, stop them and take all they have from them, like a real army; 2) that a certain Abodin Aliasović stormed into a Serbian school in Vračevi and beat the children out of school; 3) in the village of Opavo Turks from Vučja Lokva village exhumated the dead body of Melentije Cepija, plucked both his eyes out and left him by the grave like that; 4) some unknown Turks dug out the dead Borisav Popović in Novi Pazar cemetery and mutilated him heavily; 5) Mujčinović, a well known Novi Pazar's villain, is terrorizing Novi Pazar and its neighbourhood. Further on, Askeri on the way Javor-Nova Varoš-Priboj, steal anything they come across, take away, rape in Serbian villages; the peasants complain, but the authorities do not proceed with the cases, punishing the peasants for false accusations against the Empire's soldiers instead. In the villages of Novi Pazar's Sandžak, toll collectors are plundering and fleecing the already impoverished people. From the area arond Prizren, delegations keep coming here and claiming that they cannot stand the violence of Albanians and Turks any longer. Similar messages come from the area of Gnjilane, and from Peć too. We should bear in mind that this is happening in the midst of winter, so what can we expect when spring comes? Moreover, the perpetrators of such misdeeds are freely and with impunity strolling the places where they have committed such evils. Mujčinović, the murderer of Anta Jeličić in Novi Pazar, Ferat-Agic in Mitrovica, Fejzul-Aga in Vučitrn, son of Rustem Kabas in Prizren, the known murderer of Nikolče Djordjević in Gnjilane, Sait-Aga in Gnjilane, Islam in Djerkar, etc.

Petar Kostić, Serbian writer and national activist in 19th and early 20th century.

From the above described, it is clear that we could believe in the genuine commitment of Turks to improve the position of their Christian subjects in Old Serbia and Macedonia only when they curb the the bloody violence of Albanians and Turks and when the perpetrators of this terror, as well as many other terrorists, are subjected to serious and severe punishment. Therefore I would kindly ask you, Mr. Consul, on the occasion of your first meeting with Hilmi-Pasha, to demand investigation and prosecution against all the terrorists, in particular: the Mujčinović brothers from Novi Pazar, Ferat-Agiq from Mitrovica, Fejzulović from Vu-

čitrn, the murderer of Nikolče Djordjević, Isa Boletini and the son of Rustem Kabash in Prizren. You shall inform him that we cannot take seriuosly the implementation of measures ordered to him from Constantinople, as long as these criminals are not punished accordingly. You shall also tell him that the Royal Government finds it difficult to watch Serbian families flee the terror across the border with Serbia on a daily basis, and doing nothing to countervail the evil, which can only be detrimental to Turkey. Detrimental to Turkey because it will only solidify the already entrenched belief that it is only with separation of Old Serbia and Macedonia from Turkey that the position of Christians in those areas can be improved.

By the way, you can also emphasise to Hilmi-Pasha that in the province of Kosovo, the terror is mainly perpetrated by the most distinguished Turks and Albanians. The Mufti of Priština, Zeynel-Aga Šišković from Vučitrn, Ramiz-Aga and Sherif-Effendi from Prizren, Zeynel-Aga from Peć, Riza-Bey from Djakovica, Sait-Aga from Gnjilane, the spiritual champions of many evils against Serbs, have made the representatives of Ottoman authorities blind executors of their malefactors' desires and caprice. There has not been an instance of terror in the last two years without the involvement of these champions. Removing their influence on the authorities would mean nipping in the bud the actual anarchy that has overcome Old Serbia, meaning order, peaceful development and perpetuation of Old Serbia within the Ottoman boundaries, and, ultimately, the possibility to maintain proper relations between Serbia and Turkey.

THE DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE OF THE KINGDOM OF SERBIA I, pp. 451–452

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ATTACK ON THE PATRIARCHATE OF PEĆ

Hieromonk Sava Popović—to the Metropolitan Nićifor of Raška and Prizren

Peć, February 15th/28th,1904

Your Eminence,

Kindly receive my report that a large group of Albanians from the Rugova Gorge surrounded the Monastery of the Holy Patriarchate of Peć and forcefully and without any fear invaded the Monastery jumping over the monastery walls. Their attack was horrible and dangerous both for the monastery and for the brethren for there were no armed men in the monastery except for two guards (zaptiahs). It was impossible to shoot at the Albanians, especially because they could have torched the monastery and slain and robbed everyone inside the monastery walls for they came in large number—between 500–600 men.

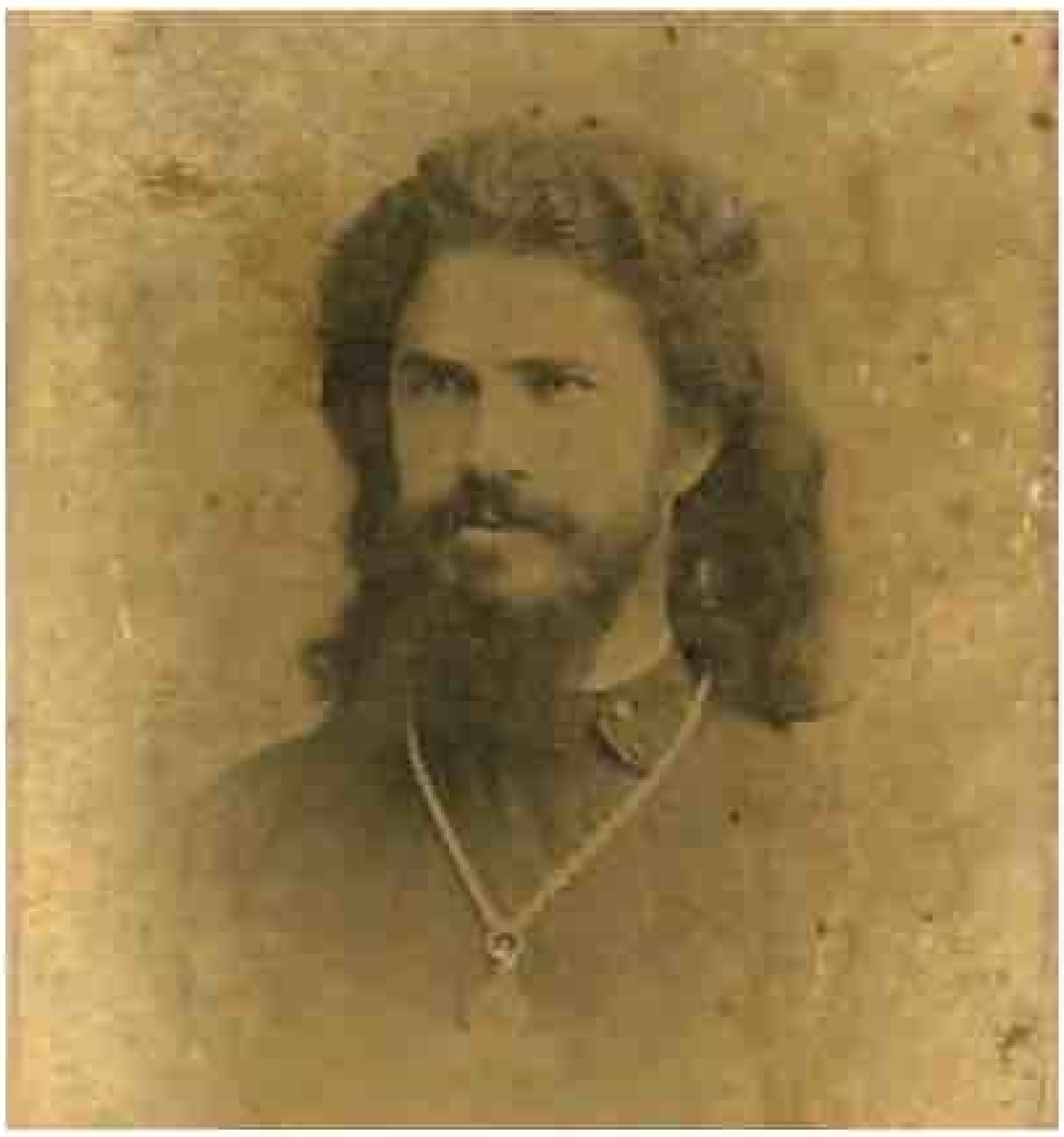
When they completed their operation having occupied the old hospices, the brethren consulted among themselves on the next step and we all agreed to leave the monastery in a peaceful manner and that is exactly what we did. It was impossible for us to meet their demands. They demanded even the things which the monastery did not possess uttering death threats to the brethren and to everyone in the monastery so that I, together with the brethren, had to leave the monastery during the night—around 5 a.m. and to inform the police about the attack, but, as there were no soldiers in Peć, the police was powerless and unable to take any action until the army from Djakovica arrived—which happened only after the Rugova Albanians inflicted enormous damage on the monastery in the course of two or three nights. They did not touch the church for it had been locked.

At the request of the local Mutesarif, I submitted a report to the Court wherein I focused on the attack perpetrated and the damage inflicted on the monastery by the Rugova Albanians. In the report, I stated that the value of the damage amounted to 2,500 groschen.

Nevertheless, it still remains to be seen whether this indemnity will be paid to the monastery. For the time being, it is peaceful in and around the monastery. The army has set up 8 military camps and it is believed that the monastery is safe and that there are no reasons for fear.

Kissing Your right hand,
Your Eminence's humblest spiritual child
Temporary head of the Monastery
of the Holy Patriarchate of Peć
Hieromonk Sava Popović (with his own hand)
In the Monastery of the Holy Patriarchate of Peć
on February 15th/28th 1904

Archive of Serbia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Politics and Education, 1904, row 104



Fr. Stevan Dimitrijević, the rector of the Seminary in Prizren, the first dean of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of the University of Belgrade, and a member of the Institute for history of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

A LIST OF CRIMES PERPETRATED AGAINST SERBS IN THE REGION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE ROYAL SERBIAN CONSULATE IN PRIŠTINA FROM JANUARY 1 1904 TILL THE END OF DECEMBER 1905, MADE PURSUANT TO THE ACT OF THE ROYAL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DATED 28/03/ Nσ. 1293

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
1	January 1, 1904	Stojan Maksimović	Sirinićska Župa, Village of Štrpce	Štrpce Village	Beba N. Arnautin	kaçak, outlaw, residence unknown	hatred	Wounded in the arm
2	January 19	Ćora Marković	District/Kaza of Vučitrn, Prilužje Village	In the wood near the Village of Prilužje	Mehmed, son of Shaban Hoxha	District of Vučitrn, Village of Beočug	revenge	Mehmed wounded Ćora's arm with an axe
3	January	Simeon Stogić	District of Gnjilane, Boljevac Village	Village of Boljevac	Halid Saitović	District of Gnjilane, Village of Makreš	profit-seeking	Saitović stole 60 lakats [1 lakat=44,50 cm] of cloth and 30 groschen from Stogić
4	January	Arsa N.'s wife and daughter-in-law	District of Gnjilane, Village of Kamenica	Village of Kamenica	Šaqir Koprana	District of Gnjilane, v. Robovce	revenge	The Albanian beat them up
5	February 9	Monastery of the Patriarchate of Peć	Monastery	Monastery	500 Albanians from Rugovac	Rugovac	greed	They plundered the spoil in the amount of 2,500 groschen
6	February	Inhabitants of the Village of Lukavca	Lukavca	Lukavca	Unindentified Albanians (Arnauts)	District of Peć	Ditto	They were blackmailed into paying 400 white mecidiyes [Turkish money, 1 mecidiye = 20 groschen]
7	February	Staniša Petković	District of Prizren, Ježica Village	On the road to Ferizović	Etša N.Arnautin	District of Prizren, the Village of Vlašina Bara	greed	Battered and robbed of 1 Turkish ducat and 10 charshija groschen
8	March 15	Three Serbs	District of Peć	Villages Sinaja and Nicha	Bajram Hadzija was a suspect	District of Peć	hatred	murdered
9	April 16	Ilija Gugić	District of Gnjilane, Ranilug Village	Ranilug Village	Two unknown assailants	unknown	unknown	murdered
10	April 16	Petar Binjčanin, a fieldworker	Livadje Village	Livadje Village	Rashid Kamberović	Livadje Village	revenge	murdered
11	April	Tasa Stanković	District of Gnjilane, Kololeč V.	Koprivnica Village	Hafe and Ajriz Suljiqi	District of Gnjilane, Bratilovia Village	hatred	murdered
12	April	Milan Mitić	Bujanovac Village	Bujanovac Village	Rahman Rahmanović with accomplices	Kaçaks, unknown	unknown	murdered
13	April	Stanko Ilić, a fieldworker	Čarakovice Village	Čarakovice Village	Balja Rahinović	Drmace Village	for being critized after having shooted in the Village	murdered
14	April	Govedara N.	Kololeč Village	Kololeč Village	same	Ditto	avarice	The Albanian tied him up rustling 4 of his oxen
15	April 23	Nikola Jović, a zaptiah [police officer]	Town of Peć	On his way to church	An Albanian (Arnaut) from Rugovac	Rugovac Village	hatred	murdered
16	May 10	Rista Denić	Paralovo Village	Paralovo Village	*The most infamous butcher of Serbs* Rashid Degelja	District of Gnjilane	revenge	Degelja abducted and then killed his daughter
17	May	Anta Ristič	Dobrotin Village	Dobrotin Village	Ismail Bashulja	Žegovce Village	profit-seeking	Bašulja imposed on him an illegal fine of 5 Turkish liras
18	May	Stevan Milenković	Koštanjevo Village	Fields of Koštanjevo Village	Arnauti N.	Koštanjevo Village	revenge	Milenković's watermill was burnt down
19	May	Rajko Živković	Mužičane Village	Mužičane Village	Salija and Mustafa Fetaović	Mužičane Village	hatred	They shot at him but missed
20	May	Nikola Čuljković	Bostane Village	Bostane Village	Unknown Albanians	unknown	greed	They torchured him inflicting burns on him to extort money
21	May	Stojan Filipović	Bušince Village	Bušince Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They fired at him but missed
22	May	Bojka Cvetković	Parteš Village	Parteš Village	Mustafa, servant of Reiz-effendi	District of Gnjilane	revenge	She died due to brutal torture
23	May	Nikola Djordjević	Grizina Village	Grizina Village	Hafz N.	Bratilovce Village	avarice	Hafz robbed him of 12 liras
24	May	Trajan Antić	Kololeč Village	In the wood of the village of Kololeč	Hafz and his gang	Ditto	Ditto	Antić was robbed of all his belongings and killed
25	May	Aksa Babić	Boca Village	In a field near the village of Boca	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Brutally battered
26	May	Arsa N.	Ferićaja Village	Ferićaja Village	Rahman Ralić and his accomplices	Kostanca Village	molesting, violence	They beat him up and fired at him
27	June	Brothers Todor and Mića Stojanović	District of Gnjilane	District of Gnjilane	Hafz N.	District of Gnjilane	avarice	Blackmailed into paying 25 liras
28	June	Jordan Stojković	Bušance Village	Bušance Village	Hamdija N.	Ditto	hatred	Hamdija shot at him but missed
29	June	Arsa Jović	Boca Village	In one of the fields of Boca Village	Unknown Albanians	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
30	June	Mitko Mladenović, a field-guard	Kamenica Village	Field of Kamenica Village	Unknown Albanians	Unknown	hatred	They fired at him but missed (his clothes being riddled with bullets)
31	June	Sava Maksimović	Town of Gnjilane	On the way to Gnjilane	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They beat him and robbed him of 150 groschen
32	June 26	Stojan Vasić	Ditto	Town of Gnjilane	Soldiers	unknown	greed	They demolished his hotel, robbed him of all his belongings and 12 liras
33	July 2	Sindja, wife of Stojan Milenković	Gnjilane	Near the town of Gnjilane	Five soldiers	Ditto	Lust and brutallity	She was brutally raped
34	Ditto	Kosta Andjelković and others	District of Mitrovića, Village of Kobilja Glava	On the road	Unknown	unknown	avarice	They stole 6 horses
35	July	Vasa Ristić	Vitinje Village	Vitinje Village	Meta Djakovac, a Caravanserai warden	Vitina Village	revenge	murder
36	July	Blagoje N.	District of Prizren, Raovce Village	In the wood the village of Raovce	Bahtijar Rokač	Kaçak- outlaw	Hatred and brutality	Rokač cut off Blagoje's ear
37	July	Rajko Krstić	District of Priština, Village of Dobrinje	Dobrinje Village	Unknown	unknown	greed	They stole his two oxen
38	July 18	Jelena, wife of Cvetko Kovačević	Vitina Village	on the road to the Village of Vrbovac	Gani Bakiq	Ljubižda Village	lust and brutality	The Albanian raped her in the presence of her husband
39	July 21	Stevan Joksimović	District of Priština, Village of Ugljare	Ugljare Village	Unknown	Unknown	avarice	They stole his two oxen
40	July 25	Milovan Dugančić	Peć District, Village of Kovraga	In the wood near the village of Lukavica	Unknown	unknown	hatred, revenge	Murdered
41	Ditto	MarkoDunić's wife	Podgorce Village	Podgorce Village	Gani Bakiq	Ljubižda Village	lust	Rape
42	July 31	Brothers Jovan and Mihajlo N.	District of Peć, Djurakovce Village	Kostur Village	Unknown	unknown	hatred	Murdered
43	August 1	Son of Laka Vukadinović	Peć District, Kostrec Village	Kostrec Village	Unknown	unknown	hatred, revenge	Murdered
44	August 3	Anta Ristić	Gnjilane District, Dobrotin Village	Dobrotin Village	Djelal Bašlja	Gnjilane District	avarice	Two oxen stolen
45	August 10	Trajko Bojković	Priština District, Đonja Gušćerica Vil.	Donja Gušćerica Village	Unknown Albanians	Kosina Village	hatred	They burnt down his hay inflicting damage in the value of 50 liras
46	August 11	Janja Mašić, his wife and his brother Paja	Peć District, Pogradja Village	Pogradja Village	Some Albanian settlers	Peć District, Pogradja Village	Malice, envy and revenge	Murdered
47	August 19	Vasa Aksić-Panićand his son Dušan	Gnjilane Town	Gnjilane Town	A soldier, son of Kasa, supplier of the Court	Gnjilane Town	Revenge	He shot at them 2–3 times but missed
48	August	Sava and Nikola Grandi	Ferizović	Ferizović	Unknown Albanians	Ferizović	Greed	They stole his horse.
49	August	Jerotije Blagojević	Kosina Village	In the field near Kosina Village	Ditto	Kosina Village	Ditto	They stole his two horses
50	August	Ica N	Peć District, Šaljinić Village	Šaljinić Village	Ditto	unknown	Hatred and revenge	They burnt down all of his movable and immovable property together with the stables; only the tower remained
51	August	Hadži Lazović	Peć District, Vrh Village	In the field near the village of Vrh	Unidentified Albanians	unknown	hatred and revenge	They burnt down all of his crops
52	Septem-ber 14	Luka Štević, Radoš Milić and Djordje Paljevac	Peć District, Bić Village	Bić Village	Sadik Ramović	Peć District, Djurdjevak Village	Ditto	Sadik torched their house
53	Septem-ber 16	Cvetko Stanković-Dojčinović	Prizren Town	Prizren Town	A Muslim priest (hodja) with 50 Turks	Prizren	hatred	Cvetko was brutally beaten up losing his three teeth and almost lost another three
54	Septem-ber	Rade Jovanović	Peć District	Peć District	Hasan Nekiq	Peć District, Prekale Village	hatred	Evicted from the estate; three of his family members having been killed and other three wounded *two years ago*
55	Septem-ber	Some Serbs	Podgori Village	Podgori Village	Sadik Shala, Nazir Abiduloviq and Delija Ševiq	Džakovo Village	avarice	The Albanians committed numerous and various sorts of thefts
56	Date unknown	In the vicinity of Ferizović	Serbs living in the vicinity of Ferizović	In the vicinity of Ferizović	Mehmed-Tahir	Ferizović and its environs	Avarice and revenge	Mehmed killed over 20 people stealing over 20 oxen and 100 sheep
57	Septem-ber	Sava Maksimović	Town of Gnjilane	Ferizović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Mehmed beat Sava in the center of the business area (Charshija)
58	October 5	Ilija Radić	Prizren District, Đelce Village	Delce Village	Jusuf Ukiq	unknown	Avarice	Jusuf stole his 70 sheep

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpretrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
59	October	Veta, daughter of Aleksa Pavić	Town of Gnjilane	Town of Gnjilane	Šipolja Alitoviq	Town of Gnjilane	lust	The Albanian raped Veta who is a seven-year-old girl!!!
60	October	Bogosav Krstić	Istok Village	Istok Village	Kamber Bakiq	Istok Village	Hatred and revenge	Bakić brutally beat him up
61	October 30	Inhabitants of Osojane	Village of Osojane, District of Peć	Osojane Village	Sadik Dobranac	Peć District	Profit-seeking	They were fleeced of 70 liras
62	October	Radivoj Djurišić	Peć District	Peć District	Dina Mulić Albanian	Peć District Sušica Village	avarice	He forcefully took his two oxen
63	October	Perišić	Kotar Village	Kotar Village	Smaja Sadiković	Sušica Village	revenge	Smaja beat him up
64	October	Risto Maksimović	Peć District	Peć District	Ismailović Redža Destanić	Istok Village, Sinaja Village	Ditto	Murdered
65	October	Son of Kosta Belić	Priština District, Dragovac Village	Dragovac Village	*The most infamous villain* Rašid-Degelja	Gnjilane District, Labljane Village	Blackmail	Rašid took him to the wood and blackmailed him out of 25 liras
66	October	Villagers	Letine Village, Priština District	Letina Village	Over 100 Circassians	Muar Village and Laletak Village	avarice	The Circassians forcefully seized their wood, robbed them of two ox-wagons and the oxen and beat them up
67	October	Stanoje Ilić and his son	Priština District, Vragolija Village	Vragolija Village	Sulja Muslić	Vragolija Village	Malice	Muslić and his accomplices beat them up for not allowing his cattle graze on their pasture
68	October	Trajko Nikić	Priština District, Livadje Village	Livadje Village	Unidentified Albanians	Livadje Village	Revenge	They fired over 100 shots at at his house but did not shoot him dead
69	October	Two sons of Ilija N.	Priština District, Letina Village	Letina Village	Sulejman, nephew of Zeqir Sedija	Drenica	avarice	Sulejman robbed them of their clothes and 2 oxen
70	October	Marko Vesić	unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Prizren District	avarice	They stole his two oxen
71	October	Three Serbs and one Serbain woman	Ditto	Gnjilane District, Morava	Hafz N.	unknown	revenge	Hafz killed them
72	October 30	Some Serbs	Prizren District, the village of Dulja above Suva Reka	Dulja Village	Unknown Albanians	Unknown	Avarice	The Albanians robbed them of two pairs of oxen
73	Reported in October	Seventy Serbs	from various villages	Various places	Sadik N.	Grabovnica Village	Blood-thirst	Sadik murdered 70 Serbs; time and duration of the crime being unknown
74	November 1	Milenko Stepanović	District of Peć, Verice Village	District of Peć	Fetah Fetahoviq	Verice Village	revenge	Fetahović fired at him with his rifle
75	November 5	Aksa Vuković	District of Peć,Tuče Village	Ditto	Sadik Dabranac	District of Peć, Jošanica Village	profit-seeking	Sadik took away his cow
76	November 10	Lazar Aksentijević	Vučitrn District, Vrljci Village	Vrljci Village	Unknown assailants	unknown	Revenge	They attacked him and torched his stable
77	November 2	Trajko Stepanović	Gnjilane District, D.Korminjak Village	D. Korminjak Village	*The notorious kaçak* Bislim and his gang	Gnjilane District	avarice	The Albanians stole his mare and colt
78	Ditto	Arsa Slavković	Gnjilane District, Gornji Kormishljak Village	Gornji Kormishljak Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Bislim stole his cow
79	November 12	Vasa N.	Gnjilane District, Čarakovce Village	Čarakovce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
80	November	Vasa Dajić's son and nephew	Gnjilane District, Firije Village	Gnjilane District, Firije Village	Mustafa N.	unknown	Revenge	Mustafa killed them both
81.	November	Aleksa Arsić	Gnjilane District, Odovce Village	unknown	Unknown Albanians	unknown	Avarice	Thesy robbed him of over 100 liras
82	Ditto	Trajko Arsić	Gnjilane District, Trnićava Village	Trnićava Village	Hasan N. and his 6 accomplices	Gnjilane District, Zajčevac Village	Avarice	They extorted 25 liras from him
83	Ditto	Over 20 Serbian households	Gnjilane District	Gnjilane District	Ditto	Gnjilane District	Ditto	They robbed the Serbs of their horses, oxen, goats and sheep
84	Ditto	Serbs from Vučitrn District	Vučitrn District	Vučitrn District	Kahraman Madžunić	Town of Vucitrn	Hatred	Battery, blackmail and abuse
85	Ditto	Djura Radivojević with others	District of Peć, Koš Village	Koš Village	Sadik Bajram	District of Peć, Vrela Village	avarice	Sadik blackmailed them out of 4 liras each and took away 4 oxen and 2 horses
86	Ditto	Panta Jovanović	District of Peć, Kralinjane Village	Kralinjane Village	Nazif Abdul	District of Peć, Oraška Village	Hatred	Murder
87	Ditto	Radosav Petković	Dečani Monastery	In the field	Sadik Dobranac, Ibrik Bošnjak	unknown	Revenge	They torched his 5 haystacks
88	Ditto	Vane Jovanović	Priština District, Sefalija Village	Town of Priština	Ibrahim Uka	Town of Priština	Hatred	Ibrahim brutally beat him up making him bleed

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
89	Ditto	Radoje Čorić	District of Peć, Istok Village	Istok Village	Kamber Blakiq	unknown	Revenge	Kamber imposed 278 groschen fine on him for having reported him to Hlemi-pasha
90	Novem-ber	Radojko Šundić	Peć District	Peć District	Halil Djecić	Tomanca	avarice	Halil forcibly took his mare
91	Novem-ber	Živan Belošević	Ditto	Ditto	Sali Ukça	District of Peć	Ditto	Ukča forcibly took his ox
92	Novem-ber	Ivko Ašanović	Mojstara Village	Peć District	Mira Baliq	District of Peć	Avarice	Balić forcibly took his ox
93	Novem-ber 14	Stole Grujić	Priština District, Bresje Village	Bresje Village	Circassians	Dobreka Village	Revenge	Murdered
94	Novem-ber	Villagers from Tuča, Osjana, Belice and Poljani	Tuča, Osjana, Belice and Poljani	Same	Fetih Kahramaniq	Tuča Village	Ditto	Various sorts of terror and crimes (zulums)
95	Novem-ber	Inhabitans of the villages of Peć District	District of Peć	District of Peć	Bahtijar Rokač	Peć District, Domenik Village	Profit-seeking	Ditto
96	Novem-ber	Rista N.	Vučitrn District, Prilužje Village	Prilužje Village	Luan Strovca	Gnjilane District	avarice	Strovca stole his ox
97	Novem-ber	Zanfa Kojić	Vučitrn	Vučitrn	Rama Mulafejzolović	Vučitrn	hatred	Beaten up in the center of the business area (charshia)
98	Decem-ber 2	Dimitrije Stojanović	Gnjilane District	Gnjilane District	*The notorious* kaçak Bislim and his gang	Gnjilane District	Avarice	He was fleeced of one lira
99	Ditto	Vasa Palić	Gnjilane District, Charkovac Village	Čaakovac Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Palić's ox was stolen
100	Decem-ber 3	Stojko Stojiljković	Gnjilane District	Gnjilane District	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Two cows stolen from Stojiljković
101	Decem-ber 5	Atanasije Djokić	Gnjilane District, Baljevac Village	Baljevac Village	Ahmed N., Kaçak	Ditto	Hatred	Murdered
102	Ditto	Krsta Živić	PrištinaDistrict, Village of G. Nerodimlje	G.Nerodimlje Village	Unknown Albanians	unknown	Profit-seeking	He was robbed
103	Decem-ber 6	Stavra Andrejić	Priština District, Lipljane Village	Lipljane Village	Kamberi Tahir Ibrahimović	Priština District	Revenge	The Albanians beat him up for becoming a field-guard
104	Decem-ber 10	Trajko Gocić	Čarakovce Village	Čarakovce Village	Beslim and his gang	Gnjilane District	Avarice	They stole his ox
105	Decem-ber 12	Pavle Jovanović	Gnjilane District, Stanišar Village	Stanišar Village	Alid and Hafz	Ditto	Hatred	They murdered him
106	Ditto	Stojan Simić	Gnjilane District, Straža Village	Straža Village	Adem and Ajet	Gnjilane District, Bresiće Village	Profit-seeking	They stole his two oxen
107	Decem-ber 13	Stevan Milovanović, Rista Antić and Stoleta Ninčić	Sirinić Župa,Village of Štrpje	Wood near Shtrpje Village	Unknown Albanians	unknown	Ditto	He was robbed
108	Decem-ber 16	Dana Stefanović	Priština District, Lipljane Village	Lipljane Village	Ditto	Lipljane Village	Revenge	They shot at him through the window
109	Decem-ber 17	Djordje Dimitrijević	Ditto	Ditto	Ahmed Alivata	Priština	Hatred	Alivata fired three shots at him but missed
110	Decem-ber 18	Dana Stefanović	Ditto	Ditto	Two Unknown Albanians	Unknown	Revenge	They fired at her house riddling it with bullets
111	Ditto	Mihailo Ristić	Gnjilane District, village of D. Korlinjane	D.Korlinjane Village	Bislim and his gang	Gnjilane District	Gnjilane district	They torched his haystack
112	Decem-ber 29	Jovan Stevanović, teacher	Gnjilane District, Vitina Village	Vrbovac Village	Bakija Bajrush	Gnjilane District	Fanaticism	Murdered
113	Decem-ber	Nikola Djordjević	Gnjilane District, Grezika Village	Grezika Village	The notorious malefactor Hafz	Gnjilane District	Avarice	Hafz blackmailed him out of 30 liras
114	Decem-ber	Nića Nikolić	Gnjilane District, Gajanovce Village	Gajanovce Village	The notorious malefactor Hafz	Gnjilane District, Bratilovce Village	avarice	He stole his horse and mare
115	Ditto	Jefta Pešić	Gnjilane District, Božovce Village	Božovce Village	Unidentifed Albanians	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his 12 goats
116	Ditto	Jovan N.	Gnjilane District, Klobukare Village	Klobukare Village	Salih Hasanović	Gnjilane District, Busova Village	Avarice	Salih stole Jovan's two oxen

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
117	Ditto	Tasa Stanković and two Serbs	Bujanovce, Ferizović	Bujanovce Village	Hafz	Gnjilane District, Bratilovce Village	Hatred	Hafz murdered them
118	Ditto	Serafim Maksimović	Gnjilane District, Domorovce V.	Domorovce Village	The notorious kaçak Beslim and his gang	Gnjilane District	Avarice	They fleeced him of one lira
119	Ditto	Trajko Atanasković	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Bestiality	They burnt his stack of hemp
120	Ditto	Jordan Selkić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	They stole his 13 sheep
121	Ditto	Pera Stojanović	Gnjilane District	Gnjilane District	Alit N.	Ditto	profit-seeking	Alit robbed him of 4 liras
122	Ditto	Rista Cajić	Gnjilane District, Boljevce Village	Gnjilane District	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Alit roobed him of two liras, 1 white mecidiye and 1 pair of socks
123	Ditto	Stole Stošić	Gnjilane District	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They forced him to buy 50 fisheks of ammunition for Martin rifle and 1 oka (three pounds) of tobacco
124	December	Sima Marinković	Gnjilane District	Gnjilane District	Alip N.	Gnjilane District	profit-seeking	He bought 40 fisheks from him but then beat him up
125	Ditto	Nephew of Trajko Arsić	Gnjilane District, Tranićevac Village	Ditto	Hasan N.	Gnjilane District, Zajćevac Village	Revenge	Hasan shot at him with a gun wounding him because he refused to give him 25 liras
126	Ditto	A Serbian girl	Paralovo Village	Paralovo Village	The most notorious and greatest villain Rašid Degelja	Gnjilane District	lust	She was forcibly raped
127	Ditto	Fića Bojić	Gnjilane District, Pasjike Village	Pasjike Village	Zumber Ajetoviq	Gnjilane District, Mušićište Village	Fanaticism, revenge	Ajetović murdered him
128	Ditto	Child of Djordje Čuljak	Gnjilane District, Bostanje Village	Bostanje Village	Ahmed Saitović and Ajriz Plavica	Gnjilane District, Manješ Village	Ditto	They murdered him
129	Ditto	Stanko Filić	Village of Kuzmin	Vil. of Kuzmin	Sadik N.	Grabovce Village	Ditto	Sadik attempted to murder him
130	Ditto	Milenko Cvetković	Gnjilane District, Rojanovac Village	A field near Rojanovac Village	Unknown kaçaks	Gnjilane District	Avarice	They stole one ox and a cow
131	Ditto	Jevta Cvejić	Gnjilane District, Oraovce Village	Oraovce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his two cows
132	Ditto	Mihail Kožljević	Gnjilane District, Boževce Village	Boževce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his 8 sheep and 1 goat
133	Ditto	Stojko Minkic	Gnjilane District, Gogolovica Village	Gogolovica Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his beehive
134	Ditto	Manasije Djekić	Boljevac Village	Boljevac Village	Ahmed N.	Makraš Village	Revenge	Ahmed murdered him
135	December	Pavle Jovanović	Gnjilane District, Stanišare Village	Gnjilane District, Stanišare Village	Unknown Albanians	Unknown	revenge	They murdered him
136	Ditto	Djoka Denić	Gnjilane District, Bratilovce Village	Bratilovce Village	The notorious criminal Hafz	Gnjilane District	profit-seeking	Hafz imposed illegal fine of 12 liras on him and stole his 12 goats

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1	January 1905	Djordje Jović and Fila Dejanić	Gnjilane District, Dejanovce Village	The wood near the village of Poljane	Rašid N.	Mešina Village	Quarrel	Rašid beat him up with an ax and rifle-stock
2	Ditto	Stojan Trajković	Gnjilane District, Ajnovce Village	in the field	Alija Išljamović	unknown	Revenge	Išljamović brutally beat him up
3	February 14	Radonja	Dragoljevce Village	Dragoljevce Village	Imer Smail	Istok Village	Avarice	Smail fired at him and stole his two oxen
4	February 15	Simon Džavić	Istok Village	Istok Village	Osman Labović	Istok Village	Ditto	The Albanian stole his cow
5	February 16	Radoje Djurić	Ditto	Ditto	Kamber Blakiq	Ditto	Ditto	Bljakić slaughtered his ram
6	Ditto	Živko Djordjević	Crkoljeza Village	Crkoljeza Village	Ramadan Mehmedović	Ukče Village	Ditto	Ramadan robbed him of 248 groschen
7	February 18	Milenko Petrović	Sušica Village	Sušica Village	Keca M. Ibrahimović	Sušica Village	Ditto	Ibrahimović robbed him of one cow
8	Ditto	Zdravko Šundić	Lukavce Village	Lukavce Village	Halil Djociq	Tomance Village	Fanaticism	Halil slaughtered his pig
9	Ditto	Zdravko Brajković	Mojstare Village	Mojstare Village	Dina Muliq	Sušica Village	Avarice	Dina stole his ram

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
10	February 20	Živko Rašić	Belica Village	Belica Village	Army patrol in Rudnik Village	unknown	Hatred	They beat him up
11	February 21	Milovan Vučinić	Banja Village	On the road to Rakdiš Village	Aluš Ram	Ukče Village	Avarice	Ram robbed him of 1 oka of sugar and 100 drams of coffee
12	Ditto	Jovan Radiševac	Poljana Village	Poljana Village	Bahtijar Košuka	Tuče Village	Ditto	Košuka stole his ox
13	February 22	Vukajlo Rašković	Dren Village	Dren Village	Redza Brahim	Džakovo Village	Avarice	Brahim stole his two sheep
14	February 23	Milisav Kolić	Prekale Village	Prekale Village	Jusuf Kapitić	Žači Village	Ditto	Kapitić fired at him and stole his horse
15	February 24	Radojko Božić	Istok Village	Istok Village	Mula Bujapac	Istok Village	Ditto	Bujapac forcefully took his young bull
16	February	Kosta Djurdjević, a boy	Lepinje Village	In the wood	The notorious criminal Bislim and his gang	Androvac Village	Bestiality	They forcefully took him to the wood and blackmailed him into paying 55 liras
17	February	Jovan Šugović	Peć	Peć	Sulja Kurtulić	currently imprisoned in Azira	Greed	Kurtulić gradually extorted 12194 groschen and 27 paras from him
18	February	Lazar Arsić Dabišić	The District of Peć, Drenik Village	Drenik Village	Abas Ćol and his brother Lata	The District of Peć, Ridjevo Village	profit-seeking	They took him prisoner blackmailing him out of 15 liras
19	March 3	Church	Gnjilane District, Mogila Village	Mogila Village	Unknown Albanians	Djurekare Village	Avarice and fanaticism	They demolished and desecrated the church riddling it with bullets
20	March 7	Kosta Sidić, merchant, Giga H. Jakić, merchant	Skoplje Prizren -Thessaloniki	on the road to Prizren	Ditto	unknown	Avarice	They robbed Sidić of 20 and Jakić of 100 liras
21	Ditto	Sava Bokumirović	Sjenica	Sjenica	Soldiers	originally from Nova Varoš	hatred	They attacked him with knives leaving him to bleed to death
22	March 13	Sutka, wife of Arsa Stojković	Gnjilane District, Kololeč Village	Kololeč Village	Abdul N.	Svirce Village	brutal fanaticism	Abdul kidnapped her and then imposed forceful conversion upon her
23	March 17	Stojan Milošević	Ježevica Village	Ježevica Village	Unknown Albanians	Unknown	avarice	They stole his textile
24	March 24	Djordje Rabovički	Ferizović	Ferizović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They demolished his shop robbing him of goods in the value of 10 liras
25	Ditto	Ilija Božović, a watchmaker	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They demolished his shop but found nothing valuable
26	March 25	Staniša Krstić	Jezhnice Village	Ježnice Village	Ditto	Ditto	profit-seeking	They stole his two beehives
27	March 26	Djordje Tanasković Lukić	Ferizović	Ferizović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They tried to smash his shop window but a police patrol chased them away
28	March 28	Vitko Denić, Todor Maksimavic and Stevan Stanković	Nerodimlje Village	Nerodimlje Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They demolished their watermill
29	March 20	Rale Maksić	Kosturce Village	Kosturce Village	Isenovići	Kosturce Village	Ditto	They forcefully took his cow
30	March 22	Stanislav Veličković	Istok Village	Istok Village	Numan Dervish	Istok Village	Ditto	He was robbed of 230 groschen
31	March 25	Siljan Ašanic	Sinaja Village	Sinaja Village	Dina Muliq and Mula Bujaniq	Ditto	Ditto	They robbed him of his cow
32	March 25	Radojko Bojić	Istok Village	Istok Village	Kamber Blakiq	Istok Village	profit-seeking	They robbed him of 124 groschen
33	March 27	Zaharije Laušanić	Koš Village	Koš Village	Jusuf Kapitić	Žači Village	Ditto	They forcefully took his two oxen and a cow
34	March 28	Milenko Rajković	Banja Village	Kopnica mountain	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	He was beaten up
35	March 30	Djordje Memrić	Belo Polje Village	Belo Polje Village	Alija Bali	Rokoša Village	avarice	Balj stole his ox
36	March 30	Djordje Jandžiković	Banjica Village	Banjica Village	Bajram Sakiq	Sušica Village	hatred	Sakić forcefully expelled him from the land together with 45 persons
37	March 30	Some Serbs	Crkoljeza Village	on the road to Verić Village	A gang of Albanian criminals	Unknown	avarice	The Albanians forcefully took their horse, their belongings and 40 liras
38	March	Stevan Marković, policeman	Opteruša Village	Opteruša Village	Kaqaun N.	Opteruša Village	for refusing to give him his weapons	They killed him but he also killed two of them

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
39	Ditto	Jovan Vasić Govedarčić and Blagoje Jovanović	Prizren District, Opteruša Village	Opteruša Village	Albanian kaçaks (brigands)	Opteruša Village	revenge	The Albanians murdered them
40	Ditto	Luka Ristić, policeman	Peć	Peć	Ramiz, tobacconist	Peć	hatred	Ramiz hit Ristić with his tobacconist's knife, cutting off his arm and smashing his head
41	Ditto	Rista, craftsman	Ježince Village	Ježince Village	Unknown criminals	unknown	Unknown	They robbed him of 150 groschen
42	March	Petko Arsić and others	Vrbeštica Village	Gadanica Mountain	Adem, Isen, Redžep, Bardi, Salih Bećr – kaçaks-outlaws	Outlaws-unknown	Unknown	Arsić was wounded and others were robbed
43	Ditto	Rista Pavlović	Ferizović	Ferizović	Unknown Albanians	Ditto	Ditto	They demolished his store taking away 10 liras
44	April 1	Krsta Perić	Bale Village	on the road to Lukavica Village	A gang of criminals	Ditto	Ditto	They robbed him of his horse, his belongings and 40 groschen
45	April 2	Teodosije Kakndžikić	Beljice Village	on the road to Istok Village	Sadik and Rexha	Istok Village	quarrel	They wounded him in the arm
46	April 5	Priest Djordje Jovanović	Beli Potok Village	on the road to Peć	Kolčaković, Arnaut (Albanian)	unknown	revenge	The Albanian fired at him 7 times but did not shoot him dead
47	April 6	Živko Rašić	Beljica Village	Beljica Village	Unknown	Ditto	Unknown	He was attacked during the night
48	Ditto	Nedeljko Rašić	Istok Village	Istok Village	Kamber Blakiq	Istok Village	greed	The Albanian fleeced him of 46 groschen
49	Ditto	Milenko Tomašević	Suho Grlo Village	Suho Grlo Village	Mulla Murtezović	Istok Village	Ditto	Mula stole Milenko's cow
50	April 7	Vasa Dabišić	Drenik Village	Drenik Village	Abas-Ćel and his brother Lama	Peć District, Ridjevo Village	Ditto	He was battered, taken away to Malisija, to the village of Ćelije, being blackmailed out of 55 liras
51	April 7	Milosav	Belo Polje Village	Belo Polje Village	Selman Fetah	Veriće Village	greed	Selman stole his 4 goats
52	April 10	Radonja Sedlarović	Dragance Village	in the wood near Dragance villlage	Unknown	unknown	greed	They fired at him 4 times but missed
53	April 12	Blagoje Vojnović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	They stole his cow
54	April 14	Arsa Djurić	Istok Village	on the road to Peć	Ditto	Ditto	Unknown	Two Albanians seized him but a zaptiah prevented them from murdering him
55	Ditto	Ratko Andžiović	Beljica Village	Beljica Village	Ibrahimović	Šaškovce Village	avarice	He stole Ratko's cow
56	Ditto	Toma Simonović	Sinaja Village	in the field near the village of Sinaja	Unknown	Unknown	bestiality	They slaughtered his ox taking half of the carcass leaving the other half there
57	Ditto	Radoje Rašković	Dren Village	Dren Village	Rama Zećirović	Suho Grlo Village	greed	Zećirović stole his 5 sheep
58	April 12	Sima Simić and Stevan Arsić, policeman (zaptiah)	Peć	on the road to Peć (going to church)	Halil Develjović and his gang	Environs of Peć	fanaticism	They fired 10 shots at them killing Stevan Arsić and wounding Sima Simić
59	April 15	Živko Belošević	Crkoljeza Village	Crkoljeza Village	Mula Murtezović	Džakovo Village	Avarice	Murtezović stole his ox
60	Ditto	Rista Betić	Sinaja Village	Sinaja Village, on the threshing floor	Suspect Alil Čekrljak	Mušutište Village	Unknown	Murdered
61	April 16	Miloš Perić	Istok Village	Istok Village	Salih Muljić and Keca Bajrić	Istok Village	revenge	They were waiting for 24 hours to kill him but he did not come up
62	April 16	Jovan Arsić	Banja Village	Banja Village	Redžep Muratović	Banja Village	revenge	The Albanian beat him up for having refused to work for free (to perform *kuluk*)
63	Ditto	Radonja Pajić	Belo polje Village	Belo polje Village	Etem Jakubović	Belo polje Village	greed	Jakubović stole his one cow
64	April 17	Djordje Momirović	Ditto	Ditto	Dina Deliq, Albanian	Sušica Village	Ditto	The Albanian forcefully took his two goats shooting at his shepherd in the wood
65	April 18	Vučko Mutavdžić	Dren Village	Dren Village	Aljuš Ralić	Ukće Village	Ditto	Ralić robbed him of his mare
66	April 21	Rista Kovačević	Vrbovac Village	Vrbovac Village	Elaz-bey Šefikbegović	village headman	For not allowing him to sexually abuse his wife	Murdered

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
67	April 22	Naja Balašević	Orahovce Village	Orahovce Village	Elin N.and his gang	Unknown	Unknown	Beaten up to death
68	Ditto	Pana Kostić	Petrovac Village	Petrovac Village	Unknown	Ditto	Ditto	He was attacked at his own house; he fell ill being under intense and constant fear
69	April 23	Mića Petrović	Ranilug Village	Ranilug Village	Ditto	Ditto	because he wanted to bathe in the Morava	They murdered him
70	April	Villagers	Cerovo	Cerovo Village	Toska, Beslim with Ali Osmanović and Mehmed	D. Makreš Village	avarice	The Serbs were coerced into cultivating all their land
71	April	Spasa Šurilić	Kruševo Village	Kruševo Village	Fanda (Albanian Catholic convert)	Environs of Peć	avarice	They stole his 4 oxen and one horse
70	April	Janja Jovanović	Naplavak Village	Naplavak Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his two oxen and all of his property
73	April	Stanko Jotić	Cucare Village	Cucare Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his 12 goats
74	April	Stevan Živković	Kovraga Village	On the road to Sinaja Village	Fazlija Labović	Muževišče Village	hatred	Labović shot him dead with a revolver
75	April	Jevrem Popović	Variće Village	in the wood near Variće Village	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Murdered
76	April	Petar Paković	Town of Peć	Town of Peć	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	During the night, he hit Petar on the head with a metal bar leaving him unconscious
77	May 1	Sretko Rademirović	Džakovo Village	Džakovo Village	Sublieutenant of Istok Village army patrol and 7 Albanians	Ditto	hatred	They searched his house beating him with a Martin rifle
78	May 2–4	Luka Dančić	Binč Village	Binč Village	Unknown	Ditto	Unknown	Murdered
79	May 3	Pera, Živko and Ilija	Pasjane Village	Pasjane Village	Osman Beslim	Ogošta Village	avarice	They fleeced him of 3 liras
80	May 4	Sima Milićević	Čaglavica Village	Čaglavica Village	Zaid Effendi, commander of the local gendarmerie	Priština	Because he could not pay the tax on the spot	The Efffendi tied him to a fence and whipped him
81	May 4	Wife of Stanko Spasić	Laplje Village	Laplje Village	Zabit Hasan-Effendi	Priština	Because she could not pay the tax instanta-neously	He was beaten up with a gunstock
82	May 4	Vukojlo Vuksanović	Kolašin District Strelce Village	Strelce Village	Unknown	Unknown	greed	They stole his cow
83	May 4	Danče Miljković	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his 2 cows and 1 ox
84	May 9	Ilija Ivković	Dragovce Village	Dragovce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Murdered
85	May	Milenko Stanković	Peć District, Vučinovo Village	Vučinovo Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Murdered
86	May 15	Nasta Živanović	Lipovadja Village	Lipovadja Village	Zabit Hasan Effendi	Priština	because he could not pay the tax on the spot	Hasan Effendy beat him up
87	May 15	Stojan Babić and Spasa Maksimović	Gotovuša Village	Gotovuša Village	Unknown	Unknown	greed	They stole his ox
88	May 20	Stojan Maksimović	Gotovuša Village	Gotovuša Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
89	May 22	Daughter of Sretko Račić	Dren Village	Dren Village	Lošević and Mustafić	Ditto	lust and Ditto	She was taken captive
90	May 23	Mladen Zuvić	Peć District, Sinaja Village	Sinaja Village	Alil Sakiq, Čakrnjak and Rexha	Mušutište Village	hatred	They beat him up
91	May 25	Tuša-Antonije Popović	Town of Peć	T. Peć	Mulla Jahja	T. Peć	Ditto	Mula wounded him in the head
92	May 25	Jakov Brković	Kavraga Village	Kavraga Village	Alil Sakić, Čakrnjak and Rexha	Mušutište Village	Ditto	They beat him up
93	May 27	Milisav Petrović	Beljice Village	Beljice Village	Catholic Committee	Unknown	Ditto	They attempted to kill him wounding him in the arm

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94	May 29	Mika Pavlović	Žači Village	Žači Village	Abdul and Jusuf Kapitiqi	Drači Village	Ditto	They attacked him in his own home firing at him but missed
95	May 31	Stojan Čanajčević	Sirić. Župa, Village of Štrloce	On the way to Gatinjska Wood	Uknown Albanians	Unknown	Unknown	Murdered
96	May	Rade Bošković	Ditto	Štroce Village	Sulj Pomaja	Pomaja Village	avarice	Forcibly robbed of 5 liras and 45 groschen
97	May	Ilija Ivković	Dragovca Village	Dragovca Village	Rashid Degela	Labljane Village	hatred	Murdered
98	May	Radivoje Nikolić	Beljica Village	Beljica Village	Osman Fratović	Gadovište Village	avarice	Fratović fired at his house stealing from him 4 head of cattle
99	May	Milisav Zdravković	Banja Village	Banja Village	13 Albanians	Unknown	revenge and Ditto	Murdered
100	May	Pera Jakić and Živko	Banja Village	Banja Village	Same	Ditto	Ditto	The Albanians fired at them but missed
101	May	Radojko Radojević	Džako Village	Džako Village	13 Albanians	Unknown	revenge and avarice	They stole his two oxen; he fled to Mitrovica fearing for his life and is still there
102	May	Luka Stefanović	Bič Village	in the wood of Bič Village	Ditto	Ditto	revenge	Murdered
103	May	Djordje Jovanović	Izvor Village	Izvor Village	Unknown	Ditto	Unknown	Murdered
104	May	Villagers of Pasjane	Pasjane Village	Pasjane Village	Osman and Beslim	Ogošta Village	fanaticism	They were unlawfully fined being fleeced of 300 liras
105	May	Arsa Jovanović	Oraovac Village	Oraovac Village	Hafz N.	Bratilovac Village	avarice	Ditto of 25 liras
106	May	Ceka N.	Ropotovo Village	Ropotovo Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto of 6 liras
107	May	Trajko Veljić	Kamenica Village	Kamenica Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto of 3 liras
108	May	Stojan Antić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
109	May	Nasko Nisić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
110	May	Arsi N.	Boce Village	Boce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto of 6 liras
111	May	Stanko Arsić	Kačare Village	Kačare Village	Rahman N.	Unknown	greed	The Albanian abducted his daughter and robbed him of 2 liras
112	May	Anta Perić	Čarakovce Village	Čarakovce Village	Beslim	Ogošnja Village	avarice	Robbed of 12 liras, 10 okas of brandy and a lamb
113	May	Todor Savić	Ranilug Village	Ranilug Village	Unknown	Ditto	Ditto	They murdered him and wounded a miller
114	May	Stojko N.	Klobokare Village	Klobokare Village	Unknown	Ogošnja Village	bestiality	The Albanians inflcted burns on his child and robbed him of 20 balams?
115	May	Tasa Marković	Rugova Village	Rugova Village	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	They stole 11 goats from him
116	May	Danča Djokić	Bušinca Village	Bušinca Village	Hafz and Rahman	Ditto	Ditto	He was blackmailed out of 4 liras
117	June 2	Pavle Djordjević	Sinaja Village	Sinaja Village	Unknown Albanians	Unknown	Unknown	Murdered
118	June 5	Arsa Djurić	Istok Village	Istok Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Murdered with an axe
119	June 7	Petko Nikić	Gatnjance Village	near the Village	Ismail Shabanoviq	Semanje Village	fanaticism	Murdered
120	June 9	Petko Sinđić	Belo Polje Village	Belo Polje Village	Unknown Albanians	Unknown	Unknown	Murdered
121	June 14	Stanko Ilić	Berovce Village	Berovce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They fired at him but missed
122	June 15	Kosta Dekić	Priština District, Gračanica village Gračanica Village	Gračanica Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	The Albanians attacked him beating him up with gunstocks
123	Ditto	Deka Milenković	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They attacked him but he managed to escape
124	June 16	Mladen Djekić	Gnjilane District, Trančevce Village	Gnjilane District, in the wood near the village	The nototious villain Rashid Degela	Gnjilane District, Labljane Village	fanaticism and avarice	Degelja beat him up for refusing to turn Turk and convert to Islam, he forced him to take off his clothes and then stole his clothes together with 3 white mecidiyes
125	June 17	Stanko Kevkić	Gotovuša Village	Gotovuša Village	Unknown assailants	Gnjilane District, Labljane Village	hatred	Murdered

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
126	June 19	Stojko Branković, a beggar	Štrpce Village	Environs of Štrpce Village	Ditto	Ditto	profit-seeking	Murdered
127	June 20	Pera Živanić	Town of Peć	Town of Peć	Ditto	Unknown	Unknown	They fired at him but missed
128	June	Djordje Aleksić	Beljica Village	Beljica Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Murdered with a rifle
129	Ditto	Rade Paštić, tailor	Town of Peć	Otomanac Village	Iljam, son of Selim Djoce	Otomanac Village	For demanding payment of debt	Murdered
130	Ditto	Dimitrije Janković	Ditto	Deto	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Someone fired at him but missed
131.	Ditto	Bajko Mitrović, ateacher	Peć District, Balji Village	On the road, on his way back from Peć	Zaptiahs (gendarmes) Ditto	Ditto	hatred	Murdered
132	Ditto	Dimko Maksimović	Beravce Village	Beravce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Unknown	They fired at him but missed
133	Ditto	Trajko N., a gendarme	Town of Priština	While guarding the procession of convicts	Unidentified convict	Ditto	Escape	Murdered
134	Ditto	Milan Djakonijević	Sirnić. Župa, Štrpce Village	In the wood of Gotovuša Village	Unknown	Ditto	hatred	Murdered
135	Ditto	Rista Štetarica	Kijevo Village	Kijevo Village	Bahtijar Rokač	Unknown	revenge	Rokač burnt down his house
136	June	Milutin Čakrlić	Drsnik Village	Drsnik Village	Bahtijar Rokač	Unknown	revenge	Rokač burnt down his house
137	July 1	Petar Maksimović Živ. Damjanović, Petar Čuljko Ivanić Manasije Stanković and Stojko Ivković	Izvor Village Bostanje Village Izvor Village	Gnjilane District, in the wood of Androvce Village	The notorious Rashid Degelja Bisla N.	Labljane Villag,e Androvce Village	greed	The Serbs were robbed of their money, clothes and horses
138.	July 3	Misleta N.	Opraška Village	Opraška Village	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Murdered
139	July 21	Vidosav N.	Šaljinovce Village	Šaljinovce Village	Unknown	Ditto	Ditto	Murdered
140	July 23	Stojan Rakić, a potter	Town of Priština	Town of Priština	Aguš son of Husein, a local barber	Priština	hatred	Murdered
141	July 26	Vasilije Jovanović	Oraovac Village	Oraovac Village	Unknown Albanians	Unknown	Unknown	Murdered
142	July 31	Todor Bošković	Drenovčić Village	Drenovčić Village	Unknown kaçaks (outlaws)	Unknown	bestiality	The Albanian outlaws burnt down his 50 wagons of hay, 1000 okas (3000 pounds) of bitter vetch as well as his stables and haymows
143	July	Tijanići N.	Crkoljeza Village	Crkoljeza Village	Ditto	Ditto	Unknown	Murdered
144	July	Miloš Vuksanić	Kolašin District, Streoce Village	Streoce Village	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	They stole his ox
145	July	Vule Andjelković	Kolašin District, Streoce Village	Streoce Village	Unknown kaçaks	Unknown	avarice	They stole his 4 oxen
146	August 2	Tasa Stojanović	Ferićaje Village	Ferićaje Village	The notorious Bislim	Ogošta Village	hatred	Murdered
147	Ditto	Mitar Živković	Žitkovce Village	Žitkovce Village	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	They tricked him into leaving his house at night and killed him
148	Ditto	Srećko Andjelković	Kolašin District Streoce Village	Streoce Village	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	They stole his ox
149	Ditto	Cvetko Andjelković	Kolašin District Prevlaka Village	Prevlaka Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
150	August 3	Jarsa Pljinčević, innkeeper	Town of Priština	Town of Priština	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They demolished his inn and robbed him of 1100 groschen and his belongings
151	August 6	Maksim Antonić	Kolašin District, Brnjake Village	Village of Brnjake	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his ox
152	August 13	Sima Vučetić	Kolašin District, Zubin Potok Village	Zubin Potok Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his two oxen
153	Ditto	Rade Vučetić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his ox
154	Ditto	Stojko Milosavljević and Stojan Bošković	Priština District, Nerodimlje Village	The wood of Nerodimlje Village	Nuredin Hasanoviq	Javorca Village	hatred	Hasanoviq destroyed their cart chopping it with an axe and banished them

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
155	August 13	Jefta, brother of Denja Ristić	Gnjilane District, Mešina Village	Mešina Village	Rahman Rahmanović	Gnjilane District Repaštica Village	hatred	Murdered because his brother failed to pay a ransom of 15 liras
156	Ditto	Jovan Pančić	Town of Priština	In a field near Priština	Unknown	Unknown	avarice	They stole his two wagons full of corn
157	Ditto	Krsta Kostić	Town of Prizren	Priština District, in the vicinity of Goranica Village	Alija Kočijaš	Town of Prizren	hatred	Murdered
158	August 14	Nikola Joksimović	Voćnjak Village	Voćnjak Village	Unknown	Unknown	Ditto	Murdered
159	August 21	Srećko Andjelković	Čičevo Village	Čičevo Village	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	They stole his ox
160	August 23	Vukašin Milićević	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his 19 goats and clothes
161	Ditto	Kosta Miladinović	Kolaš. District Jabuka Village	Jabuka Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his two oxen and two cows
162	Ditto	Vukoman Milićević	Čičevo Village	Čičevo Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his ox
163	August 26	Jovan Stojković, Maksim Trajković and Kosta Djokić	Glogovac Village	Glogovac Village	Jusuf Idrizović	Karadag, Sefarovac Village	Ditto	Idrizović blackmailed them out of 75 liras
164	August 28	Srećko Stojanović	Kolaš.District, Streoce Village	Streoce Village	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	The Albanians fired at him through the window but missed
165	August	Dena Ristić	Mešina Village	Mešina Village	The notorious Beslim	Ogošta Village	hatred	Murdered
166	August	Cvetko Milovanović	Grebovce Village	In a watermill in Banjska	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Murdered
167	Ditto	Maksim Antonović	Kolašin District, Brnjaka Village	Brnjaka Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his ox
168	Ditto	Stanko Ristić	Gnjilane District, MešinaVillage	Meadows of Mešina Village	Rahman and his two accomplices	Gnjilane District, Mešina Village	avarice	Murdered
169	Ditto	Villagers of Kololeč Village	Kololeč Village	Kololeč Village	same	Ditto	Ditto	Blackmailed out of 26 liras
170	Ditto	Jovan Filipović	Gnjilane District, MešinaVillage	Mešina Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Fleeced of 6 liras
171	Ditto	Daka Nekit.	Terinus Village	Terinus Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Robbed of 12 liras
172	Ditto	Dina N.	Bratilovce Village	Bratilovce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Fleeced of 4 liras, 1 ces. and 4 pairs of socks
173	Ditto	Senta Denić	Teranus Village	Teranus Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Fleeced of 6 liras
174	Ditto	Roska N.	Arnovce Village	Arnovce Village	Zejnel Ukiq	Ajnovce Village	lust	Abducted and forcefully converted and turned Turk
175	Ditto	Stojan Antić, Trajko Veljić and Tasa Stanković	Kamenica Village	Kamenica Village	Rahman and his two accomplices	Mešina Village	greed	The Albanians extorted 3 pairs of socks from them
176	August	Villagers of Drenovca	Drenovca Village	enovcaVillage	Rahman and his two friends	Mešina Village	greed	The Albanians unlawfully demanded 50 liras of illegal fine
177	Ditto	Rista Stanković and his brother Veličko	Ditto	near Drenovca Village	Ditto	Ditto	hatred	The Albanians tied them up, forcefully took them away and killed them
178	Ditto	Djordje Popović, a teacher	Kamenica Village	Kamenica Village	Behlul N.	Kamenica Village	for having sued him	He beat him up
179	Ditto	Aleksa N.	Gnjilane District, Prilužje Village	Prilužje Village	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	They fired at him but it is not known whether they shot him dead
180	Ditto	Trajko Živić	Boljevac Village	The wood of Boljevac Village	Raxha Suljić	Boljevac Village	Unknown	Murdered
181	Septem-ber 6	Mina Tošić	Grabovce Village	Grabovce Village	Jashan villains	Unknown	hatred	They burnt down his estate worth 8000 groschen
182	Ditto	Raka Radivojević	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	The Albanians burnt down his estate worth 7000 groschen
183	Ditto	Milisav Kitić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They burnt down his estate worth 12000 groschen
184	Ditto	Miloje Nešić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They burnt down his estate worth 5000 groschen
185	Septem-ber 6	Vule Zgović	Belo polje Village	Belo polje Village	Unknown criminals	Unknown	hatred	They stole his two oxen

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
186	Septem-ber 8	Petar Radović	Belo polje Village	Belo polje Village	Zenel beg and his Gypsy servant	residing in Streoce	hatred	Murdered
187	Septem-ber 10	Stanko Barilac	Mešina Village	Mešina Village	Rahman Raliq	Mešina Village	For refusing to pay the blackmail in the amount of 40 liras	Murdered
188	Septem-ber 11	Wife of Stole Simić	Klokot Village	Klokot Village	Bakija Ali Demoviq	Požarak Village	Blackmailing her hursband	Demoviq wounded her firing a rifle shot
189	Septem-ber 12	Lazar Aleksić	Gračanica Village	Gračanica Village	Unknown	Unknown	hatred	They wounded him in a night attack having shot at him with a rifle through the window
190	Septem-ber 17	Stanko Stamenković	Štrpce Village	Haymow in Štrpce Village	4 unknown criminasl	Unknown	avarice	They stole his 40 goats
191	Ditto	Stanko Jovanović	Sušica Village	Sušica Village	Unknown villains	Unknown	greed	They stole his 4 oxen
192	Ditto	Spira Cakić	Priština District, Gračanica Village	Watermill near Gračanica Village	Rahman Shabanoviq	Badovince Village	hatred	Shabanoviq wounded Cakić shooting at him with a gun
193	Ditto	Zdravko Jovanović	Lipljan Village	In the vicinity of Ribare Village	Unknown malefactors	Unknown	greed	They stole his two oxen
194	Ditto	Wife and children of Jovan Arsić	Ditto	Lipljane Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole 45 goats from them
195	Septem-ber 28	Krsta Stanojević and others	Sirinić Župa, Štrpce Village	Štrpce Village	Unindentified Budak Arnauts (Albanians)	Unknown	Avarice	They robbed him of 270 groschen
196	Septem-ber	Stanko Vasić	Kusinja Village	On the road to Nerodimlje Village	4 Unknown Albanians	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his two oxen
197	Ditto	Stevan Terzić	Klokot Village	Village Klokot	Bakija Ali Demović	Požarine Village	Ditto	Ali Demović extorted two liras from him
198	Ditto	Cvetko Spasić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	He was robbed of 400 okas of wheat and 92 groschen
199	Ditto	Trajko Dimić	Boljevac Village	Boljevac Village	Son of Sulja N.	Marovce Village	hatred	Murdered
200	Ditto	Stole Trajković, Bursić and Cvetković	Klokot Village	Klokot Village	Sali Kapitić	Trpeza Village	greed	Blackmailed into paying 4 liras each
201	Ditto	Mrdjinac	Štrpce Village	Štrpce Village	Unknown	Unknown	Ditto	The Albanian stole his cow
202	October 7	Stojan Stevanović	Lipljane Village	Lipljane Village	A soldier named Djemail	Lipljane Village	For refusing to give him a chicken	Beaten up by Djemail
203	October 2	Vasa Stojanović	Gnjilane District	On the road to Gnjilane	Jashar Ademović, Tahir Četilović and Qazim Arifović	Busovata Village	avarice	Blackmailed into paying 10 liras
204	October 7	Stojan Savić	Štrpce Village	Štrpce Village	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	They stole his two oxen
205	October 9	Stojan Mladenović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	They stole all his clothes
206	October 9	Dosta Janićeva	Village	Štrpce Village	Unknown	Unknown	avarice	They stole all her clothes
207	Ditto	Djordje Popović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They stole his three beehives
208	October	Spasa Stojanović	Koriše Village	Koriše Village	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Murdered
209	Ditto	Vasa Filipović	Gnjilane District, Božovce Village	On the road called Hadžijin Kamen	Tahir Džekić and Jashar Azenović	Busovinje Village	hatred	Murdered
210	Ditto	Toma Djokić, zaptiah (policeman)	Radenovce Village	Radenovce Village	Rahman Rahmanović	Bratilovce Village	hatred	Wounded in the chest
211	Ditto	Marko N.Tutić	Robovac Village	Robovac Village	Ditto	Ditto	greed	Fleeced of 11 liras
212	Ditto	Stanko Trajković	Terince Village	Terince Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Robbed of 15 cubits of wool cloth
213	Ditto	Diče Stojanović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Robbed of 14 cubits of textile
214	Ditto	Senta Denić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto		Blackmailed into paying 4 liras; being an utter pauper he was forced to sold his daughter to give him 4 liras!!!
215	Ditto	Arsa Stojanović	Bušince Village	Bušince Village	Ditto	Ditto	greed	The Albanian robbed him of 14 cubits of wool cloth

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
216	Ditto	Anta Pavić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Fleeced of 15 liras
217	October	Petar Jović	Bušince Village	Bušince Village	Rahman Rahmanoviq	Bratilove Village	greed	Fleeced of 10 liras
218	Ditto	Steva Mladenović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Fleeced of 4 liras
219	Ditto	Stajko Krakanović	Klobukare Village	Klobukare Vill.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Fleeced of 10 liras
220	Ditto	Villagers from Gradjanik	Gradjanik Village	Gradjanik Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Coerced into paying illegal tax in the total amount of 50 liras
221	Ditto	Simeon Antić	Gnjilane district, Drenovce Village	Gnjilane District, Dre-novce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Forced to pay illegal tax in the amount of 15 liras
222	Ditto	Denča Jović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Forced to pay 10 liras of illegal tax
223	Ditto	Mihailo Djordjević	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Forced to pay 6 liras of illegal tax
224	Ditto	Krsta Stojković	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Forced to pay 6 liras of illegal tax
225	Ditto	Živko Stojanović	Gnjilane District, DrenovacVillage	Drenovac Village	Rahman Ramiq	Bratilovce Village	greed	Forced to pay illegal tax of 6 liras
226	Ditto	Stanko Stojanović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Forced to pay illegal tax of 6 liras
227	Ditto	Villagers from Ropotovo	Ropotovo Village	Ropotovo Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Forced to pay illegal tax of 30 dukats
228	October	Wedding guests from Bujanovac Village	Bujanovce Village	Levo Village	Afiz and Rama and their gang, unknown Albanians	Unknown	hatred	The Albanians killed 9 wedding guests
229	Ditto	Mihailo Košinović	Boljevci Village	Boljevci Village	Jašar Azemović and his 4 freinds	Busovinja Village	Bestiality and greed	The Albanians inflicted burns on Mihailo's child and extorted 3 liras
230	Ditto	Villagers of Ropotovo	Ropotovo Village	Ropotovo Village	Rahman N.	Bratilovce Village	greed	Blackmailed out of 28 dukats
231	Ditto	Stanko Stajić	Migance Village	Migance Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Blackmailed out of 6 liras
232	Ditto	Stanko Ivanić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Blackmailed out of 2 liras
233	Ditto	Nikola Rakić	Peć District, Kijevo Village	In the wood of Kijevo Village	Bislim and his gang	Androvac Village	For trying to save his bro-ther from being taken captive	Murdered
234	Ditto	Jovan Pećinović	Djurakovce Village	Djurakovce Vill.	Kolj Ajdar Fanda	Budisavac Village	Greed	They stole his 9 wagons
235	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Kamber Smailović	Istok Village	Ditto	Smailović stole his two oxen
236	Ditto	Mira Ivković	Mojstare Village	Mojstare Village	Unknown villains	Unknown	revenge	The Albanians fired at him and broke his arm
237	October	Simon Stanković, Mi-hail Petrović, Krsta Betić and F. Djokić	Sinaja Village	Sinaja Village	Unknown criminals	Unknown	revenge	From each of them two oxen were stolen—8 oxen in total
238	Ditto	Živko Miladinović	Lukovac Village	On the road to Lukovac Village	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	He was robbed of two oxen
239	Ditto	Janja Ratković	Ditto	In a field near Lukovac Village	Ditto	Ditto	revenge	The Albanians burnt down his hay worth 21 dukat
240	Ditto	Milisav Sedlarević	Draganjevac Village	Draganjevac Village	Abaz Malica, kaçak	Ditto	revenge	The Albanian burnt down his hay worth 700 groschen
241	Ditto	Spasa Mitrović	Dvorina Village	Dvorina Village	Albanians from Budakovo Vil.	Budakovo Village	avarice	Robbed of 15 loads of wheat
242	Ditto	Mitar Stolić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Robbed of 10 loads of wheat
243	Ditto	Isavin Stolić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Robbed of 25 wagons of hay
244	Ditto	Krsta Mitrović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Robbed of two containers of wheat
245	Ditto	Ilija Mitić	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They forcefully took from him 80 sacks of corn and 50 workers
246	Ditto	Villagers of Lipovljane Village	Lipovljane Village	Lipovljane Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	The Albanians forced 600 workers from the village to cultivate land for them
247	October	Spasa Savić	Popovljana Village	Popovljana Village	Albanians from Budakovo	Budakovo Village	avarice	Robbed of 30 wagons of hay
248	Ditto	Pera Mijatović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Robbed of 8 bowls of rye
249	Ditto	Stanko R.Gačić	Bitina Village	Bitina Village	Unknown	Unknown	Ditto	They stole his cow
250	Novem-ber 6	Spasa Ribić's child	Drenik Village	Drenik Village	Rexhep Alitoviq	Turjaka Village	Blackmail	Kidnapped and murdered
251	Novem-ber 17	Živko Janković	Totičane Village	Totičane Village	Unknown villains	unknown	avarice	They stole his 3 cows and 1 young bull

No.	Date of crime	Victim's name and surname	Victim's place of residence	Place of crime	Perpetrator	Perpetrator's place of residence	Motives for the crime	Note
252	November 11	Stole Tomić	Sirinić District, Vrbeštica Village	Vrbeštica Village	Ditto	Ditto	Cattle raiding	Murdered
253	November 18	Blagoje Mojsić and his brother Jefta	Belo Polje Village	Belo Polje Village	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	They demanded from him to pay 55 liras of illegally imposed tax
254	November 18	Mladen Jandžiković	Beljica Village	Beljica Village	Ditto	Ditto	hatred	Attacked and murdered
255	November 21	Djoša N.	Belo Polje Village	Belo Polje Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They attacked him but he managed to defend himself
256	November 22	Zdravko Bošković	Topličane Village	Topličane Village	Ditto	Ditto	avarice	They demolished his watermill and wounded him
257	Ditto	Sava Bošković	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They demolished his watermill
258	Novembar 22	Mita Terčilić	Domoravce Village	Domoravce Village	The notorious Beslim and Hafz	Beslim from the village of Ogošte and Hafz from Bratilovac	bestiality	Having killed him, they riddled his dead body with bullets
259	November 27	Aleksa and Risto Trajković	Belo Polje Village	Belo Polje Village	Unknown villains	unknown	unknown	They were attacked but managed to defend themselves
260	November 28	Vukadin Rašković	Peć District, Dren Village	On the road to Peć	Unknown villains	Suho Grlo Village	hatred	They killed him
261	December 3	Milisav Enkezić	Šaljinovce Village	On the road to Peć	Ditto	unknown	hatred	They killed him
262	December 4	Simeon Stanković	Sinaja Village	Sinaja Village	Albanian named Čekrnjak and his gang are under suspicion of being the assailants	Muževina Village	greed	They attacked him but he defended himself
263	Ditto	Djoka Maksimović	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	They robbed him of 4 horses
264	Ditto	Anta Dimitrijević and his brother Kosta	Town of Peć	Town of Peć	Three Albanians	Town of Peć	hatred	They were attacked but managed to escape
265	December 8	Todor Bošković Lazarević	Peć District	Drenovčič Village	500 Fanda Catholics (Albanian Catholics)	Drenovčič Village	fanaticism	He heroically repelled the attack
266	December 19	Vasiljko Stojković	Priština District, Dragovce Village	On the road to the village of Izvor	Unknown assailants	unknown	unknown	Murdered
267	December 14	Radojko Radivojević	Džakovo Village	On the road to Sinaje Village	Čakrnjak is a suspect	Lužavina Village	hatred	Murdered
268	December 15	Trajko Milošević	Karminjane Village	Karminjane Village	Unknown	unknown	avarice	They stole his two cows
269	December 19	Djordje Krstić	Sljivovo Village	Sljivovo Village	Ditto	Ditto	hatred	They cut his throat
270	December	Sima Smiljanić and Pavle Savić	Gnjilane District, Božovce Village	Božovce Village	Ahmed Aliloviq	Strezovce Village	Refuse to pay illegally imposed tax	He beat them up
271	Ditto	Rista Cenić	Boljevce Village	Boljevce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
272	Ditto	Milan Perić	Pasjane Village	Pasjane Village	Kadrija Atemoviq	Pasjane Village	malice	Wounded
273	Ditto	Nasko Stanković and Dane Jancić	Ditto	Ditto	Unknown	Unknown	avarice	Robbed of 30 liras
274	Ditto	Trajko Spasić	Priština District, Trpska Village	Trpska Village	Son of a man named Šeh	environs of Kačanica, Sopotnica Village	hatred	Murdered
275	Ditto	Stojan Krdžalijić	Village of Ugljare	In the wood of Ugljare Village	Hafz and Beslim, kaçaks (outlaws)	known	Refuse to pay the blackmail in the amount of 60 liras	They killed his two workers and a child
276	Ditto	Arsa Čolak	Močare Village	Močare Village	The notorious kaçaks Hafz and Beslim	Hafz from Ogošta Village and Beslim from Bratilovac	avarice	Fleeced of 6 liras
277	December	Žarko N.	Miganovca Village	Miganovca Village	Unknown kaçaks	Unknown	avarice	They broke his basket and took away all of his cattle
278	Ditto	Villagers from Boževac Village	Boževac Village	Boževac Village	Hafz and Beslim	Ogošnja Village Branilovce Village	Ditto	Fleeced of 50 liras
279	Ditto	Some Villagers	Boljevce Village	Boljevce Village	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	The Albanians tied them up and beat them extorting 6 liras
280	Ditto	Mihailo Kužnić	Ditto	Ditto	Qazim N	Gnjilane District, Busovanja Village	greed	They inflicted burns on his child to extort 800 groschen
281	Ditto	Janko Jović	Bušince Village	On the road Priština	Unidentified kaçaks	Unknown	Ditto	They robbed him of his earnings of 300 groschen from livestock sale

In Priština, April 22/ May 5, 1906
In the absence of consul
Vice-consul N.Dj. Nastasijević
Archives of Serbia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belgrade
EP, 1906, row 589, EP, No.313

(Documents edited by Dušan T. Bataković)

SERBS FLEEING KOSOVO

Manojlo Čemerikić, vicar in Orahovac, to the Rector of the Theology Seminary in Prizren

Prizren,
May 27th/June 9th, 1906

Most Reverend Archimandrite,

Since the third day of Easter this year, when Albanians killed two sons of Petko Dedić, people are very agitated and want to move away from Orahovac. 30 families are ready to go. Today I went with 6 people from Orahovac to see Mr. Tuholka, to inform him of this and ask for his advice. He advised us to appeal to the local court and to inform them of the depopulation, but the people of Orahovac cannot do it for the reason that the court would certainly hinder this cause and the Orahovac mudur (administrator) would be informed of this, and he, being also a villain and Serbian foe, would grow resentful and molest the miserable Serbian population even more. We told Mr. Tuholka this too, and he said the parson and I should inform the Mutesarif (governor) of this.

Though it was very inconvenient for me to do this, as I am equally in villanous hands, threatened with murder, I had to do it nevertheless, hoping to help my poor parisheners at least a little. The Mutesarif said I should stop the peasants' moving away, promising that within the next 7–8 days Shemsi-Pasha would be coming to improve the position of the local Serbs.

A question could be raised here: why do Serbs want to move away? The reason is in that since last year's affair of Hoča, 40 families have been shut, not daring go anywhere. Their meadows are not mowed, their land not sown, their vineyards not spaded up (they do not dare till their land and neither do others), and there are no sources of income. The wretched souls cannot even go to church because as soon as they get out of their houses, a tax officer makes them go to court and pay tax, so how can this poor people hope to survive here?

With Albanians and authorities themselves killing these poor people economically and working toward their extermination, there is nothing they can do but either to move away or to take weapons in their hands and pay back in kind, and for the sake of survival they need financial assistance and weapons to defend themselves when attacked.

On behalf of the Orahovac inhabitants, Mr. Rector, I kindly aks you to inform the competent authorities of the above said.

AS, MFA, 1906, row 59, Political and Educational, №2314

VIOLENCE AGAINST PEASANTS WHO WERE COLLECTING GRAIN

Vice-Consul Nastas Dj. Nastasijević, to Nikola Pašić, President of the Ministerial Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Political and Educational
Department, № 777

Priština,
September 10th/23th, 1906

Esteemed Minister-President,

I am honored to kindly inform you that Stojan Kostić from the village of Slavina, in the area of Priština, stated the following at yesterday's hearing:

„Five days ago, I, my wife Cveta, my uncle Filip Stanojević, his wife Gordana and my maiden sister Stanka were harvesting the yields of our land. Sun was not even set when two Albanians from our neighborhood stormed in with drawn rifles: Osman Avdić from Bor and Bahtijar Salijić, who settled in Gnjilane two years ago. They both shouted at the same time: „Men back off!" and grabbed Stanka by the hand. When I came up to him and begged Osman to let my sister go, he shot two bullets at me, but did not hit me. Stanka snapped out and came to uncle Filip, crying: „Don't let them have me! You'd better lose your lives than let them change my faith!" Bahtijar shot at my uncle immediately, one bullet passing under his right arm and hitting his left breast, of which he immediately died. Having seen this, my sister Stanka set off to run immediately, but Osman saw that and fired at her, hitting her in the right loin, where the bullet stayed. After two hours of tremendous agony, Stanka passed away. Murderers Osman and Bahtijar ran away and nobody knows where they are".

I gave Stojan instructions, so he immediately composed an application for the local representative of the State Prosecutor.

There, Mr. Minister President, that is the situation to which our poor population has been brought. They cannot even collect fruits of their land in peace, while all sorts of tax and toll are demanded from them.

It is not our girls that Albanians want, they intend to obliterate us from the face of the earth, us „Skav i Djaur", as they call us („Slave and Infidel").

Numan Lula, Albanian from the village of Ljubižda near Peć, wounded on 22th last month a diligent husband Rade Ivković, from the village of Istok, in the same area, only to take over his land. Mr. Arsenije Zdravković, graduate of Turkish law, our student, wrote an application and submitted it to the Mutesarif. The Mutesarif received the application, however did nothing about it.

A.S, MFA, Political and Educational Department, 1906, row 59, № 4277, 14 September 1906

NEW ACTS OF VIOLENCE—SEPTEMBER 1906

Vice-Consul Milan M. Rakić to Nikola Pašić, President of the Ministerial Council

Political Affairs, № 804

Priština,
September 26th/October 9th, 1906

(...) In the past month, violence has been on the rise in the area of Peć, murders, arsons and other forms of terror. While Albanian Muslims are somewhat retired, the Catholics are attacking Serbian settlements with their force, and the barehanded, dismal and devastated Serbs cannot possibly succeed in resistance to their surge.

In one night, old and renowned Serbian homes were destroyed; the people got fled running for their lives, so nothing remained of the cooperative. The inhabitants of Peć want to move to Serbia and, not finding adequate assistance with this Consulate, try to cross the border any way they can.

On the 15th last month Rade Ivković from Istok was murdered. After the death of Arsa Djurić he was considered to be the leader in the village, which is why they killed him.

On the same day, Mateja Radovanović was wounded in the same village.

On the same day, all the hay owned by Radoje Ljušić as burnt down.

On the 18th last month they burnt down all the barns and grain of Rista in the village of Mlječan.

On the night of the same day, they burnt down the house of Milutin Čakrljić from the village of Drenik.

On the 1st of this month, Rista Zarić from the village of Ljubožde got killed. Five years ago, Rista had to leave his land because of the terror he was exposed to, so he found refuge on the village of Klina, as worker of Zeynel-Bey from Peć. He was heading toward Ljubožde to try to get at least a fourth of his land, but Albanians crossed his way and killed him with a rifle.

On the 17th this month, Ica Šćepić from Salipovci and Vukajlo from Oprašak were attacked by bandits and their friends shot at the bandits, killing one and murdering the other.

Last week, Boško Slavković from the village of Suho Grlo got killed. Zeynel Uka murdered him.

A.S, MFA, Political Affairs, row 171, 1906

NEW ACTS OF VIOLENCE (NOVEMBER 1906)

Vice-Consul Milan M. Rakić to Nikola Pašić, President of the Ministerial Council

Political and EducationalDepartment, 975

Priština,
November 22th/December 5th, 1906

(...)

In the recent period, the following acts of terror happened in the area if Vučitrn:

On the 10th this month, Mujan from Rasani stole two bulls from Miljko Perić in Slivovica and on the same day bulls were stolen from Ariton Micić and Mirko Stević.

On the 14th this month, Albanians from Rasani and Bošnjane attacked the houses of Trajko, Ariton and Krsman Mičić from Šlivovica, but they heroically defended their livestock and gave none away. The fight lasted all night long.

On the 9th this month, Albanians attacked Srećko Vuletić from Sviljarevo, wounding him and taking 20 sheep from him. The peasants of Sviljarevo brought the wounded Srećko to Vučitrn for complaint, but to no avail. The court and the kaymekam were heedless. Ibrahim Zećir, Albanian from Kosurić near Djakovica, wounded Nikola Antić from Drenovac.

Drec Gini, a fanda, stole a sow from Marko Vasojević in Vidane (Peć district).

Baros Berol stole a cow from Sima Veljić, a priest in Dolac.

Živan Dončić from Biča was hit once and all his feed was burnt down one night.

To Jovan Belić and Milivoje Stevanović from Kijevo they also burnt down feed. To the former, twenty cartloads of hay, five cartloads of aftergrass and five cartloads of pulses, and forty cartloads of straw to the other.

Rexhep the settler imposed a 34-lire fine to the village of Cucaje.

On the 1st this month, Stepan Djurić from the village of Osojane was killed.

On the 2nd of this month. Jovan Piskulić from the same village was murdered.

On the 4th of this month, Radovan Šapić from the same village was shot at several times, but struck none.

Earlier this month, Stojadin Stojković from Vaganeš got killed, and Nikola Djordjević from Grizima (near Gnjilane) was wounded.

Jashar Atemović from Busovar imposed an 8-lire tax to Petar Jović from Businčac (near Gnjilane).

Zeka from Tudjovac blackmailed Jovan Papulović from Strezovac for 12 lires.

Two cows were stolen from Stanoje Perić in Ajnovce (near Gnjilane).

24 sheep were stolen from Veljko Stević in Sušić.

Albanian Šaćir from Vica stole the daugther of Staniša Milosavljević from the same village. He detained her for about ten days and his company battered her incessantly, making her convert to Islam. The girl barely managed to return to her father's.

A.S. MFA, Political and Educational Affairs, 1906, row 59. № 25. XI 1906. Political Affairs № 5893.

DEVASTATION OF VILLAGES AROUND PRIZREN

Vice-Consul Milan M. Rakić to Nikola Pašić, President of the Ministerial Council and Minister of Foreign A ffairs

Political and Educational Department № 998;

Priština,
November 29th/December 12th, 1906

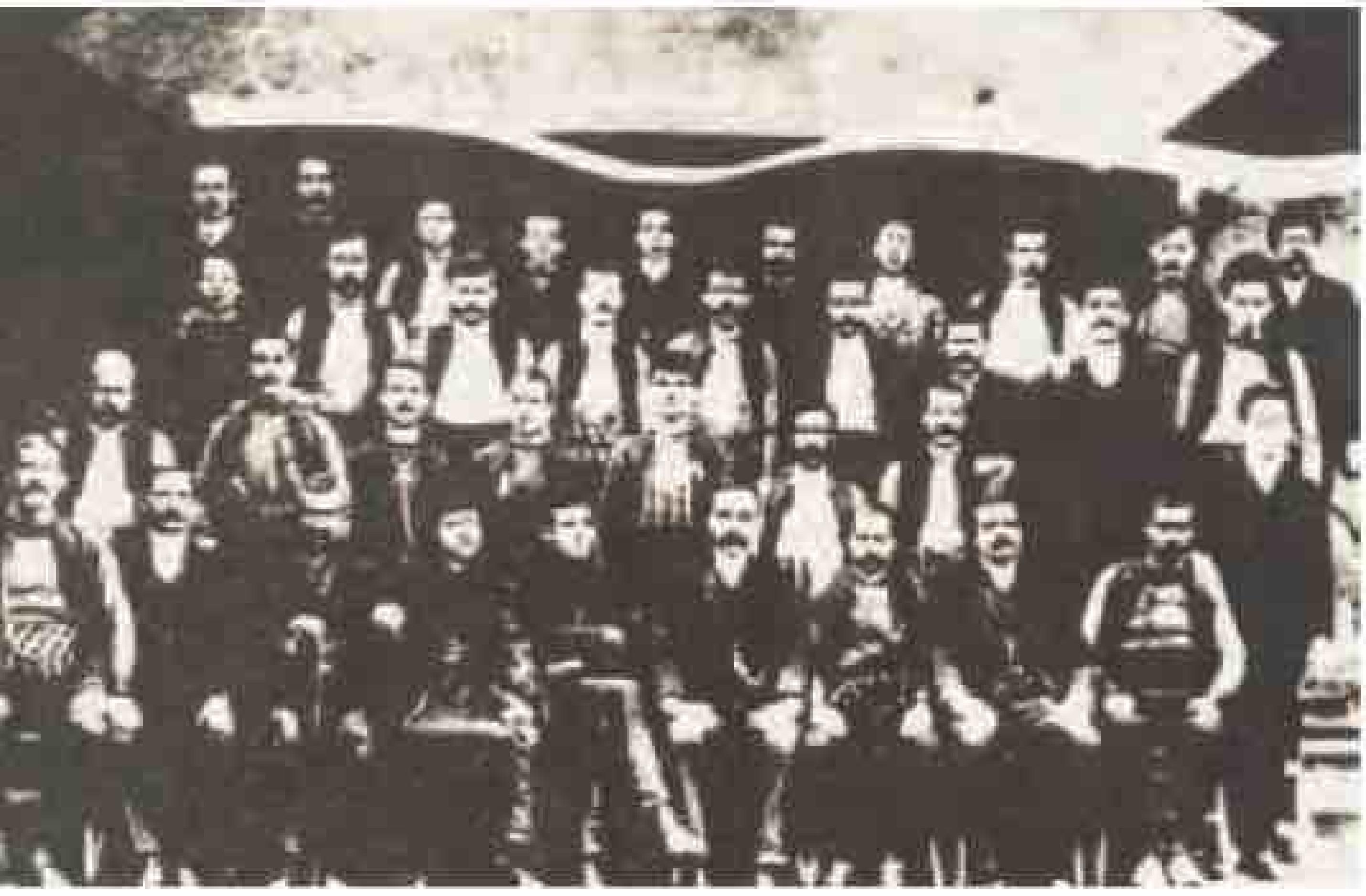
Mr. Minister,

The old tactics of Sultan to reward certain Albanian terrorists with either clemency or various honorary titles and tangible rewards, especially granting clemency to Destan-Efendi lately, a former policeman in Prizren, gave rise to uprising of some Albanians in Lluma, hoping to get the Sultan's grace and generosity to their homes. A certain Ahmed As, former captain of gendarmerie in Prizren, who was exiled with other villains, is now asking to return to service. If this is not allowed, he will, modest as he is, be satisfied with salary only, not even performing the duty of a captain. With him, the infamous bandit Ramadan Zaskok, also former captain, who got that rank as a reward for numerous crimes perpetrated within twenty years.

Waiting for this movement to get full-fledged, or for the authorities to meet their demands, Albanians attacked Serbian population around Prizren with all their forces. Of their terrorist acts, six villages in Podgorje are most severly afflicted, Ljubižda, Koriša, Mušutište, Dvorane, Popovlavle and Movlalje. In those villages, land is mostly owned by Serbs, or at least Serbs till their land, so the mountains' Albanians, taking advantage of the absolute anarchy in that area intend to drive our population away and seize the fertile soil in the plains.

And, indeed, due to the terror, our people are leaving their land and finding refuge anywhere just to save their lives. Thus, in Ljubižde, the number of our households is halved, in Koriša only nine our families remained, in Popolavlje five and in Movlalje eleven!

Many a time have the peasants complained to the Mutesarif in Prizren, but the repercussions on them were even



The Serbian youth organization "Dečanski", founded in Djakovica 1910

worse, because, firstly, the authorities did nothing about that and, secondly, the villains, resenftul with the complaint, were even more vindictive against Serbs. However, the peasants of these villages still filed a complaint to the Prizren Mutesarif a couple of days ago. They submitted a copy of the complaint to the respective Russian, Italian and Austrian Consulates in Prizren. What happens further and what position the Consulates will take, I will have the honor of informing you in due time.

Please, Mr. Minister, kindly receive the assurances of my most excellent esteem.

A.S, MFA, Political and Educational Department, 1906, row 59, № 6019 № 5. XII 1906

A LETTER FROM SERBS DISPLACED FROM KOSOVO

Stamen Djurdjević, Spasoje Trajković— to the Minister President of the Ministerial Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Belgrade,
May, 17th/30th, 1907

Mr. Minister,

Due to the Albanian terror and violence in the Turkish Empire, known to all of you, it is impossible for us, Serbs, to survive in the Turkish Empire further, and we, the undersigned, had to leave the homes of our ancestors due to the force and caprice of Albanians, in the villages of: Trnica, Stevanac, Crveni Grad, Babina Poljana, Koćura, Lesnica, Balaćevci, Dejance Punesence and Presevica, and to move to the Kingdom of Serbia, where we stayed near the town of Leskovac, and there are about 250 of us.

The people who moved here have no bread or roof over their heads, because all that we had at our homes was taken by Albanians, so we came to the new fatherland barefoot, hungry and impoverished.

On behalf of all of us signatories to the list, we are kindly asking you, Mr. Minister, to order that we be given food to support these people, and to ensure that the Minister of People's Economy allocate land to each of the families, so that they could settle somewhere, as we have no intention of returning to Turkey and we want to stay in Serbia and to remain citizens of Serbia. Our people and children are in despair because they have nothing to eat, so we are begging you, Mr. Minister, to help us get some food as soon as possible, because the authorities in Leskovac refused to give us any, saying they had nothing to offer us when we asked.

On behalf of all, begging you and hoping for assistance soon.

On 17 May 1907 in Belgrade
Stamen Djurdjević, Spasoje Trajković,
Temporarily c/a Leskovac

A.S, MFA, Political and Educational, 1907, № 2395. letter. 17. 1907, row 310

MUSLIMS CONFIRMING THAT THERE IS VIOLENCE AGAINST CHRISTIAN SERBS

A group of Muslims to the police commissioner in Peć

Peć, October 1st/14th, 1907

We all claim in general that the complaint submitted by Mr. Metropoliten to his Tzar on his Christians faithful to the Tzar is truthful. The acts of terror, be them in town or in villages, are so blooming that they cannot be put up with any more, and the kinds of terror are: murders, arsonry, fines, thefts and conversion of faith.

Although many of the suffering people have addressed the court, still the assassins have not been caught and thus such crimes are multiplied although the court council has registered all the acts.

Most of these miserables, for fear, dare not initiate a law suit, so they are leaving their homesteads all the time. Therefore, these emigrants and martyrs should be invited to be questioned why exactly they are moving. But, as long as these people in dismay cannot be in peace and security , they will not say the names of the criminals.

That is the situation and this is the people's response.

Sealed by the local:
Hagi Mahmud-Efendi Gul Maten
Sinan Cheri-Pasha
Ismail-Efendi from Ali-Chaush mahala (quarter)

A.S, MFA, Political and Educational Department, 1907 row 310

NEW ACTS OF VIOLENCE

The attaché of the Serbian Consulate R. Šaponjic, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Political and Educational Affairs, № 1603

Priština,
October 21th/November 3rd, 1908

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

The Consulate, in due time, had the honor of informing the Ministry of the establishment of the constitutional regime would not be enough of a guarantee for improving the life of the local population and of begging to keep the well-known Albanian besa (promise) concluded in Ferizovići. This opinion of the Consulate was, unfortunately, corroborated by the subsequent events on which the Consulate reported to the Royal Ministry.

A postcard from Priština, between the two World Wars

Now that the date for delivery of the promise, St. Dimitri's Day, is coming near, the crimes are getting ever more frequent. Not to even mention the district of Peć, where terror [*zulum*] has never been mitigated, violence is spreading across the whole territory of Kosovo. In the past seven days, a Serb was murdered in Lipljan, by a man from Djakovica; a serf from Lipljan was heavily beaten for protecting a peasant, also from Lipljan; his house was attacked at night and drilled by a burst of gun fire.

At the night between 19th and 20th of this month, Albanians attacked the house of Toma Terzić in Čaglavica and on that occasion took his 20 sheep.

Four days ago, the house of Rajko Krstić from Dobrotin was burnt down, the blaze threatening to engross the whole village, and was hardly extinguished. Albanians were driving away the crowd with gun shots, preventing them to put out the fire.

Immediately after that event, an Albanian beat up and left semi-conscious a local shop-owner only because he dared ask him to pay for some goods.

The village of Ugljare has been attacked twice by Albanians, at night, trying to drive the cattle away from their barns. Practically nobody sleeps at night, sitting awake and guarding their yards, in fear of Albanian attacks, as they have no weapons to defend themselves.

All these misdeeds remain unpunished because the authorities do nothing, or almost nothing, to proceed with them.

While leaving the Albanian crimes thus with impunity, the authorities punish most severely even the lightest Serbian offences.

So, for instance, yesterday they were battering twelve our compatriots in the hucumat (court council), for drunkenness and quarrels, although those events happened almost a month ago and fell into oblivion.

Albanians are attacking and threatening incessantly, so the fear is growing as St. Dimitri's Day is coming up.

The news of Serbia seizing Novi Pazar is being kept topical here, to perpetuate hard feelings of Turks and Albanians against Serbs.

Archive of Serbia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Politics and Education 1907, row 310, № 5811.

ACTS OF VIOLENCE COMMITTED BY ALBANIANS AGAINST SERBS

Consul Milan M. Rakić to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Political and Educational Affairs № 837

Priština,
October 12th–25th, 1911

Albanian acts of terror [*zulum*] against the Serbs

From July 1 till the end of October 1911 in the areas (kazas) of Priština, Prizren and Tetovo and Sanjaks of Gostivar, Sjenica, Peć and Pljevlja

Thefts	128
Cases of arson	35
Felonies	41
Appropriation of property	53
Cases of blackmail	30
Cases of intimidation	19
Attempted murders	37
Armed attacks on property	58
Cases of battery and abuse	27
Forced conversions to Islam	13
Inflictions of serious injuries	18

The Tradition of Kosovo in the Formation of Modern Serbian Statehood in the 19th Century

Dimitrije Djordjević

The tradition of Kosovo, in the form of the cult of the 1389 battle, inspired the Serbian people, its leaders, and intellectuals for centuries. It became deeply imbedded in the origins of modern Serbian nationalism and the struggle for national emancipation and liberation. The "historical memory" became part of self-awareness, an incentive for survival, and an instrument to obtain national and human rights. It mirrored the collective and individual destiny of the Serbs and was built into the origins of modern statehood. In 1889 the historian and statesman Čedomilj Mijatović summarized the impact which the cult of Kosovo had on generations:

There was not a single struggle of the people for liberation in which the heroes from the Kosovo battle were not present. The Montenegrins, fighting in their rocky mountains quenched their thirst from the Kosovo spring. Karageorge breathed the air from Kosovo and the Obrenovići placed Kosovo in their coat of arms.[1]

The modern Serbian state originated in the nineteenth century, during and after the 1804–1815 uprisings against the Ottomans. These uprisings represent the second of three traditions which were central in the development of modern Serbian statehood. The first of these traditions, the cult of the Battle of Kosovo, marked the defeat of the medieval Serbian state. The cult of the 1804–1815 uprisings announced the beginning of the reborn state; while the third tradition, the cult of the 1912–1918 wars, declared the confirmation of that new state.

The uprisings in the early years of the nineteenth century transformed an agrarian upheaval into a national liberation movement. This cannot be understood without presupposing an historical consciousness, however vague, which was seeded in the soul of the peasant and further enforced by the intelligentsia. In this regard, the popular epic poetry and the message transmitted by the church and early historiography played the role of mediator between the old and the new state.

We do not know how deep the historical heritage rested in peasant memory. But we know that the epic popular poetry expressed the deeds of heroes, the strength of the Orthodox faith, and the martyrdom of a conquered nation. In the mind of the peasant, for example, Kraljević Marko fell asleep in the Šar mountains; when the time came, Marko would wake up and Kosovo would be avenged. Poems collected by Vuk Karadžić and chanted by peasant bards from generation to generation transferred the message that there is no freedom without sacrifice. The Kosovo epic cycle presented Miloš Obilić as a hero, Prince Lazar as a martyr, and Vuk Branković as a traitor. The blind bard Filip Višnjić sang to peasants about Karadjordje ruling "from Kosovo all the way to Belgrade."[2] Raško "the geron" (starac) chanted to insurgents about Kosovo, Prizren, Priština, Banjska, Janjevo, Vučitrn, and ancient Serbian imperial sites.[3] The best poems of the bard Tešan Podrugović were about Boško Jugović, the standard bearer in the Battle of Kosovo.[4] In the later *haiduk* epic cycle, the outlaws were avengers of Kosovo. Priests and monks, among whom a significant part of the 1804 insurgents' leadership was recruited,[5] constantly reminded the peasant about the tragic battle. According to Joakim Vujić, in 1804 the peasants attributed the ruins of the palace near

[1] Speech in the Serbian Academy of Sciences made on 15 June 1889, in *Otadžbina*, vol. 22 (Belgrade, 1889), p. XIV.

[2] Alex Dragnić and Slavko Todorović, *The Saga of Kosovo* (Boulder East European Monographs, 1984), p. 98.

[3] Vuk Vinaver, "Istorijska tradicija u Prvom srpskom ustanku," *Istorijski Glasnik*, № 1–2 (Beograd, 1954), p. 116.

[4] "Riding on chestnut horse, dressed in gold and wrapped in the standard which carried the cross...", Dragana Samardžić, *Vojne zastave Srba do 1918* (Beograd, 1983), p. 20.

[5] The long list of priests (leaders of the insurgents) is to be found in Mihailo Popović, *Istorijska uloga Srpske crkve u čuvanju narodnosti i stvaranju države* (Beograd, 1933), pp. 81–106.

Ćuprija, the foundation of the Čokešina monastery, and the alleged stables in the Cer mountain to Miloš Obilić.[6] Villagers told Mateja Nenadović that the two rocks in the field named after Relja Krilatica were thrown there by the Kosovo hero.[7] Later in the century in 1875, during a trip through Bosnia, the archeologist Sir Arthur Evans found "the memory of Kosovo still living... chanted by peasant bards to peasants along the Sava and Danube rivers and in the remote parts of the Balkans, from the Montenegrin mountains to the blue waters of the Adriatic."[8]

Each generation rewrites history, inevitably injecting present ideas into the past. Modern nationalism among Czechs, Poles, and Hungarians, as well as among Balkan peoples, found its justification in history, reappraising former feudal institutions and medieval monarchies by accommodating them to the needs of modern times.[9] A similar role was assigned to the Kosovo legend; to confirm the birth of modern Serbian statehood, to justify its inception, to legitimize its existence, and to promote its development. The liberation and unification of a nation divided and subdued by foreign rule found inspiration in the past. "The poetic legend of Kosovo," observed Radovan Samardžić, "condensed in itself the idea of the patriarchal man concerning his past and expressed his values of morality and freedom."[10] According to Veljko Petrović, "Fictitious or true, the Kosovo legend offered a fatherland to the people who had lost it."[11] And Zoran Mišić remarked, "The world echoed in ourselves before we were even aware of it."[12] Thus, fiction became reality in the popular mind.

In the late nineteenth century critical historiography argued the accuracy of the Kosovo myth. Ilarion Ruvarac, for example, relentlessly questioned the alleged treason of Vuk Branković in the Battle of Kosovo. Ruvarac was right, but at the same time a young Serbian nationalism needed that treason to justify the collapse of the medieval state. Njegoš's masterful epic, *Gorski vijenac*, clearly relied on historical errors, but it inspired Montenegrins in the fight for freedom. Myth clearly played a vital role in shaping the Serbian people's psychology and determining its destiny. Thus, the significance of the myth overshadowed its historical veracity.

The impact of the myth made the Battle of Kosovo the watershed in Serbian history. Eventually the entire past would be divided into two periods— before and after Kosovo. Vuk Karadžić, collecting epic popular poems, found "only a few heroic poems older than [the Battle of] Kosovo. The shock hit the people so hard that almost everybody forgot what happened before... The recording and singing started only after that."[13]

A rather thin layer of lay intelligentsia, mainly in the diaspora, also helped to preserve information about Kosovo. Seventeenth and eighteenth century historians revived the battle, offered colorful portraits of medieval rulers, and described the downfall of the state. Jovan Rajić's history, written in 1768, became a kind of bible for the 1804 insurgents.[14]

In regards to church influence, the late Professor Dimitrije Bogdanović correctly stated that "without the Patriarchate of Peć, restored in 1557, Kosovo would probably be lost forever."[15] While the state of the Nemanjić lasted for three centuries, the spiritual legacy of St. Sava survived for five centuries.[16] The church was the custodian of medieval statehood. It assigned to Kosovo the role of "Serbian Palestine, the Mount Sinai" where "graveyards of emperors, of grief and sadness, and of ancient glory" were to be found.[17] The myth became "the great national school in which language and trust in self-being have been preserved."[18]

Canonized by the church, Prince Lazar became the source of hope. As the nun Jefimija embroidered on his shroud:

Don't forget your beloved children
Who need your help, oh martyr![19]

According to the geographer Jovan Cvijić, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries approximately half a million Serbs migrated from Montenegro, Herzegovina, and Old Serbia and populated Šumadija, where the new Serbian state would be established.[20] Religious icons and relics of medieval rulers followed their migrations. Prince Lazar's remains symbolized the Serbian exodus.

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6 Vujić Jovan, *Putešestvije po Srbiji* (Beograd, 1902), pp. 77, cited in: Vuk Vinaver, "Istorijska tradicija u Prvom srpskom ustanku," p. 105.

7 Prota Mateja, *Memoari Prote Mateje* (Beograd, 1893), pp. 40–41.

8 Arthur Evans, articles published in the London *Times* and Manchester *Guradian*, cited from the Serbo-Croatian translation in Vladimir Dedijer, *Sarajevo 1914* (Belgrade, 1966), p. 423.

9 Dimitrije Djordjević, "Uloga istoricizma u formiranju balkanskih država XIX veka," *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta*, X-l (Beograd, 1968), pp.309–26.

10 Radovan Samardžić, "Oko istorijskog i legendarnog u kosovskom predanju," in: *Zadužbine Kosova, Spomenici i Znamenja Srpskog Naroda*, edited by Živorad Stojković (Belgrade, 1987), p. 564.

11 Veljko Petrović, "Smisao Vidovdana," *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 284.

12 Zoran Mišić, "Šta je to kosovsko opredeljenje?" *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 288.

13 *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 267.

14 See Radovan Samardžić, *Pisci srpske istorije*, vol. I (Belgrade, 1976), pp. 7–27, 29–59; vol, II (1986), pp. 7–41. Also, Nikola Radojčić, "Oblik prvih modernih srpskih istorija," *Zbornik Matice srpske*, sv. 2 (Novi sad, 1952), pp. 1–52.

15 Dimitrije Bogdanović, *Razgovori o Kosovu* (Belgrade, 1986), p. 45.

16 V. Petrović, "Peć i Dečani" (1932), in *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 168.

17 Ljuba Nenadović (ed.), *Šumadinka* (May 4 [16], 1850).

18 Lazar Trifunović, "Likovni izraz kosovskog predanja," cited in *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 291.

19 Monahinja Jefimija, "Pohvala Knezu Lazaru (1402)," in *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 187; Dimitrije Bogdanović, *Knjiga o Kosovu* (Belgrade, 1985), p. 61.

20 From 1876 to 1912, some 150,000 Serbs moved from the Ottoman territory. See, Jovan Cvijić, *Balkanski rat i Srbija* (Belgrade, 1912), p. 10; D. Bogdanović, *Knjiga o Kosovu*, pp. 137–138, 150; *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. VI, 1 (Belgrade Srpska književna zadruga, 1983), p. 266.

At first buried in Priština after the Kosovo battle, they were removed to Ravanica in 1390/1391 and to Szent Endre near Budapest in 1690. In 1697 they were transferred to Vrdnik monastery in Srem, where they rested until World War II. The Ustashi genocide against the Serbs during that war forced their removal to Belgrade for reasons of safety. Finally, in June 1989, on the occasion of the sixth centenary of the Battle of Kosovo they were brought back to Gračanica in Kosovo and then finally returned to Ravanica.

Together with these holy bones Serbian migrants carried two important items: the legacy of Kosovo and the idea of an integral national identity. Separated geographically from Kosovo they were not estranged spiritually. Kosovo became synonymous with the word "battle field." In medieval sources the region was named Serbia. In the nineteenth century, when the modem Serbian state originated in Šumadija and the valley of the Morava, the region of Kosovo and Metohija was renamed Old Serbia, to distinguish it from the new, liberated one.[21] But in the Serbian mind they made one entity. Even the unity with the old patriarchate was kept close until the Ottomans abolished the patriarchate in 1766.[22] There is little doubt, therefore, that the Kosovo legend and its message helped to form the peasant conception of the new state during the 1804 uprising.

Nevertheless, the central idea of modern statehood was imported from the upper clerical and social layers of the Serbian diaspora in Southern Hungary. In contact with the European Enlightenment, influenced by the French Revolution, exposed to denationalization, and placed on the margins of the main national body, intellectuals were the first to espouse the idea of a renewed Serbian state. In 1791 the archimandrite Stefan Jovanović, and later in 1803 the archimandrite Arsenije Gagović proposed the formation of a Slavic-Serbian empire to the Russian tsars. Sava Tekelija, a rich Serbian merchant in the Hungarian capital, published a map of Serbia and proposed the state's restoration to both Napoleon and Franz I of Austria. These suggestions were renewed in 1804 in an address of the metropolitan Stefan Stratimirović to Tsar Alexander I.[23]

In the meantime, a sense of history was revived in the country. In 1806 the monks from Studenica removed the relics of the First Crowned King Stefan to the monastery of Vraćevšnica, in the liberated territory.[24] For good reasons King Stefan soon became the central cult of the insurgents. In that same year the Turkish Vizier in Travnik, Bosnia, reported about the "intention of [Serbian] insurgents to delay their activity until St. George's Day [May 6] and then to do as Prince Lazar did in the past at Kosovo. They carry books [telling] about the Prince, and find in him a great incentive for the rebellion."[25]

In 1807 Baron Simbschen, the Austrian commander of the Military Frontier, in formed the Archduke Leopold that the Serbian insurgents possessed the Žefarović collection of medieval coats-of-arms. Among the collection was the copper-plate of the crowning of Emperor Dušan, showing all his conquered lands lying under the hooves of his horse. The baron did not fail to understand the inspiration which this plate provided for the insurgents: "Mit vielen Enthusiasmus und Religions-Fanatismus (die Serben) den Wunsch högen wieder die Vereinigung der disseits gelegenen Provinzen das alte servische Reich herzustellen… und eine selbstandige Nation auszumachen."[26]

Most importantly, Karadjordje himself seemed to appear as the avenger of the Kosovo defeat. In the speech he made to the insurgents in Topčider in 1804, he called on them "to throw off, in the name of God, the yoke which the Serbs carry from Kosovo to this day."[27] He praised his commanders and compared them to Miloš Obilić. His seals had the inscription "With the mercy of God, Georgije Petrović, (in the name) of all the people of Serbia and Bosnia." A small seal represented the coat-of-arms of historic Rama, while a larger one carried the two-headed eagle with Serbian and Bosnian coats-of-arms.[28] In Buda a calendar was published showing Karadjordje with the crown and eagle of the Nemanjić dynasty on the front page. During the full swing of the revolution, Karadjordje started restoring some ancient monasteries. This led the Greek Bishop Leontije, when consecrating the fortress of Belgrade, to extol Karadjordje for "restoring Serbia as she was many centuries ago."[29]

References to Serbia's medieval past were abundant during the years of the uprising, and gradually symbols of the state replaced images of saints. The first Serbian government, the *Sovjet* (Council), regarded itself as the legitimate heir of the medieval authority. It moved to Smederevo "the city of our Despots and emperors." Austrian spies saw in the *Audienzsaal* of the *Sovjet* the por-

[21] Old Serbia included the Sandjak of Novi Pazar (from the southern Bosnian borders to Mitrovica), Kosovo with Priština, Metohija with the cities of Peć and Prizren, and the area south of the Šar mountain, see Jovan Cvijić, *Balkanski rat i Srbija,* pp. 6–7; Also Branislav Nušić, *Kosovo, opis zemlje i naroda* (Novi Sad; Matica srpska, 1902), vol. 6, p. 2.

[22] Milenko Vukićević, *Karadjordje,* vol. I (Belgrade, 1907), pp. 236–237; vol. II, p. 202. Nikola Radojčić, "Sava Tekelija," *Istorijski časopis,* XII-XIII (Belgrade, 1963), p. 9.

[23] Prota Stevan Dimitrijević, *Stevana Dimitrijevića, mitropolita karlovačkog plan za oslobodjenje srpskog naroda* (Belgrade, 1926), pp. 35–47.

[24] V. Vinaver, *Istorijska tradicija,* p. 111.

[25] Letter of the Vizier in Travnik, *Zadužbine Kosova,* p. 611.

[26] A. Ivić, *Spisi iz bečkih arhiva o Prvom srpskom ustanku* (Subotica: SKAN, 1938), vol. IV, Doc. 577, Baron Simbschen, *General F. M. Lieutenant to Erzherzog Ludwig* (10 October 1807), pp. 828–30.

[27] Prota Mateja, *Memoari,* p. 261.

[28] Vinaver, *Istorijska tradicija,* p. 112.

[29] Aleksa Ivić, *Spisi iz bečkih arhiva o Prvom srpskom ustanku,* vol. IV (1807), Doc. 156, Oberster Press 8, III, 1807, p. 241.

trait of Emperor Dušan. During the 1809 crisis of the uprising, the *Sovjet* sent a cry for help to Serbs in Trieste "Our fatherland is now swaying the way it did on the field of Kosovo."[30] Trying to obtain Napoleon's support for the uprising, the Serbian emissary in Paris recalled Serbia's ancient history and empire.

Artists across the Danube produced seals and standards for the insurgents. The most frequently used was the coat-of-arms of the ancient Serbian region of *Tribalia*, represented by the head of a boar pierced by an arrow. Also very popular was the insignia of the old region of *Rama*—an arm holding a sword. The cross with four "s's" ("c's" in Cyrillic) placed between the cross-arms was attributed to Prince Lazar's family. Embellished with a double-headed eagle, it became the nineteenth century Serbian coat-of arms. At the beginning of the uprising, Karadjordje's flag had the image of King Stefan, The First--Crowned, on the face, and the cross with four "s's" on the reverse side. Military detachments (*kompanije*) received their individual flags in 1809, ornate with the Serbian cross and the boar head, pierced by an arrow. Insurgent leaders obtained similar personal flags.[31]

The memory of Kosovo also had a profound impact among Serbs in Montenegro. The second Serbian state which emerged in Montenegro during the nineteenth century was called "the Serbian Sparta" in the period of romanticism. While the Serbian state inherited the tradition of medieval *Raška*, Montenegro's legacy was to continue the statehood of ancient *Zeta*. The proclamation of the Montenegrin Kingdom in 1910 made direct reference to the medieval rulers of Zeta: Vojislav, Mihailo, and Bodin.[32]

The tribal Montenegrin society, isolated in rocky mountains and waging an almost continuous war with the Ottomans, preserved the Kosovo tradition even more than Serbia. In the *History of Montenegro*, published in Russia in 1757, Bishop Vasilije argued that the Petrović family of Montenegrin bishops is related to "the imperial stem of Simeon (Stefan) Nemanja."[33] Planning with Karadjordje a joint Serbo-Montenegrin offensive toward Sandžak and Kosovo in 1809, Bishop Petar I Petrović was very concerned about saving the relics of the ancient kings in Kosovo.[34] Ivo Andrić, the 1962 Yugoslav Nobel prize laureate, called the Montenegrin Bishop Rade-Njegoš (1830–1850) "the Jeremiah of Kosovo" who carried "the message of Obilić."[35]

In his philosophical epic, *The Mountain Wreath*, Njegoš cited Miloš Obilić more than any other Serbian hero. He prophesied, "the name of Montenegro will be resurrected from the Kosovo graveyard."[36] "Praise to the ashes of the Nemanjić," wrote the poet: "...Their crowns will shine again ...The dawn is coming to our mountains!"[37]

In a letter Vladika Rade addressed to Osman Pasha Skopljak in 1847, he described Montenegrins as "worthy scions of old knights... who fought for honesty and identity since that unhappy [Kosovo] day when the Asiatic destroyed our empire."[38] When asked what he would do if his dream were realized during his lifetime, the Bishop answered: "I would go to my Patriarchate in Peć and Mihailo, the Prince of Serbia, would go to Prizren."[39] The Serbian writer Ljubomir Nenadović addressed Prince Danilo of Montenegro: "After Lazar you are the first!" In *Letters from Cetinje*, Nenadović described "the mourning for the lost empire." Women and young girls did not adorn themselves with flowers but wore a black scarf around their heads. The traditional man's cap was also embroidered in black—for the memory of Kosovo. "When you talk to these people," wrote Nenadović, "you have the impression that the Battle of Kosovo took place yesterday."[40]

In 1900 the Montenegrin war leader, Vojvoda Marko Miljanov, praised "the candle which lit the past and present, and ever since Kosovo was the watchful guardian of the Serbian pledge."[41] Kosovo was also the leitmotif in the poetry of the Montenegrin prince, and later (1910) king, Nikola. His poem "There, Over There" (*Onamo, 'namo*), which was accepted as the national anthem evoked Prizren, the ruins of imperial palaces, and ancient glory:

Over there, behind those mountains
It is told that Miloš's grave repose(s).
There! My soul will rest in peace...
Over there: to see Prizren
It is mine: I shall come home.[42]

After the autonomy obtained in 1830, Serbia embarked on the thorny road of modernization and state building. The deeply rooted Ottoman heritage was to be replaced by Europeanization. The process of national liberation, aiming toward the unification of the scattered Serbs still living under foreign rule, met with the opposition of two neighboring empires, the Ottoman and the Habsburg. Until 1867 the sultan's flag still floated over the citadel in Belgrade, and the Turkish *nizams* patrolled in Serbian cities.

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30 Ivić, *Spisi iz bečkih arhiva o...* IV (1807), pp. 111, 115, 117.

31 Dragana Samardžić, *Vojne zastave*, pp. 35, 37–39, 45–46, 55.

32 Nikola Škerović, *Crna Cora na osvitu XX veka* (Belgrade, 1964), pp. 555–556.

33 D. Djordjević, *Uloga istoricizma*, p. 317.

34 "This year we Montenegrins as well as Serbs from the side of Belgrade intend to raise arms against the Turks and to liberate you," wrote the bishop to the prior of Dečani monastery. He warned him to "take care and save the relics of the Holy Kings and the cross." *Zadužbine*, p. 611.

35 Ivo Andrić, "Njegoš kao tragični junak kosovske misli," *Zadužbine*, p. 279.

36 Cited in Dedijer, *Sarajevo 1914*, p. 411.

37 *Zadužbine*, pp. 221–23.

38 *Zadužbine*, p. 268.

39 Dragnić-Todorović, *The Saga of Kosovo*, p. 80.

40 Ljubomir Nenadović, "Pisma sa Cetinja (1878)," cited in, *Zadužbine*, p. 270.

41 *Lj. Nenadović*, "Pisma sa Cetinja (1878)," p. 272.

42 Bogdan Popović, *Antologija novije srpske lirike*, 13th ed. (Belgrade, 1971), p. 13.

The realities were somber, but a young and dynamic society, based on free peasant land ownership, and the emergence of a middle-class and a domestic intelligentsia, all moved Serbia toward the future. Again, history was to justify existence and to offer prospects. In 1844 the Serbian statesman Ilija Garašanin combined the past, present, and the future of his country in the *Načertanije* ("Draft"), which was to become the Serbian national program until World War I. In this program the old "pre" and "post" Kosovo approach was amended by the existence of the newly restored statehood. As Garašanin observed:

The Serbian state must strive to expand and become stronger... Its roots and foundation are firmly imbedded in the Serbian empire of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the glorious pageant of Serbian history... The arrival of the Turks in the Balkans interrupted this development [the taking over of the Byzantine empire]... But now, since the Turkish power is broken and destroyed, so to speak this interrupted process must commence once more and in the same spirit... We Serbs appear before the world as the heirs of our illustrious fathers, doing nothing that is new, other than completing their work... Serbia must destroy, stone by stone, the edifice of the Turkish State... and upon the solid foundation of the old Serbian state, erect the new one.[43]

The tradition of Kosovo again reappeared as the cornerstone in shaping the history of the Serbian state.

In 1848 revolutions stormed Europe and echoed in the Balkans. In Central Europe the explosion of nationalism, liberalism and anti-feudalism marked the finale of the movement which started in France in 1789. The ideas of European liberalism penetrated modestly in Serbia. They echoed among the youth and were embodied in the already awakened nationalism. In 1845 liberal high school students organized the "Dušan regiment" (*Dušanov polk*) and held military exercises in Belgrade. Two years later the group was enlarged and renamed "The Society of Serbian Youth" (*Družina mladeži srpske*) with the program to include "all Serbs from the ancient empire." They chose St. Vitus Day as the commencement day of the society; for that was the day "when our heroic forefathers sacrificed themselves for freedom and showed to their posterity the path to follow." The society's member, Stevan Ćirić, made the inflammatory appeal: "Do we will, are we able, do we dare to go to Kosovo?"[44] Roused by the 1848 Serbian movement across the Danube, students in Belgrade declared on St. Vitus day that the moment had come to prove "who is for the cause and who is the traitor"[45]—an allusion to Prince Lazar's speech on the eve of the Battle of Kosovo.

The revolution which started in Hungary triggered Serbian demands for an autonomous Vojvodina. Revived nationalism erupted throughout the Habsburg empire. Rejected by the Hungarian leadership, the Serbs turned for support to the emperor in Vienna and caused a tragic civil war with the Hungarians. On 1 May 1848, the popular assembly in Karlovci proclaimed the autonomy of the Vojvodina, elected a Serbian Vojvoda, and promoted the metropolitan to patriarch. As usual, the Kosovo message was present on that occasion. Josip Rajačić, the newly elected patriarch, said to the crowd: "You are watched upon today by the holy stem of the Nemanjić, by Simeon, Sava and Uroš, Dušan and Lazar. Remember Miloš Obilić... but also the treason of Vuk Branković."[46] To the Serbian frontiersmen, who were called to follow the example of the Kosovo warriors, the message was clear: "Don't be sons of Vuk Branković!"[47] Paradoxically enough, the appeal requested the same loyalty to "our merciful emperor Ferdinand."

The dynamic period of the 1860s was marked by the abolition of the Vojvodina in the Habsburg Monarchy; the nationalistic policy of Prince Mihailo in Serbia; the wars of Montenegro with the Ottomans; the upheavals in Poland, Herzegovina, and the island of Crete; and the wars for the unification of Italy and Germany. At the same time the Kosovo tradition in Serbia got a significant boost from the flowering of romanticism. To overthrow the "foreign yoke," to admire the "glorious past," to deplore the "tragedy of Kosovo" and to cry for revenge—these became the slogans of the day. The generation of the 1860s was convinced that the final settlement of the national question was around the comer and that the time had come for decisive action. As the historian Slobodan Jovanović wrote, never were the Serbs so proud and never had they believed so strongly in their historical mission as they did at that time.[48]

To young romanticists God was Serbian, and the Serb was the epitome of Emperor Dušan. Kralj Marko and Miloš Obilić were looked on as close relatives, almost contemporaries.[49] Historiography echoed the popular epics;

[43] Dragoslav Stranjaković, "Kako je postalo Garašaninovo 'Načertanije,'" *Spomenik SKA*, XVI, II (Belgrade, 1939), p. 70: The translation in English by Paul Hehn in: "The Origins of Modern Pan-Serbism," *East European Quarterly*, IX, (2) (Boulder, 1975), pp. 158–169.

[44] The emblem of the society depicted St. Sava blessing two Serbian boys shaking hands over the Serbian coat of arms. Among members of the society were later founders of the Liberal Party: Jovan Ristić, Radivoje Milojković, Jovan Ilić, and others, see, Skerlić, *Omladina i njena književnost (1848–1871)*, 2nd ed. (Belgrade, 1925), pp. 18, 23, 25, 27.

[45] *Gradja za istoriju srpskog pokreta u Vojvodini 1848–1849* Belgrade; SANU, 1952), Serija I, vol. 1 (March-June 1848), Grujić to M. Petrović (Belgrade 5, V, 1848), Doc. 320. p. 414.

[46] *Gradja za istoriju srpskog pokreta u Vojvodini*, The speech of Patriarch Rajačić presented at the May assembly, Doc. 181, p. 256.

[47] *Gradja za istoriju srpskog pokreta* u *Vojvodini*, Proclamation of the Main People's Committee to Serbian officers and non-commissioned officers, Doc. 277, pp. 370–71; Doc. 276, pp. 371–72.

[48] Slobodan Jovanović, *Druga vlada Miloša i Mihaila* (Beograd 1923), p. 263.

student journals mushroomed.[50] Youngsters were dressed in "national" attire, the *Dušanka* and *Lazarica*—a kind of a domestic version of the Hungarian fur coat. The cry was: Let us go to Kosovo! In a famous speech on 4 January 1861, the Serbian liberal leader in the Vojvodina, Svetozar Miletić, remarked, "Our God who saved Montenegro and resurrected Serbia after four hundred years is still alive and protects us."[51] Pleading for a Balkan federation as a solution to the Eastern Question, Miletić proposed "Prizren, die alte Rezidenz der Serbische Könige and Zaren"[52] for the capital of such an eastern Switzerland.

The result of this national fervor was the merging of all student groups into one "United Serbian Youth" movement (*Omladina*) in 1866. The central journal of the society, *Mlada Srbadija*, preached the resurrection of ancient glory "to restore the vigor of Obilić, to heal the wounds of Kosovo, to revenge its heroes—martyrs who died for freedom—and to break the chains of a five century slavery."[53] From 1866 until 1871 the *Omladina* organized six general assemblies of its members. More nationalistic in the Vojvodina, more liberal in Serbia, the youth clashed with authorities in both Hungary and Serbia; soon they split between nationalists and socialists, which brought about the end of the movement.

The 1876 declaration of war against the Ottomans referred to the "mission of Kosovo" and the liberation of Serbian brethren from Turkish rule.[54] Prince Nikola of Montenegro addressed his soldiers with a flamboyant appeal: "This time we have to avenge Kosovo! Under Murad I the Serbian empire was destroyed—now, during the reign of Murad V it has to rise again."[55]

However, the "revenge of Kosovo" was more difficult to achieve than the Serbian nationalistic public realized. Defeat in the 1876 war brought disillusionment and sobered the spirits. The 1877–1878 war was more successful, particularly because of the Russian involvement. In January 1878, a detachment of the Serbian army reached Kosovo, entered Gnjilane, and came to Gračanica monastery. It was enthusiastically accepted by the native Serbian population, which from 1875 had prepared an uprising. Some people even volunteered in the Serbian army. However, after less than a month the detachment had to leave the region due to the decisions taken at the Berlin Congress. Serbs from Kosovo sent petitions to the great powers and to Prince Milan but to no avail.[56]

The situation for Serbs in the region of Kosovo and Metohija deteriorated after the 1870s' wars and accelerated the further exodus of the Serbian population, which was exposed to Albanian and Ottoman pressures. National dreams of joining Bosnia and Herzegovina to Serbia were crushed after the Berlin Congress, which assigned the two provinces to Austro-Hungarian occupation. During the 1880s Serbian politics turned toward the Habsburg Monarchy, which supported Serbian claims in the south in order to divert them from the western Balkans. The convention which Serbia concluded with the Ottomans in 1886 provided for the establishment of Serbian consulates in Salonika and Skoplje in 1887, and in Bitolj and Priština in 1889.[57] After the death of the Greek metropolitan in the Ras-Prizren diocese, a Serbian bishop was appointed in 1896. The Serbian government inaugurated a national propaganda campaign, based on the promotion of Serbian primary schools in Kosovo and the restoration of medieval monasteries that were in ruins. The activity was organized and directed by a special Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Belgrade, as well as by the St. Sava Society founded in 1886.

The Serbian Orthodox seminary in Prizren, established in 1871, also became an important center of national activities. The seminary attracted students from Montenegro, the Sandžak, Bosnia, and Serbia, especially after 1894 when the regions of Pljevlje, Prijepolje, and Novi Pazar were detached from the diocese of Herzegovina and joined to the diocese of Prizren. In the period from 1872 to 1896 the seminary enrolled a total of 1867 students.[58] After graduation they were ordained or appointed as teachers. The major motive which inspired these youngsters to join the seminary in Kosovo was its location. Anton Farić, one of its students and later a professor, expressed this clearly in his poem *Prizren sonnets*:

God blessed me with the good fortune
To see Prizren, the tall Dečani,

[49] Skerlić, *Omladina*, p. 157; see also Živojin Boškov, "Uloga Danice u stvaranju srpskog romantizma," in: *Ujedinjena Omladina srpska, Zbornik radova* (Novi Sad, 1968), p. 519.

[50] *Zora* in Vienna, *Preodnica* in Pest, *Sloga* in Segedin, *Sloboda* in Bratislava, *Srbadija* and *Srpska nada* in Beograd. They were joined by *Javor, Danica*, and *Vila* in Novi Sad. During the second half of the nineteenth century fifty-six Serbian periodicals were published in Novi Sad. Branislav Vranješević, "Štampa Ujedinjene Omladine srpske," in, *Ujedinjena Omladina, Zbornik radova*, p. 512.

[51] Nikola Petrović (ed.), *Svetozar Miletić in Narodna stranka, Gradja 1860–1885* (Sremski Karlovci, 1968), vol. I, Doc. 22, pp. 54–55.

[52] *Die Orientfrage—von Svetozar Miletić* (Neusatz, 1877), also in *Svetozar Miletić i Narodna stranka*, Doc. 47, p. 151; Doc. 78, p. 202.

[53] Djordje Bajić, "Časopis Mlada Srbadija (1870–1872)" in: *Ujedinjena Omladina, Zbornik radova*, p. 538.

[54] Account of a volunteer in the Serbian army in 1876: Jaša Tomić, *Rat na Kosovu i Staroj Srbiji 1912* (Novi Sad, 1913), pp. 45–46.

[55] *Zadužbine*, p. 268.

[56] Jovan Hadži Vasiljević, *Pokret Srba i Bugara u Turskoj posle srpskoturskog rata 1876 i 1877–8 godine i njegove posledice (1878–1882)* (Beogad, 1908), pp. 17–36; Vladimir Stojančević, "Prvo oslobodjenje Kosova od strane srpske vojske u ratu 1877–8," in: *Naučni skup Srbija u završnoj fazi velike Istočne krize, 1877–1878* (Beograd, 1980), pp. 459–460.

[57] Russia established the consulate in Kosovska Mitrovica (1902), Austria- Hungary (1905), and Italy in Prizren (1907).

[58] The later patriarch in Yugoslavia, Gavrilo Dožić, was among the students. *Spomenica 50-godišnjice versko-nacionalnog i kulturno-prosvetnog rada bogoslovskoliterarne Družine Rastko u Prizrenu, 1889–1939* (Skoplje, 1940), p. 285.

Monument to Kosovo Heroes,
Djordje Jovanović, detail, Kruševac

The Kosovo field where Lazar died.
And Gračanica in solemn days.[59]

In 1889 students founded "Brotherhood" (*Bratstvo*), a literary society; and in 1899 they renamed it *Rastko*, after the lay name of St. Sava. They wrote poems, papers in history and literature, and discussed the liberation and unification of the Serbs.

In 1882 Serbia proclaimed itself a kingdom, an act which Milan Obrenović justified as an accomplished "wish endowed by the past and a token of our future."[60] The official press responded by calling him "the first King from Kosovo," and the "realization of a dream which lived for hundreds of years in history, poetry, the church, and in popular assemblies."[61]

The reality, however, was not so rosy. An unpopular war with Bulgaria in 1885 brought defeat and humiliation. Moreover, the domestic political arena was in turmoil, manifested by the 1883 peasant upheaval in eastern Serbia, and the brutal reprisals of the king and the conservatives against the Radicals, whose party won the support of the peasantry. The stalemate between the king and his adversaries opened the door to the 1888 liberal constitution and caused the abdication of King Milan in 1889.

The shaken dynasty, represented by the minor King Alexander and the Regency, needed a consolidation of the monarchy. The five hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in 1889 offered such an opportunity that would serve the purposes of the monarchy as well as general national politics. The government dedicated St. Vitus day to all those who "died in wars for the Faith and the Fatherland."[62] From then on the anniversary of Kosovo would become the date to express national solidarity, pride, and self-confidence at people's gatherings.[63]

The official 1889 commemoration in Serbia was organized and carried out by the Regency, the Royal Academy of Sciences, religious and cultural institutions, and the military. On June 15 (old calendar) in Kruševac, the medieval capital of Prince Lazar, the young king, members of the Regency and of the government, and representatives of the clergy and army attended a solemn requiem to the Kosovo warriors. They also laid the foundations for a monument dedicated to Kosovo and established the special medal of Prince Lazar, which would be given only to Serbian monarchs and their adult heirs.[64]

From Kruševac, King Alexander and his suite traveled to Žiča monastery, where medieval rulers had been anointed. The young monarch, in the presence of the Russian consul Persiani, went through the same traditional ritual and was greeted by the crowd as "the first anointed king of the resurrected monarchy."[65] Sermons were held in churches all over the country.[66]

In Belgrade the Academy of Sciences held a special session on St. Vitus day.[67] Its president, Čedomilj Mijatović, called it "a liturgy which the people offered to the Kosovo martyrs." Several publications were issued by the Academy on that occasion.[68] The military journal *Ratnik* (The Warrior) published a speech about the Battle of Kosovo, which was presented in the Officer's Club by the minister of national defense.[69] And foundations were laid for St. Sava's Center in Belgrade.[70]

59 *Spomenica 50-godišnjice versko-nacionalnog i kulturna-prosvetnog*., pp. 108–111.

60 Živan Živanović, *Politička istorija Srbije*, vol. II, 1878–1889 (Beograd, 1924), p. 199.

61 *Srpska Nezavisnost*, № 32 (February 23, 1882), cited in Živanović, pp. 199–200; see also *Hrišćanski vesnik, Časopis za hrišćansku pouku i crkvenu književnost*, edited by Aleksa Ilić (Beograd 1889), XII, 2 (February 1889), pp. 147–148.

62 *Hrišćanski vesnik*, (Beograd 1889) № 7–8, p. 596.

63 V. Petrović, "Smisao Vidovdana," in *Zadužbine Kosova*, pp. 283–284.

64 About the celebrations in Serbia and Vojvodina see *Javor*, p. 271; Sava Petrović (ed. *Glas Istine*, VI (15) (Novi Sad, 1889), p. 127; *Kalendar Orao*, pp. 21–27.

65 Arsa Pajević, "Miropomazanje kralja Aleksandra u manastiru Žiči, *Orao* (1890), pp. 30–43. It was reprinted in *Mala spomenica sa 500-godišnjice slave vidovdanske u Kruševcu i miropomazanje kralja Aleksandra u Žiči* (Novi Sad, 1889). See also *Glas istine*, № 15 (Novi Sad, 1889), p. 240.

66 "Kosovska petstogodišnjica," *Krišćanski vesnik*, VI (Beograd 1889), pp. 401–3; and "Vidovdanske proslave," *Hrišćanski vesnik*, VI, pp. 557–66.

67 *Godišnjak Srpske kraljevske akademije nauka*, vol. III (1889) (Beograd 1890), pp. 1–2, 38–40, 86, 65–66.

68 Dr. J. Jovanović, *Pregled na dramsku literaturu o Kosovu* (Beograd , 1980); C. Mijatović, *Boj na Kosovu po kronici kaludjera Sen Deniskog* (Beograd, 1891). Matija Ban published the third and fourth volume of dramas about the Battle of Kosovo and the 1815 uprising, see *Otadžbina*, vol. 88 (1889), I-XV; *Glas* SKAN, XVIII, vol. 12 Beograd, 1890), p. 188.

69 The speech was published in several volumes of the journal *Ratnik*, tome XX and XXI, vol. IV (1889), pp. 477–93; vol. I-IV, pp. 1–34, 125–133, 253–263, 381–400. See also Glavni generalštab (ed.), *Dvadesetpetogodišnjica Ratnika*, (Beograd, 1904), p. 516.

70 *Hrišćanski vesnik*, № 7–8 (1889), p. 593.

The memory of Kosovo in 1889 united the Serbs in the northern and western Balkans, and the battle was also commemorated in the Vojvodina, Montenegro, and Bosnia. Ravanica monastery in Srem where the relics of Prince Lazar were kept, was chosen to be the center of the commemoration in the Vojvodina. In the neighboring city of Ruma a special committee was appointed to organize the festivities. The program included a solemn requiem and choral societies from all over the Vojvodina were invited to participate.[71] The Committee dedicated two poems, "The Hymn to Kosovo" and "The Farewell to the Vidovdan Fifth Centenary," for which the music was composed by a Czech orchestra conductor.[72] The celebration took place, as scheduled, on St. Vitus day.

A good number of publications, histories, dramas, and poems, dedicated to Kosovo, were published on the occasion;[73] and the daily press reported about similar festivities which took place among the other Serbs. Posters, lithographs, and p ortra its of medieval rulers and Kosovo warriors were advertised and sold in Serbian bookstores.[74] Students in the Serbian Orthodox seminary in Prizren, until 1912 under Ottoman rule, competed over who would have the most complete album.[75] *Vidovdan* was remembered in churches in Bosnia; and the Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences in Zagreb commemorated the battle in a solemn session at which the two most prominent Croatian scholars, Franjo Rački and Toma Maretić, gave speeches.[76]

In Montenegro the unpopular rule of King Milan in Serbia and his abdication in 1889 raised the prestige of Prince Nikola. In the eyes of Serbian nationalists, "the rocky mountains of Montenegro preserved the message of Kosovo and the eagle of Dušan."[77] The flamboyant poetry of the prince, in which Montenegro was described as "the stumbling rock of the Ottoman empire," contributed to the aura of the poet and ruler. On June 17, on the eve of the Kosovo commemoration in Cetinje, Prince Nikola proclaimed his son Danilo an adult and heir to the throne. Nikola's drama, *The Balkan Empress* (*Balkanska carica*), was put on stage for the first time with professional actors, and was attended by the Russian archduke Petar Nikolajević, the fiancé of Nikola's daughter Milica.[78]

During the last decades o f the century the tradition of Kosovo continued to play an important role in orchestrating national feelings in Serbia toward the liberation of all of Serbdom. The Kosovo theme dominated literature, drama, poetry, and the arts. As early as 1865 Belgrade invited the Serbian poet from the Vojvodina, Jovan Jovanović-Zmaj, to write the text of the Serbian national anthem. For reasons of foreign policy, however, he was reminded not to mention St. Vitus Day explicitly. Zmaj, who previously authored a flamboyant poem to the "holy graveyard," wrote the requested anthem in which he referred to the "God of justice not yet attained" and to "centuries bitterly lam ented..."[79] In 1872 Jovan Djordjević took over the introductory words, "God of Justice," for the chant which ended his drama, *Marko's Saber*, presented in the National Theatre in Belgrade on the occasion of Prince Milan's accession to the throne. The melody was composed by Davorin Jenko. With some adaptations the last two stanzas became the national anthem.[80]

The repertoire of the National Theatre in Belgrade included performances dedicated to Kosovo. In 1868 the stage was opened by Jovan Sterija Popović's drama, "The Death of Stevan Dečanski." The play "Miloš Obilić," written by Jovan Subotić, was kept in the repertoire from 1868 until 1912. Miloš Cvetić triumphed with three plays: "Nemanja," "Lazar," and "Dušan". The last one was on stage for twenty-four years (1890–1914). In 1889 Matija Ban presented "King Vukašin"; while the Dubrovnik writer Ivo Vojnović authored "The Death of the Mother of the Jugović" (1909) and "The Resurrection of Lazar" (1913). Žarko Lazarević's drama, "The Kosovo Tragedy," was accompanied with music.[81] Culminating with Kosovo, all of Serbian history romanticized, idealized, embellished, and nourished the fantasy of the public.

When the 1912 Balkan War started, the popular perception was that Kraljević Marko finally woke up. The hope became the reality: two victorious allies, Serbia and Montenegro, were to return to Kosovo. The declaration

[71] *Javor* (Novi Sad, 1889), pp. 206–207; *Glas Istine*, № 4 (1889), pp. 62–63.

[72] The text of the hymn was written by a Serbian priest from the village of Piroš. The "Vidovdan Farewell" was written by a certain Mr. Nenad from Split in Dalmatia. The conductor, Havlas, from Hermanstadt in Bohemia composed the melody, as he previously did for Djura Jakšić's poem "Die, O brothers!" *Javor* (1889), pp. 287, 351, 384.

[73] Among them were: "The Memorial of the 500 years of the Battle of Kosovo"; "Battles and Heroism in Epic Poetry" (Milivoj Srbinić); "St. Sava, the Serbian Educator and Teacher in Popular Poetry"; "The Vidovdan Hymn"; "The Service to the Martyr Prince Lazar, the Emperor and Ruler of Serbian Lands"; "After 500 years—A Reappraisal of the Battle of Kosovo and of the Collapse of the Serbian State" (Jaša Tomić); "The Kosovo Battle and the Fall of the Serbian State" (Dr. Pavle Padejski). See *Javor* (1889), p. 208.

[74] Most popular were portraits of Emperor Dušan St. Sava and Prince Lazar's Last Supper. See advertisements in *Javor, List za zabavu, pouku i književnost za godinu 1889,* Dodatak, edited by Ilija Ognjanović i Jovan Grčić, nos. 2 and 23 (Novi Sad, 1889).

[75] *Spomenica pedesetogodišnjice družine Rastko u Prizrenu*, p. 134.

[76] *Javor* (1889), p. 174.

[77] *Grlica* (Cetinje, 1889), p. 52. Quote from Jovan Sundečić.

[78] *Javor,* № 31 (1889), p. 496.

[79] Živojin Boškov (ed.), *Prepiska Jovana Jovanovića Zmaja* (Novi Sad, 1957), Doc. 77. Zmaj to Jovan Bošković, Pest 19, III, 1865, p. 91–92. The melody for Zmaj's poem was composed by Kornelije Stanković (Doc. 78), and the Viennese composer Sechter.

[80] Stanoje Stanojević, *Narodna enciklopedija*, IV (Zagreb, 1929), p. 798.

[81] Živojin Petrović, "Domaći dramski repertoar (1868–1968)," in *Jedan vek Narodnog pozorišta u Beogradu 1868–1968*, edited by Milan Djoković (Beograd, 1968), pp. 207–229. Dramas with the theme of Kosovo were performed also by amateur or student groups in the country.

of war against the Ottomans, issued by King Peter I on 5 (18) October 1912, made Old Serbia, including Kosovo, the priority among the war aims. It referred to the region as:

...the glorious and saddened mother of our Kingdom where lies the historical kernel of the old Serbian state, [its] kings and emperors... and the glorious capitals of the Nemanjić: Ras of Novi Pazar, Priština, Skoplje, and Prizren. Here live our brothers by blood, customs, national consciousness, and aspirations.[82]

Throughout Montenegro echoed Prince Nikola's appeal: There, Over There!

The character of a holy war triggered a kind of national exultation. Young Serbs believed that those who fought in the war personified Miloš Obilić and Marko Kraljević.[83] In record time Serbia assembled an army of 350,000 soldiers.[84] Volunteers joined the draftees.[85] The decisive battle took place at Kumanovo, on October 23–24. The Serbian victory created the slogan which spread through the army: For Kosovo-Kumanovo! The Serbian war plan assigned the offensive toward Kosovo to the Third Army corps. In twelve days Old Serbia with Kosovo was captured. Priština was taken on 9 (22) October, Ras on 13 (26), Prizren on 16 (29). Penetrating from the northwest, the Montenegrin troops entered Peć and liberated Dečani Monastery.

The hasty advancement of the Serbian army was risky. The small cavalry detachment of ninety-seven men which entered Prizren faced some twenty thousand hostile Albanians living in the city, who were joined by a crowd of Turkish deserters from the front. The army under Djavid pasha was bivouacked on the surrounding hills. The Russian consul in Prizren, Emilianov, as well as the representatives of some two thousand unarmed Serbs in the city, begged the Serbian commander to withdraw. The major refused: the flag was not to be taken away once it was planted on Emperor Dušan's fortress. Instead, he used a trick and ordered ten thousand loaves of bread and two thousand kilograms of meat for the army from local bakers and butchers. All of it was supposed to arrive the next morning. But the next day, only two infantry detachments with one cannon arrived. For the entire day they paraded in and out of the city, while a trumpeter repeatedly sounded his trumpet to give the appearance of a larger force. Four days later, on October 21, the whole Šumadija division entered Prizren and ended the agony of the calvary vanguard.[86]

The entire campaign in Kosovo was highly emotional. The poet and diplomat, Milan Rakić, was consul in Priština from 1905 to 1911. Before the visit of the su ltan to Kosovo in 1908, Rakić buried the church bell. Volunteering for the irregular troops, Rakić returned to Priština in 1912, excavated the bell, and hung it on a tree branch. From there he and his fellow soldiers rang the bell.[87] The commander of the Third army corps, General Boža Janković, attended the solemn service held at the place where Prince Lazar and Miloš Obilić were killed in 1389. The Miloš Obilić medal was awarded to soldiers and officers for courage proved on the battlefield.

Victories obtained in the 1912–1913 Balkan wars echoed among the Yugoslavs in the Habsburg Empire. In 1914, Serbian national societies and high school teachers organized tours of Kosovo. Visits to the "Holy Land" were mainly scheduled on St. Vitus Day so that people could attend services in the monastery of Gračanica. Visitors collected soil from Kosovo and brought it home. It was during such a tour that graduate students from Novi Sad got the news of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo.[88]

The Kosovo tradition also deeply influenced the revolutionary youth in Bosnia. Miloš Obilić was given the aura of a deity. Gavrilo Princip knew Njegoš's *Mountain Wreath* by heart. Bogdan Žerajić, who committed suicide after a failed attempt on the life of the governor of Bosnia, symbolized the act of tyrannicide. It was a significant coincidence that the assassination of the Austrian archduke and heir to the throne occurred on St. Vitus Day.[89]

The memory of Kosovo surfaced again during World War I. In that war John Reed reported that the Serbs understood very well the meaning of their effort: "The common soldier knows why he is fighting. From adolescence his mother greeted him: Hello, avenger of Kosovo!"[90] After victories over the Austro-Hungarian army in 1914, the Serbian army was encircled in 1915 by superior Austro-Hungarian, German, and Bulgarian forces. It started to withdraw toward Montenegro and Kosovo. At the head of the retreating troops, soldiers carried the sarcophagus

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82 Stanoje Stanojević, *Srpsko-turski rat 1912 godine* (Beograd 1928), pp. 82–83.

83 Svetozar Radojčić, "Kosovka devojka" (1969), in *Zadužbine Kosova*, pp. 289–91.

84 Borislav Ratković, "Mobilization of the Serbian Army for the First Balkan War, October 1912," in *East European Society and the Balkan Wars*, edited by B. Kiraly and D. Djordjević (Boulder, 1987), pp. 146–57; also *Prvi Balkanski rat*, edited by Istorijski institut JNA, I (Beograd 1959), p. 315–23.

85 One of them who was refused permission to join the army because he was registered as deceased on the military list, answered "I was dead for military maneuvers but I am very much alive to avenge Kosovo!" See Jaša Tomić, *Rat na Kosovu i staroj Srbiji 1912* (Novi Sad 1913), p. 55.

86 Stanoje Stanojević, *Srpsko-turski rat*, pp. 148–153; Jaša Tomić, *Rat na Kosovu*, pp. 151–53. The father of the present author, a lieutenant in the reserve, took part in the adventure. Until the end of his life he recalled his pride in lifting the Serbian flag onto Emperor Dušan's castle in Prizren.

87 "Rakić na Kosovu," in *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 760.

88 Gliša Marković, "Vojvodjanski maturanti na Kosovu 1914 godine," in *Godišnjak Matice srpske, Kalendar za 1939. godinu* (Novi Sad 1938), pp. 81–112.

89 Vladimir Dedijer, *Sarajevo 1914*, pp. 390, 423–424.

90 John Reed, *The War in Eastern Europe* (New York, 1916), cited in Serbo-Croatian translation in Dedijer, *Sarajevo 1914*, p. 387.

Акатистъ и параклисъ

Стефану Дечанскому

Въ Бѣлградѣ

1830.

ПЛАЧ СТАРЕ СРБІЕ

Хаџи Серафим Ристић

Above: Menaion, beginning of September; Akathistos service to St. Stefan Dečanski, 1830;
The Cry of Old Serbia by Serafim Ristić (1864).

Below: Church chant, 1850; The Book on Dečani, 1852;
The Customs and Songs of Serbs under the Turks, by I. Jastrebov (1886).

Краля Сербскаго,

Стефана Дечанскаго.

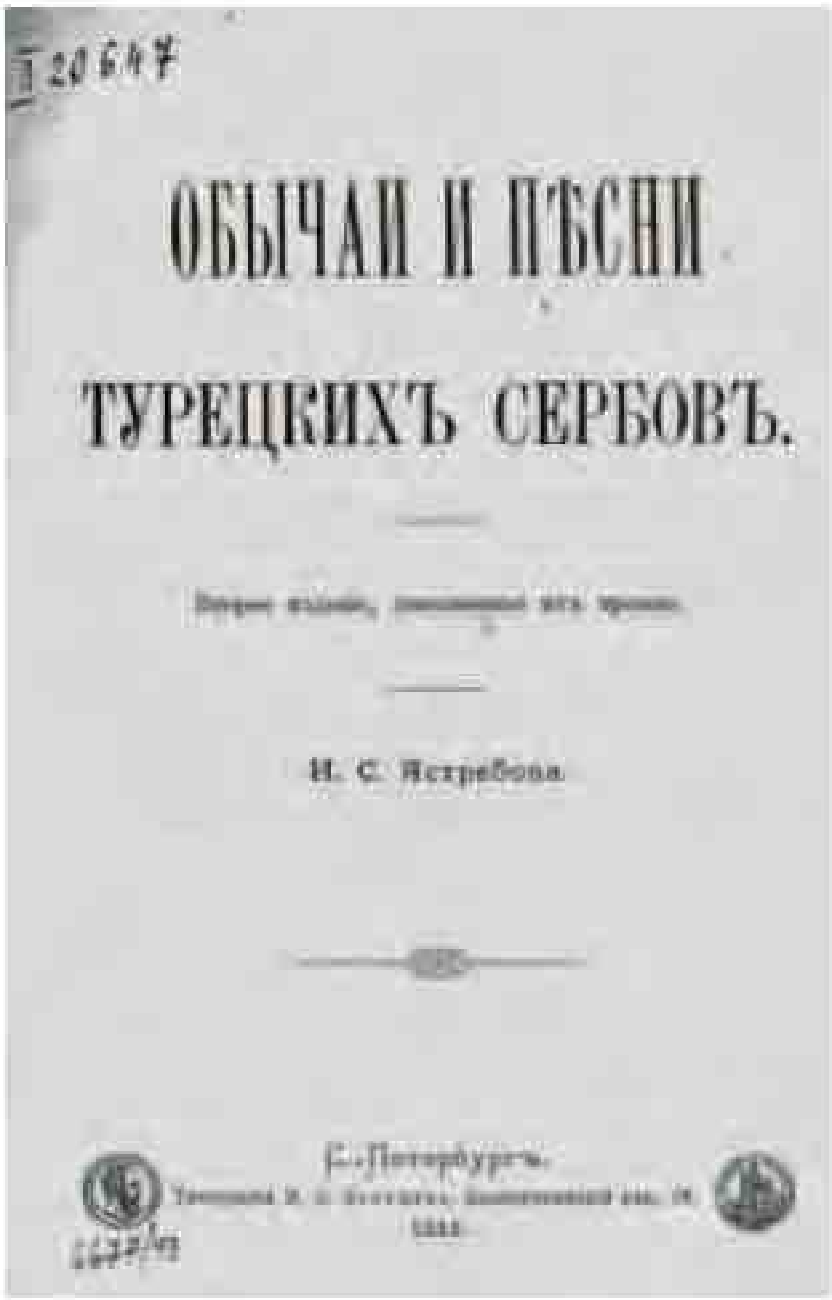
Въ Бѣлградѣ

1850.

ДЕЧАНСКИ

ПРВЕНАЦЪ.

У Новомъ Саду



ОБЫЧАИ И ПѢСНИ

ТУРЕЦКИХЪ СЕРБОВЪ.

И. С. Ястребова

С.-Петербургъ.

with the remains of Stefan, The First-Crowned King of Serbia. It was finally deposited in Ostrog Monastery in Montenegro.[91]

At the end of November 1915, the king, the Serbian supreme command, and the officials of government, who were assembled in Peć, decided to retreat over the Albanian mountains toward the Adriatic coast where they expected the support of the Western Allies. At the last moment, Vojvoda Živojin Mišić, the flamboyant army commander, tried to change the decision and proposed to the remaining army commanders in Peć a counter-offensive from Kosovo. As in 1389 the alternative would be to win or to perish. After several meetings and painful deliberations, his proposal was not accepted. Soldiers were ordered to destroy all weapons which could not be carried by hand, and the army started its tragic exodus over Albania.[92] This time the Serbian state survived and became the main factor in the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918.

The tradition of Kosovo went through various modifications and interpretations to meet the needs of the modern epoch. History was not only called upon to justify and legalize the emancipation of the national state, but also to be an instrument in domestic and foreign politics. The Kosovo myth had to be adapted to the interests of the ruling dynasties and the rising state establishment as well as to the interests of the developing social classes and groups.

Although the Kosovo myth, based on martyrdom, injustice, and hope, incited the 1804 insurgents to fight the Ottomans, the tradition of the pre-Kosovo state of the Nemanjić was more attractive to the rebels. The latter symbolized the ascent of statehood, while Kosovo marked its collapse. During the 1804–1813 uprising, the cult of Stefan, the First-Crowned King, overshadowed the cult of Prince Lazar, the victim. Much later, the writer Djordje Maletić (1816–1888) assigned to King Stefan the central place in his historical play, "The Death of Emperor Michael," because Stefan was "more suited to our times." With the strengthening of Serbia and the enlargement of the national program, the cult of Stefan was replaced by the cult of Emperor Dušan. At the same time, the patriarchal village democratized the past. In the oral epic poetry Jevrosima, the mother of King Marko, is found washing the laundry while the wife of King Vukašin prepares food for the masons.

History and the Kosovo tradition were exploited to support the monarchical system in nineteenth century Serbia and Montenegro. The Kosovo heritage was appropriated by both the Karadjordjević and Obrenović dynasties in Serbia in their bitter rivalry over the rule of the country. In the official press, Miloš Obrenović's native village of Srednja Dobrinja was compared with Ribnica, where Nemanja was born. According to Čedomilj Mijatović in 1889, "The oak in Takovo was the witness of the ancient glory as well as of the downfall of the Serbian state, but it also witnessed the illustrious moment when [Miloš] Obrenović unfolded the standard of liberation." The Obrenović dynasty was often compared with the Nemanjić. In the 14 (26) October 1888 decree calling for the new constitution, King Milan reminded his countrymen that "on the restored throne of the glorious Nemanjići now sit the scions of the people's dynasty of the Obrenović."[93] To confirm this connection, King Milan in the company of the queen and his young son frequently visited Ravanica monastery.[94] A book distributed to excellent students as an award at the end of the school year proclaimed the Obrenović goal of restoring the ancient realm of the Nemanjić: "It will accomplish Serbian hopes to reach the borders of ancient Dušan's empire."[95]

The more the dynasty was in crisis, the more the references to Kosovo and the Old Kingdom were utilized. After King Milan abdicated, a poem entitled *Kraljevka*, written by Milan Kujundžić, was presented to the king's heir in 1889, on the occasion of the fifth centenary of the Battle of Kosovo. The poem observed that "the doors of Žiča opened to the new monarch." In 1900, however, after the marriage of King Aleksandar to his mother's lady in waiting caused a break between the king and his father, supporters of former King Milan were quick to allude to the differences between the mighty Emperor Dušan and his feeble heir Uroš.

Both conservatives and liberals modified the Kosovo myth in accordance with their needs. The conservatives called for a centralized, authoritarian establishment capable of concentrating national energies to fulfill the "Kosovo message." Domestic dissent was equated with the treason of Vuk Branković. The conservatives heralded the slogan, "Internal schism provoked the downfall of the medieval state." It goes without saying that the majority of the military supported the conservatives. The defeat at Kosovo was the best proof of the disastrous effect that domestic strife could have on national unity. Only a disciplined, well-organized, and supplied army would be able to "heal the wounds of Kosovo."[96] The cult of Kosovo was strongly upheld in the army: the twelfth infantry regiment was named after Prince Lazar.

91 Dragnić-Todorović, *The Saga of Kosovo*, p. 111.

92 Vojvoda Živojin Mišić, *Moje uspomene*, preface by Savo Skoko, (Beograd, 1981), pp. 403–406; see also Savo Skoko and Peter Opačić, *Vojvoda Stepa Stepanović* (Beograd 1981), pp. 521–524; Savo Skoko, *Vojvoda Radomir Putnik*, vol. II (Beograd, 1984), pp. 279–280.

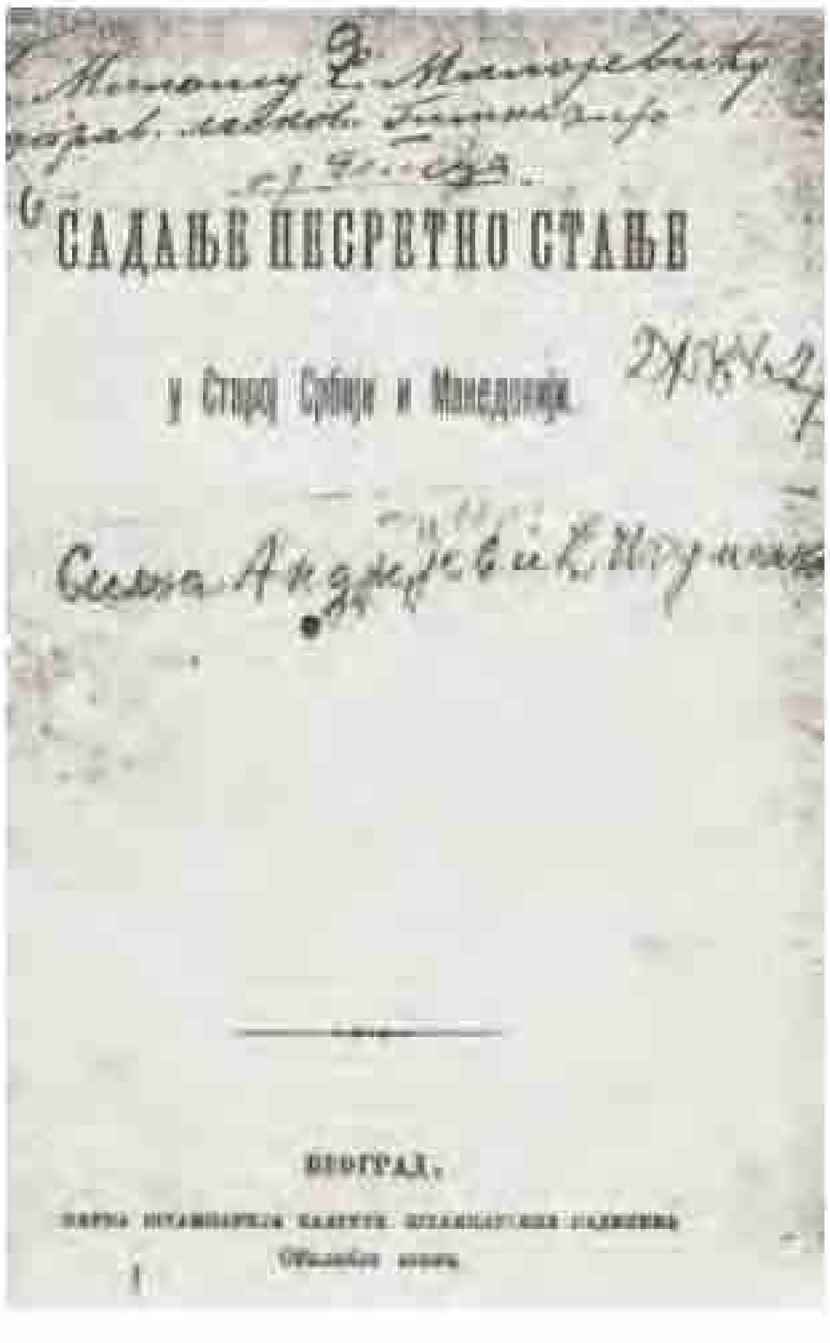
93 "King Milan's Proclamation," *Srpske novine*, № 225 (14 October 1888), cited in Branič—*Časopis za pravne i državne nauke*, edited by Djordje Nenadović, № 17–18 (Beograd 1888), pp. 628–631.

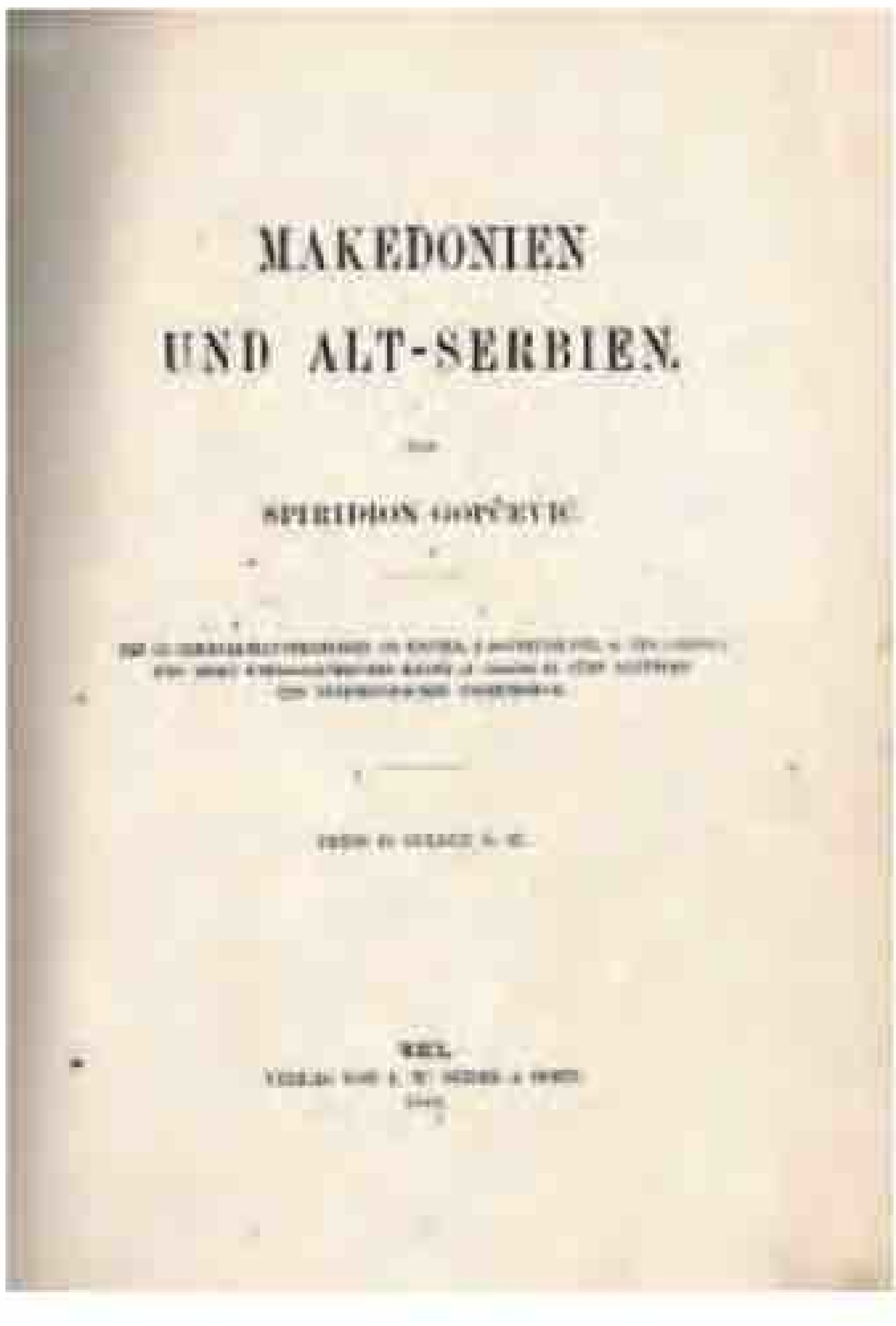
94 "Kralj Milan sa svojim sinom u Ravanici," in *Spomenica Vidovdanske proslave u manastiru Ravanica kod Ćuprije 1389–1939*, edited by Bora Nikolić (Ravanica, 1939), pp. 120–122.

95 Dj. Vrbavac, *Nemanjići i Obrenovići ili uporedjenje dva svetla perioda iz naše prošlosti* (Beograd 1900), p. 7.

96 Speech of Colonel Jovan Mišković on 15 June 1889, in *Otadžbina*, vol. 88 (1889), XVI-XXXVIII.

Serbian printed books and periodicals about Kosovo and Metohija





The liberal and radical opposition, however, refused to accept the creed of the conservatives. Although the liberals in the 1860s and the radicals in the 1880s espoused the Kosovo tradition as everyone else in the country did, they believed that there was no freedom abroad without freedom in Serbia itself. Only democracy could accomplish the Kosovo legacy. Emperor Dušan's portrait published in Novi Sad in the 1860s carried the beard and moustache of the liberal leader Svetozar Miletić.[97] The poet Jovan Jovanović-Zmaj ridiculed the conservatives: "Tell me, O Nemanja,— tell me, O Dušan! How could you succeed and be so great—and do it without the gendarmes!"[98]

The young socialists, organized in the 1870s, were the only ones who refused to "build the future on the graveyard of the past." They questioned all established values, including the Kosovo myth and any history which fostered national megalomania.

At the end of the century when Balkan cooperation against the Ottoman empire became an obvious necessity, Prince Lazar was used as the example to follow.[99] His attempt to organize the Balkan resistance at Kosovo was modified to the needs of contemporary Balkan politics. Special emphasis was placed on Serbian collaboration with Montenegro, "the first seed sprouting from *Vidovdan*."[100]

In spite of adaptations and modifications, the Kosovo tradition has remained deeply embedded in modern Serbian statehood. For centuries, from medieval to modern times, Kosovo has been regarded as a holy land. Its tradition inspired the 1804 insurgents, echoed in the 1844 national program, supported the 1878 recognition of independence and the 1882 proclamation of Kingdom, and finally motivated the peasant-soldier to fight in the 1912–1918 wars.

Not long ago Isidora Sekulić wrote that "Kosovo lived, is living, and will live from Lazar and Murad—through many uprisings, Njegoš, Kumanovo, Rakić's poetry, Meštrović's sculptures, Young Bosnia, and the Vidovdan in Sarajevo, Albania, and Kajmakčalan."[101] Deeply rooted in the mind of the people, the Kosovo tradition is still torturing Serbian blood. Today Kosovo again revives the nation in a combination of historical memory, harsh realities, and genuine optimism. The poet Ljubomir Simović has recently written a *Kosovo drama* in verse, which was staged on the occasion of the 1989 commemoration of the battle. The drama opens with a question which a faith-healer addresses to a monk:

"Is this the way to Kosovo?"
The monk replies:
"Yes it is.
But you can take the other one.
Or go another way too.
The way you came from, also.
Why do you wonder?
All the roads will bring you there.
Today, for Serbia there is no other way:
To Kosovo, or *from* Kosovo!"

Thomas Emmert/Wayne W.S. Vucinich (Eds.), *Kosovo: Legacy of Medieval Battle*, Minnesota Mediterranean an East European Monographs, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN., 1991, pp. 123–139.

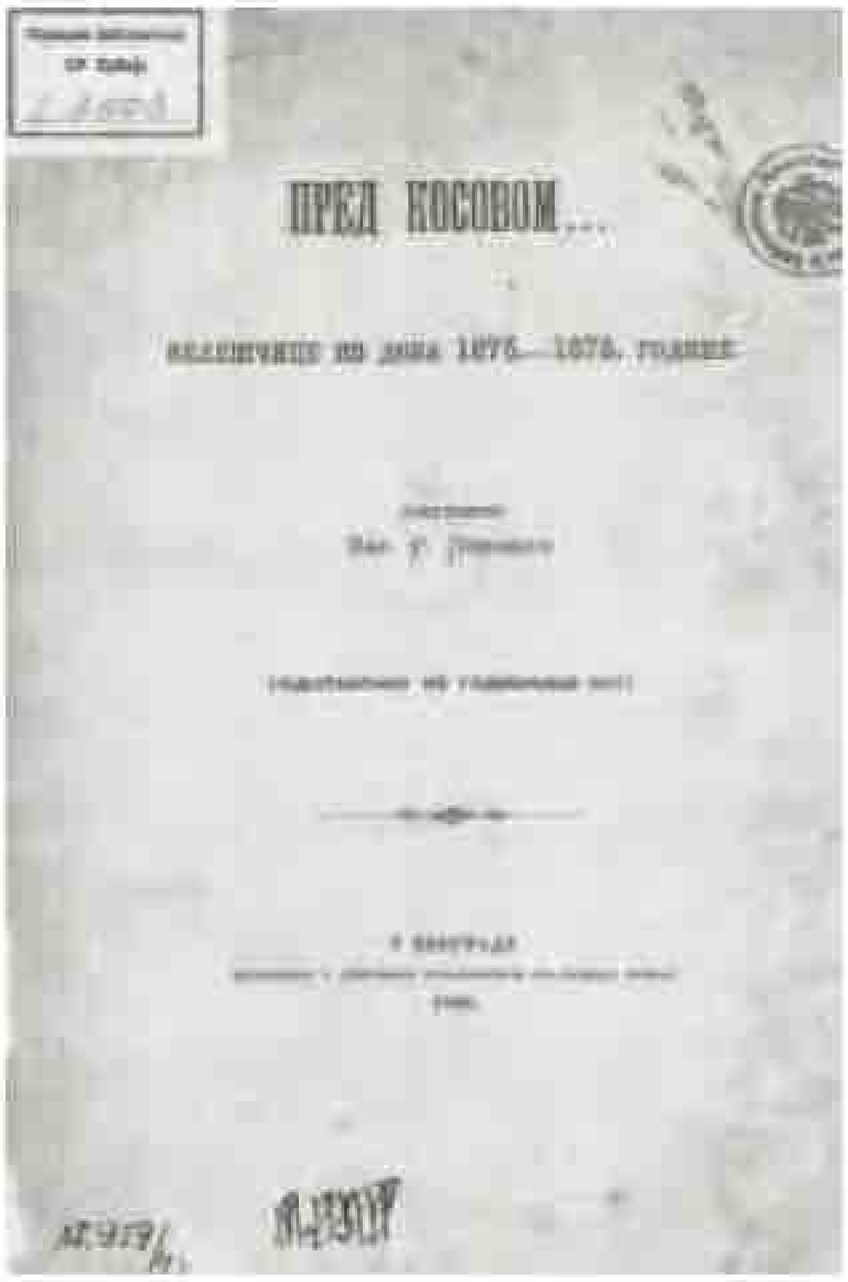
97 Skerlić, *Omladina*, p. 70.

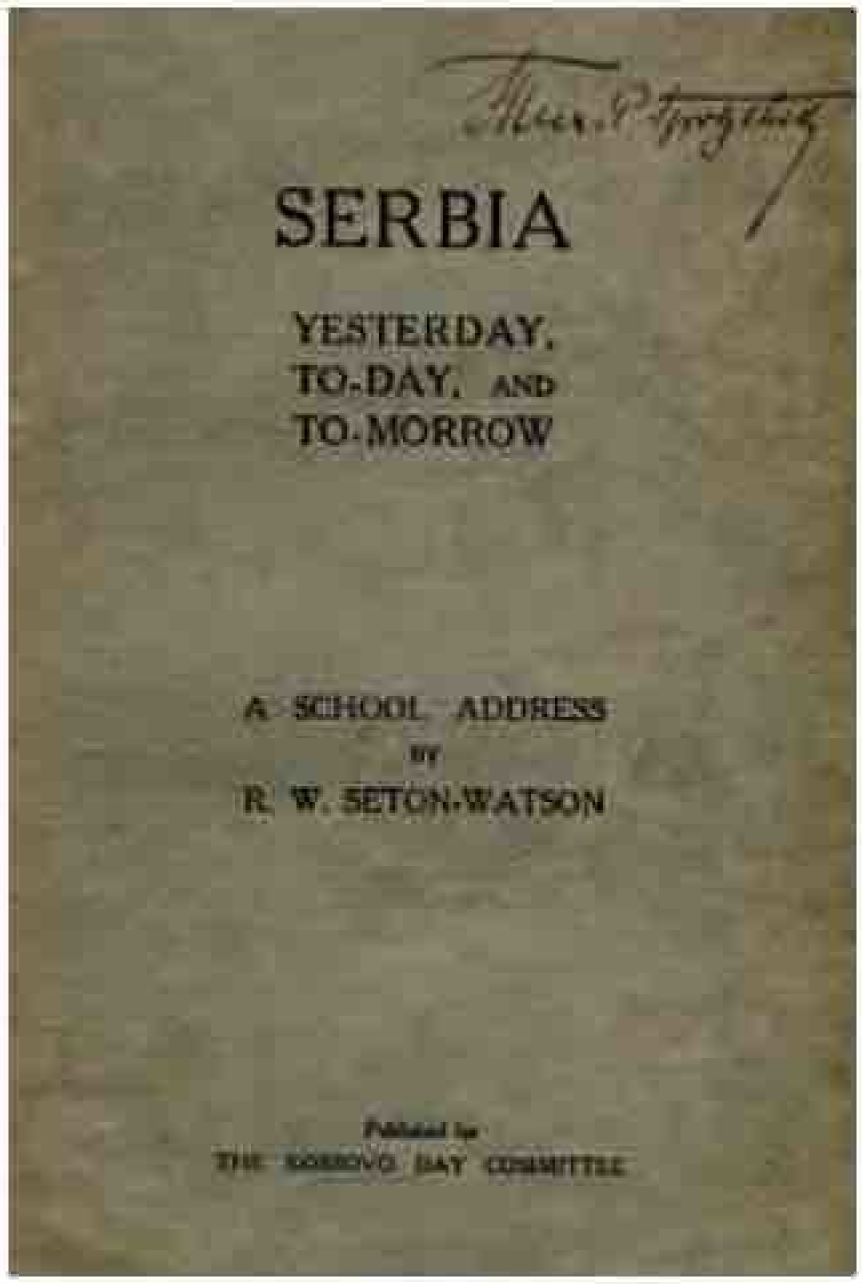
98 Skerlić, *Omladina*, p. 109; also "Srpkinjama na Vidovdan 1889," in *Orao* (1889), p. 63.

99 *Otadžbina* (1889), p. IV. *Orao Ilustrovani Almanah* (1889).

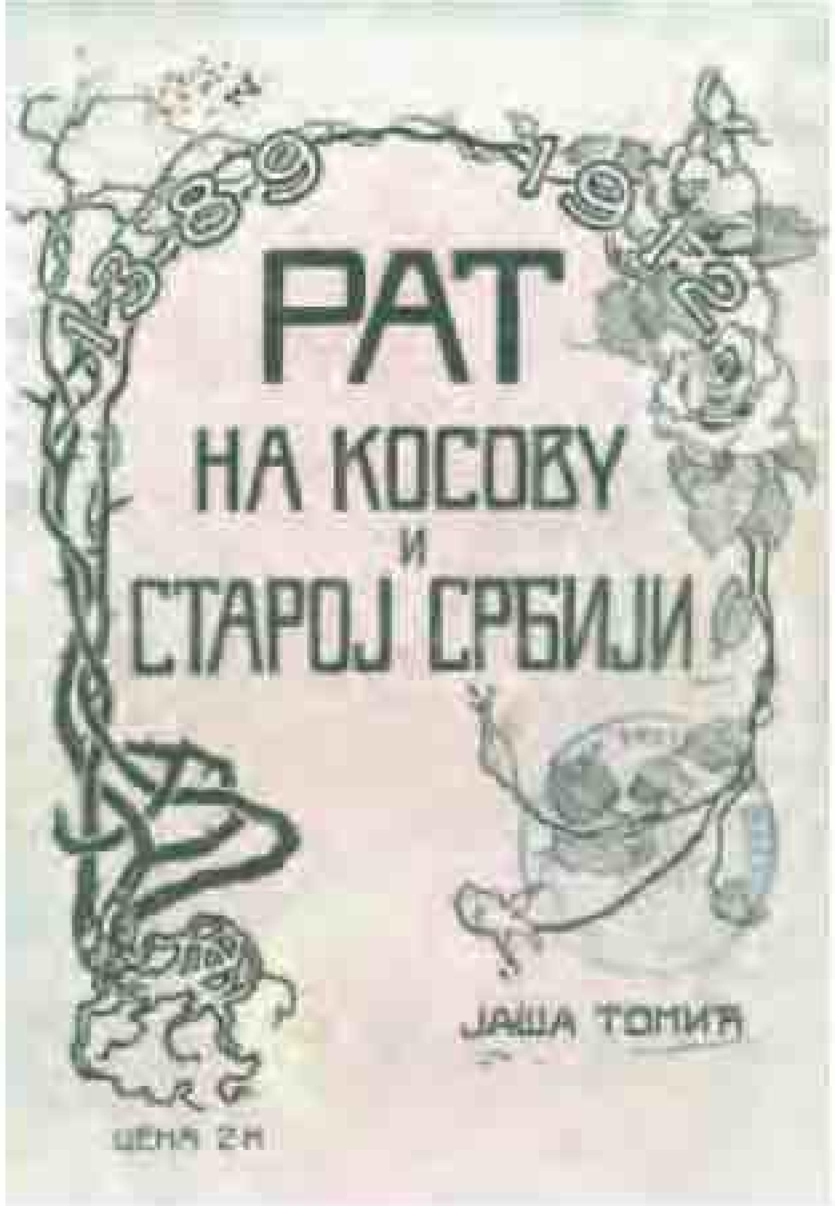
100 Poem of Jovan Jovanović Zmaj, "To King Aleksandar and Prince Danilo", *Orao Ilustrovani Almanah* (1889).

101 Isidora Sekulić, "Kosovo neprolazno," in *Zadužbine Kosova*, p. 278.





Serbian printed books and periodicals about Kosovo and Metohija



At Gazi-Mestan

Milan Rakić

The Mighty Armadillos, without fault and fear,
Cold as your armor and grim view,
You Assaulted then in a cloud of dust
And there was a slam and a bloody race.

Shaky empire toppled up with you
When the storm passes over Kosovo field
Kosovo became a vast pit
Terrible ossuary and glorious from defeat.

Kosovo heroes, merit is yours,
Because you were the last; in the bloody horror,
When rotten empire take arms.
Every corpse is aware victim, real hero.

Today they say to us, children of this century
That we are unworthy of our history,
That we are flooded by Western river,
And our souls are afraid of the dangers.

Good my country, that's a lie! Who loves you
Nowadays, it loves you.
Because before us, nor fields nor bedrock
Could not give a conscious love to another.

And today, when it comes to the last battle,
Irradiant from glow of old aureole,
I will give my life, to you my fatherland
Knowing what I give, and why I give!

Simonida

Milan Rakić

Your eyes were gouged out, oh beautiful image,
On a pilaster at approach of night,
Knowing that no one would witness the pillage
An Albanian's knife robbed you of your sight.

But neither your mouth, nor your noble face
To desecrate with his hand did he dare,
Or touch your golden crown, or queenly lace
Beneath which lay your luxuriant hair.

Now in the church upon the stone pilaster
Serenely bearing your tormented plight
Dressed in the robes of mosaic and luster
I see you sad, and dignified, and white.

Like stars extinguished in the distant past,
Which yet transmit to men the far-off glow
So that men see the light, the hue, the cast
Of stars lost to sight a long time ago,

Today upon me from your royal height,
From that antique stone covered all in grime,
Oh, sad Simonida, shines down the light
Of eyes gouged sightless in another time.

Translation from: *Anthology of Serbian Poetry*, ed. M. Djordjević, Prosveta: 1988, p. 27.

Gračanica, oil on canvas, Milan Milovanović, 1908

The Abandoned Church

Milan Rakić

There lies the ancient icon o f the crucified Christ
A trickle of blood seeps down his broken ribs;
Eyes dead, lips pale, Death itself;
Above the head, a halo of hammered silver.

Donated by former nobles and pious serfs,
A necklace o f ducats glows about His neck;
The icon's h e inlaid in pure silver,
Was chased by an artist from Debar.

Thus lies Christ within the barren temple,
As dusk gradually falls everywhere,
And a flight of night birds prepares for plunder,
Alone in the Barren church where bats circle,
Desolate and awesome Christ opens his arms,
Eternally awaiting a flock that is no more…

The Field of Kosovo

Matija Bećković

They are stealing my memory
Curtailing my past
Snatching the centuries
Turning churches into mosques
Gutting the script
Pummeling the graves
Ripping out the foundation
Overturning the cradle

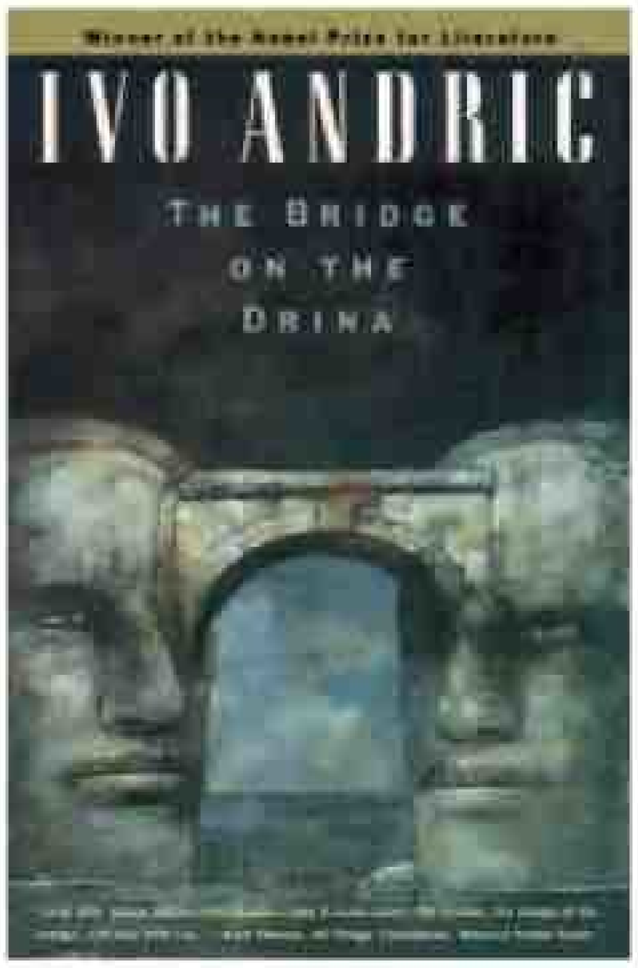
They take from me that
which I have taken from no one
My treasuries and capitals
I know not what is mine
Nor where my borders lie
My people are yoked and bestrewn
They are burning my deeds
And eradicating my existence

The field of martyrs with its blood-soaked grass
I dare not say is mine
They stop me from entering my home
Saying I sold it
The land I purchased from heaven
Was promised by someone to them
Whoever made that promise
Lied to them
Why does he not promise them
That which is his?
That is why they assail me in unison
Furious that I recognized them.

Kosovka devojka, Lazar Vozarević, drawing from *The Kosovo Cycle*, 1966–1968

Kulučari (Levies)

Ivo Andrić



The Cover Page of the English Editon of The Bridge on the Drina, novel by Ivo Andrić. Andrić is a Sebian Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1961.

BEFORE TWILIGHT, that relentless and implacable Višegrad twilight, when the steep hills seemed to close in over the town and each night fell quickly, as heavy and deaf as the last, Abidaga's fury rose to its height; and having no one left on whom to vent his wrath, he turned it on himself and could not sleep for thinking of so much work not being done and so many people malingering and wasting time. He ground his teeth. He summoned the overseers and worked out how, from then on, it would be possible to make better use of the daylight and exploit the workers more effectively.

From the novel On the Bridge on the Drina, 1944

A Herzegovinian sings to the *gusle* (drawing from 1823). Herzegovinian epic poems were often sung to the accompaniment of this traditional bowed string instrument.

The people were sleeping in their huts and stables, resting and restoring their forces. But all did not sleep; they too knew how to keep vigil to their own profit and in their own manner. In a dry and spacious stable a fire was burning, or more exactly had been burning, for now only a few embers glowing in the half-lit space remained. The whole stable was filled with smoke and the heavy, sour smell of wet clothes and sandals and the exhalations of about thirteen human bodies. They were all pressed men, peasants from the neighborhood, Christian rayah. All were muddy and wet through, exhausted and careworn. They resented this unpaid and pointless forced labor while up there in the villages their fields awaited the autumn ploughing in vain. The greater number were still awake. They were drying their gaiters by the fire, plaiting sandals or only gazing at the embers. Among them was a certain Montenegrin, no one knew from where, whom the guards had seized on the road and had pressed for labor for several days, though he kept telling them and proving to them how wearisome and hard this work was for him and how his honor could not endure this work for slaves.

Most of the wakeful peasants, especially the younger ones, gathered around him. From the deep pocket of his cloak the Montenegrin drew out a *gusle*, a tiny primitive fiddle, clumsy and as small as the palm of a man's hand, and a short bow. One of the peasants went outside and mounted guard before the stable lest some Turk should chance to come along. All looked at the Montenegrin as if they saw him for the first time and at the *gusle* which seemed to disappear in his huge hands. He bent over, the *gusle* in his lap, and pressed its head under his chin, greased the string with resin and breathed heavily on the bow; everything was moist and slack. While he occupied himself with these petty tasks, calmly and self-confidently as if he were alone in the world, they all looked at him without a movement. At last the first notes wailed out, sharp and uneven. The excitement rose. The Montenegrin found the key and began to sing through his nose and accompany himself with the *gusle*.

Everyone was intent, awaiting the wonderful tale. Then, suddenly, after he had more or less attuned his voice to the *gusle*, the Montenegrin threw back his head proudly and violently so that his Adam's apple stood out in his scrawny neck and his sharp profile was outlined in the firelight, and sang in a strangled and constrained voice: A-a-a-a-a-a-a-a- and then all at once in a clear and ringing tone:

The Serbian Tsar Stefan
Drank wine in fertile Prizren,
By him sat the old patriarchs,
Four of them, the old patriarchs;
Next them were nine bishops
And a score of three-tailed Vezirs
And the ranks of Serbian nobles.
Wine was served by Michael the cupbearer
And on the breast of the sister Kandosia
Shone the light of precious stones...

The peasants pressed closer and closer around the singer but without making the slightest noise; their very breathing could be heard. They half closed their eyes, carried away with wonder. Thrills ran up and down their spines, their backs straightened up, their breasts expanded, their eyes shone, their fingers opened and shut and their jaw muscles tightened. The Montenegrin developed his melody more and more rapidly, even more beautiful and bolder, while the wet and sleepless workmen, carried away and insensible to all else, followed the tale as if it were their own more beautiful and more glorious destiny.

The Blackbird's Field

Vasko Popa

THE BLACKBIRD'S FIELD

A field like any other
A hand and a half of green

The young moon reaps
The migrant corn
Two crossed sunbeams
Build cruciform stooks

A blackbird reads aloud
The secret letters scattered over the field

Peonies high as heaven
Offer the four black winds
The warriors' united blood

A field like none other
Heaven above it
Heaven below

SUPPER ON THE BLACKBIRD'S FIELD

All sit at table transparent
And see the stars in each others' hearts

The crowned one breaks and shares out
Their golden past
And they eat it

He pours into their white peony goblets
Their ruby future
And they drink it

Across their knees under the table
Their swords are growling quietly

In the platters on the table
Is reflected the evening sky
And in the sky the end of tomorrow's battle

A blackbird flies down
On to the crowned one's right hand
And begins his song

THE BLACKBIRD'S SONG

I the blackbird
Among birds the black-cowled

Fold and unfold my wings
Perform the rites in my field

In my beak I transform
A dew-drop and a grain of earth into song

O battle tomorrow be fine
That is to say be just

O verdant Queen grass
Be victorious you alone

O victory make the Queen's servants rejoice
Who feed her with crimson milk

Make her star-servants rejoice also
Who clothe her in living silver

I sing
And I burn one feather from my left pinion
That my song may be accepted

THE BATTLE ON THE BLACKBIRD'S FIELD

Singing we ride over the field
To encounter the armoured dragons

Our most lovely wolf shepherd
His flowering staff in his hand
Flies through the air on his white steed

The crazed thirsty weapons
Savage each other alone in the field

From the mortally wounded iron
A river of our blood streams out
Flows upward and streams into the sun

The field stands up erect beneath us

We overtake the heavenly rider
And our betrothed stars
And together we fly through the blue

From below there follows
The blackbird's farewell song

THE CROWNED ONE
OF THE BLACKBIRD'S FIELD

On his hand he holds his severed head
His bright shining benefaction
The sun's vice-regent
In the all-pervading dark

He stands beatific on a cloud
Barefoot in a torn shirt
Girt with the tail of a vanquished dragon

In a goblet brimful of blood
On his severed neck

The fragments of his sword become
Morsels of bread

Holy mother Saturday
Gives him second birth

He is alive in the crimson dew-drop
He dances in the burning circle of peonies
He sings in the blackbird's song on this field

THE WARRIORS OF THE BLACKBIRD'S FIELD

Where we are now
We are lords of the blue fields
And the ore-rich mountains with no foothills
We have married
Each his namesake star

Here in the kingdom we have won
Our arms crossed on our breasts
We continue the battle

We continue it backwards

We haven't yet reached
The start of the battle lads
God knows if we ever shall

From where we are we hear
Somewhere high above us
The blackbird's green song

THE BLACKBIRD'S MISSION

The blackbird dries his blood-drenched wings
At the fire of red peonies

Before him the field stretches out
Inscribed with molten human iron
Transmuted into honourable gold

Grass holds sway between the letters
And falls them into line
As it wills

The blackbird wrests his field
From the hands of the four black winds
And rolls it up from midday to midnight

At midnight he flies over the sky
Bears off in his beak somewhere he knows where
His green scroll

[1958-1971]

Vasko Popa, *Complete Poems 1953-1987*,
Anvil Press Poetry, 2011, pp. 191-197.

Kosovo Filed, T. Švrakić, 1913, old postcard

The Liberation of Kosovo 1912, The Battle of Kumanovo, Paja Jovanović, 1912, Historical Museum of Serbia, Belgrade

Entry of Serbian general M. Živković in Mitrovica

Balkan armies in 1912;
left: **Ottoman forces**, right: **Balkan states armies**

Balkan Wars 1912–1913

General Božidar Janković, Commander of Third Serbian Army, Liberator of Kosovo, October 1912

Serbian army in front of Gračanica

Serbian army under Zvečan

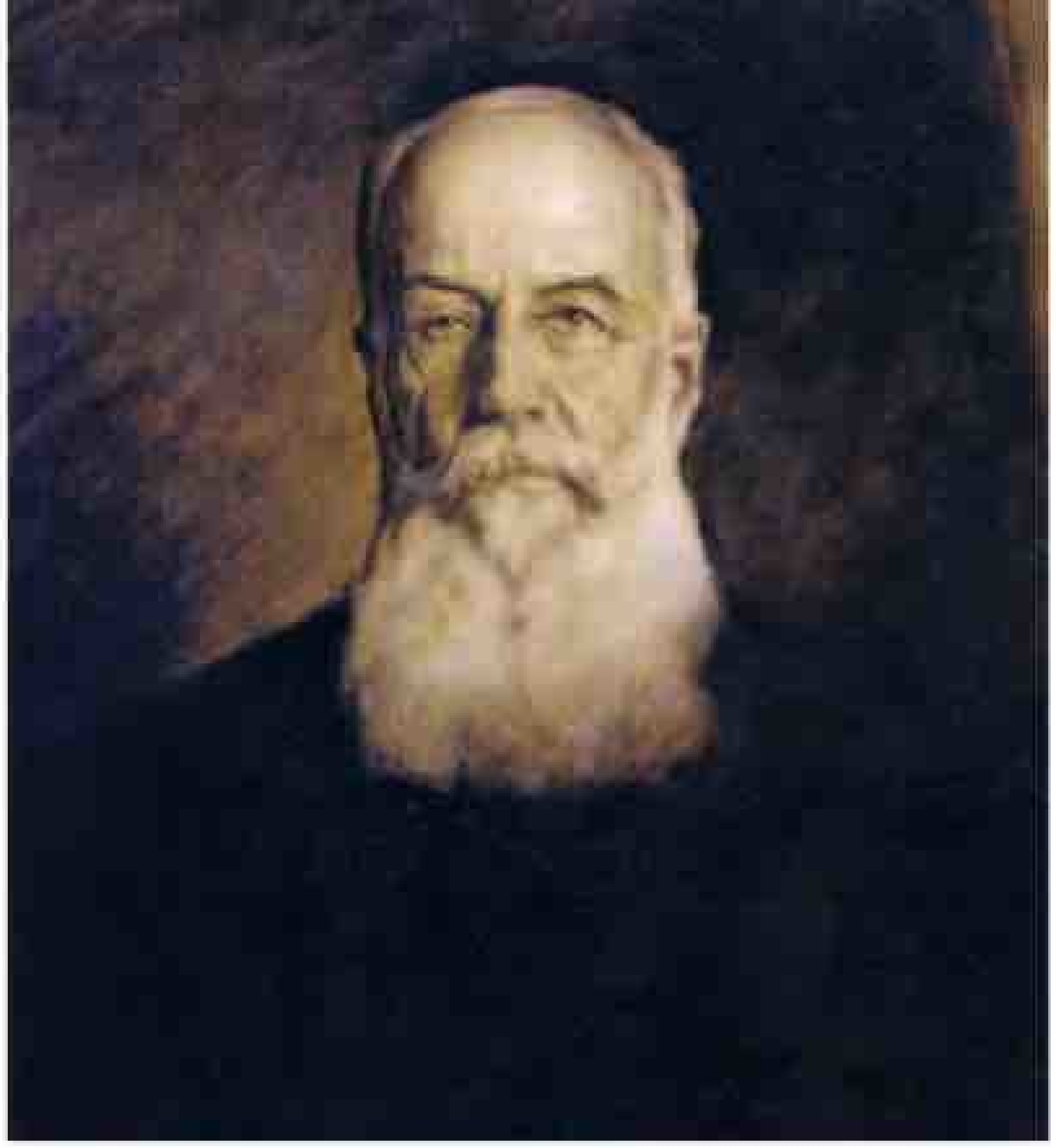
Serbian officers in Peć

The Liberation of Prizren in 1912

...And on the evening of October 17th, a young, equestrian division of the Serbian Army entered Prizren. Mayor Selimir Ostojić sat the Prizren barracks down with an eskadron horseman. He made a fire all long in the surrounding hills, the trumpet played on all sides and he sent a message that all citizens of Prizren prepare 10,000 bread for the army the following day. The next morning he called upon all the Prizren citizens by proclamation to surrender. Isa Boljetinac together with his Arnauts and the broken down army near Prizren of Dzavid Pasha with 8,000 columns of Ottoman soldiers stood near Prizren. When the Russian Consul Emilianov found out how small the Serbian army was, and furthermore that it was not receiving assistance, he asked the mayor, Ostojić, to leave, to not endure defeat, for no one will say that the Turks defeated a handful of Serbian horsemen, but they would spread word that the Serbian army was defeated at Prizren which would evoke a bad impression. Nor is it right that such heroic soldiers should perish. Mayor Ostojić told him: „I can't retreat any longer. I killed the Serbian flag in Prizren and I will die beside it!" When the Consul Emilianov told him about it later, he said: "Write as much as you can about this. They are heroes of which the whole world should know!" At that time there was a terrible commotion in Prizren. Not only Serbs came to Consul Emilianov asking for protection (and he protected them as much as he could), but Turks came to him as well. They asked to be taken under his protection in the event the Serbian army entered. He promised them he would, but he also told them: "I will be able to do this only when you prevent bloodshed." There were many of them who provoked blood. And there was on the square, by the fountain, turbulent scenes and agreements. Some said: "It's a shame what we have to endure, that a few Serbian horsemen take Prizren from us, when we could destroy them..." ...When the mighty Serbian army entered Prizren with canons and horsemen, there was an indescribable enthusiasm. At the entrance of the town General [Božidar] Janković was greeted by the clergy with a litiya (procession), Serbs welcomed him with an indescribable enthusiasm, but he was also welcomed by Turks. Even the women came out, and they appeared publicly, demonstrating after many hundreds of years.

From the book by Jaša Tomić:
War in Kosovo and Old Serbia in 1912 (Novi Sad, 1913).

Milovan Dj. Milovanović, Serbian prime Minister prior to the Balkan wars, the architect of the Balkan alliance against Ottoman empire comprising Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro.



Nikola P. Pašić, Prime Minister of Serbia (1912–1918) who succesfully led Serbia through Bakan wars and the World War I. He took office in 1912, after the sudden death of Prime Minister Milovanović.

General Radomir Putnik, the main military strategist of the operation in both Balkan wars (1912–1913). General Putnik was promoted by the King Petar I Karadjordjević into the rank of the Field Marshal (Vojvoda), in late 1912.

Ottoman soldiers and Albanian volunteers captured after the battle of Kumanovo in transit through Belgrade

Postcard from 1913 celebrating Serbian victories in both Balkan wars, against Ottomans and former allies the Bulgarians

First fighting in the battle of Kumanovo, October 1912

Milan M. Rakić, famous Serbian poet and diplomat. Rakić was Serbian consul in Priština prior to the First Balkan War; in late October 1912 he was enrolled as volunteer in the Serbian army and was the first Serbian soldier to enter into Priština abandoned by the Ottoman army.

Serdar Janko Vukotić, Montenegrin general who liberated the city of Peć and the Patriarchate of Peć

Serbian and Montenegrin soldiers in Djakovica

Gavrilo Dožić, Metropolitan of Raška-Prizren since 1911 was leading the solemn entrance of Serbian and Montenegrin dignitaries in the liberated Patriarchate of Peć in 1912. He was Metropolitan of Montenegro 1920 and eventually Serbian Patriarch 1938–1950. During the World War II Patriarch Gavrilo was first interned by Nazis and at the end of the war sent to Dachau concentration camp in Germany.

Solemn entrance of Serbs into the liberated the Patriarchate of Peć, 1913

Kossovo Day

F. W. Harvey

FROM THIS SWEET NEST OF PEACE and Summer blue – England in June—a sea-bird's nest indeed
Guarded of waves, and hid by the sea-weed
From envious hunter's eye, we send to you
Our flying thoughts and prayers, our treasure too,
Poor though it be to bandage wounds that bleed
For country dear beloved. There the seed
Of homely loves and occupations grew
To wither in the flame of Godless might
Kindled by hands of treachery, yet reeking
With blood of friends and neighbours. Serbia, thou
Has thought us careless and far off; know now
Thy name to us is sudden drums outspeaking
And tortured trumpets crying in the night!

Westminster Gazette, of June 28th, 1916; also: *The Lay of Kossovo: Serbia's Past and Present* (1389–1917) by F. W. Harvey, C. Oman, Sir Arthur Evans, Tichomir R. Gjorgjevitch [and others] and *Three Serbian ballads*; for the anniversary of the Kossovo Day Celebration in Great Britain on June 15/28th, 1916, p. 11).

Serbian troops in 1914.
Serbian army won two major victories against Austro-Hungarian troops in August 1914 (Battle of Cer) and in December 1914 (Battle of Kolubara). The unprecedented heroism of Serbia in 1914–1915, before the retreat to Albania and Corfu, provoked immense sympathies for Serbian people. In various allied countries Kosovo Day was celebrated in honour of valiant Serbia.

World War I and New Tutelage for Albania

Alex Dragnich and Slavko Todorovich

As the end of World War I approached, and Serbia inched ever nearer to the fulfillment of its war aim—the unification of all South Slavs in one independent state—relations with Albanians took a new turn. The mighty Albanian protector, and the main instigator of anti-Serbian attitudes in the area, Austria-Hungary, was about to leave the historical scene. That was the good news. The bad news was that it was about to be replaced by Italy, which during the war had settled Albanians in Serbian areas, certainly not a friendly act. Moreover, Italy had the support of the West, which Vienna did not. The Entente had made numerous promises to Italy in the Secret Treaty of London (1915), and Italy wasted no time in seeking to achieve its objectives.

But Italian and Serbian (Yugoslav) claims to former Austro-Hungarian territories overlapped. Serbia wanted Scutari, as a natural part of Montenegro, the real hinterland of the city. In vain, Montenegrins had spilled so much blood for it in the recent past. The new government in Belgrade wanted a degree of influence in Albania, especially in the northern part, and a few frontier "corrections." In general, Belgrade could live with the borderline drawn by the 1913 London Conference. Also, as it turned out, Yugoslavia was among the few voices among the allies, pleading for an independent Albania, free of any Great Power patronage.

The Serbian (Yugoslav) position was markedly different from the Italian. The disparity was not only with respect to territorial demands and ambitions, but mainly in the conceptual aspect of the demands. Italy, which had begun with an interest in the Albanian littoral, now wanted half of Albania and was pushing the Great Albania concept, which meant the incorporation of Serbian lands, such as Kosovo, into the new Albanian state. There was no way that such a proposal would be acceptable to a nation that had just come out of the war a winner.

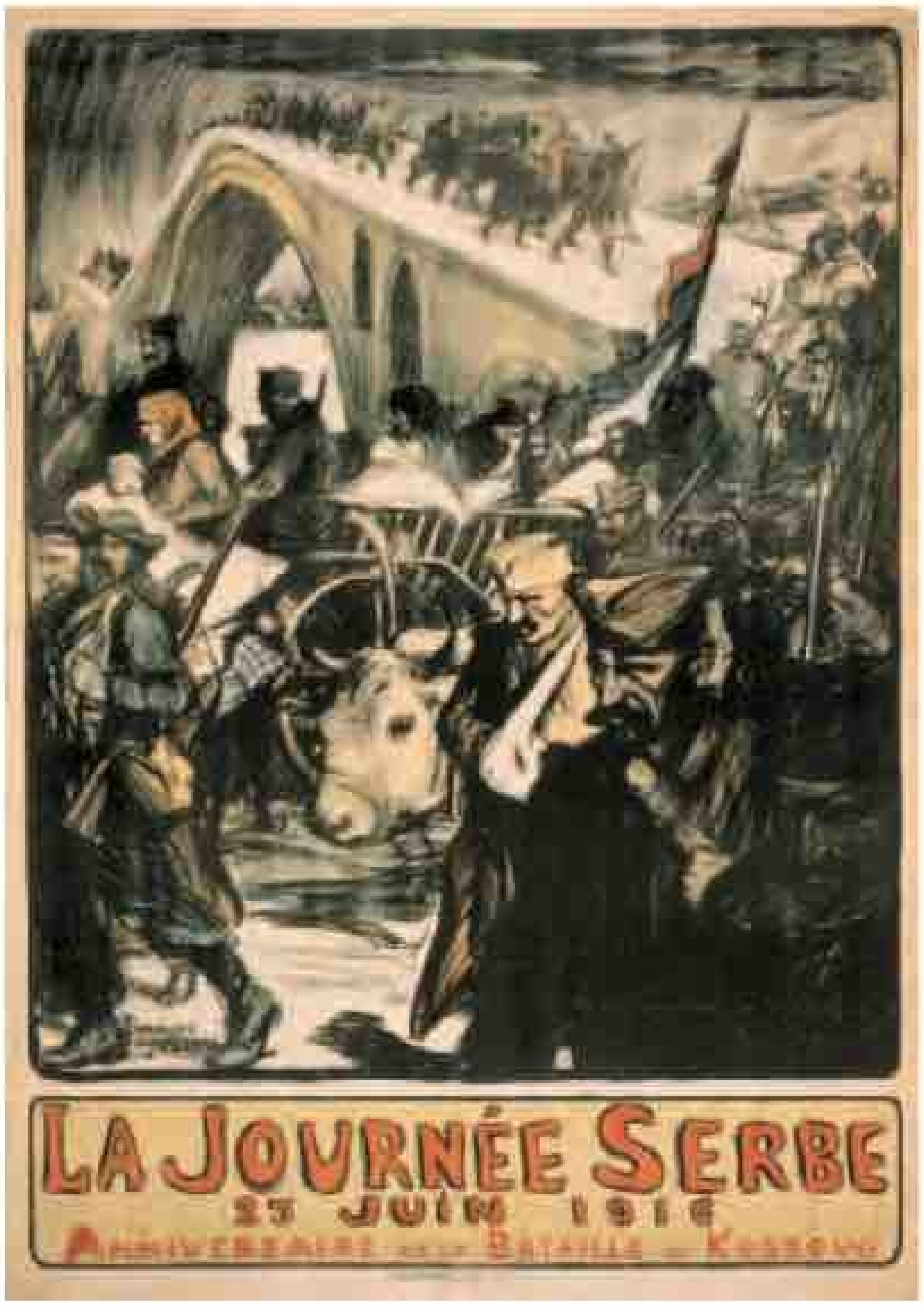
Belgrade's position on Kosovo was not negotiable and had not changed one iota since the discussions at the London Conference of Ambassadors (January 1913). Serbia could not allow the Kosovo area to be a "malignant tumor" that would affect Serbia's state power. And, Serbia never considered Kosovo as "small change" or a "bargaining chip" to be used by diplomats at the negotiating table. Finally, the Serbs could have used the right of conquest argument, since the Turks had conquered it from them, but chose not to do so. Rather, they stressed Serbia's historic, cultural, and moral rights.

The historic, cultural, and moral reasons which guided Belgrade in opposing foreign pretensions to Kosovo were fully presented to the London meeting in 1913, and did not change in 1919 in the Royal Yugoslav format, and are just as valid today, some 70 years later, although in a diametrically different ideological context. The memorandum submitted by Serbia's delegates to the 1913 conference, read in part:

"Today the majority in those areas are Arnauts [ethnic Albanians], but from the middle of the 14th century until the end of the 17th century that land was so pure Serbian... that the Serbs established their Patriarchate in Peć... and near Peć is the Serbian monastery, Dečani, the most famous monument of Serbian architecture and piety from the 14th century. It is impossible to imagine that [these] would have been built in a region in which the Serbian people was not in a majority. The region in which are found Peć, Djakovica, and Dečani, is the most holy among all Serbian lands. It is impossible to imagine any Montenegrin or Serbian government which would be in a position to yield that land to Arnauts or to anyone else... On that question the Serbian people cannot and will not yield, nor enter into any agreements or compromises, and therefore the Serbian government is not in a position to do so..."

One cannot overemphasize the moral impact that the liberation of Kosovo (cradle of the nation) had as a fulfillment of Serbia's historic mission. Rational Western diplomats had difficulty understanding this. Operating in societies where traditional values are, if necessary, also negotiable, they viewed Serbia's history in terms of "progress" made in a brief span of time. They could not understand the uncompromising position of the Serbs when it came to losing a few cities here and there compared to the overall national advantage gained in only a few years. The "some you lose, some you win" philosophy could not be applied to Kosovo. Serbia just could not accept the Entente's concept of giving certain Serbian lands to Serbia in exchange for giving other equally historic Serbian lands to someone else.

European diplomatic big guns like Lloyd George (who in 1919 said, "I've got to polish off Pašić") or Izvolski (who once called Pašić, "this old conspirator"), as well as British

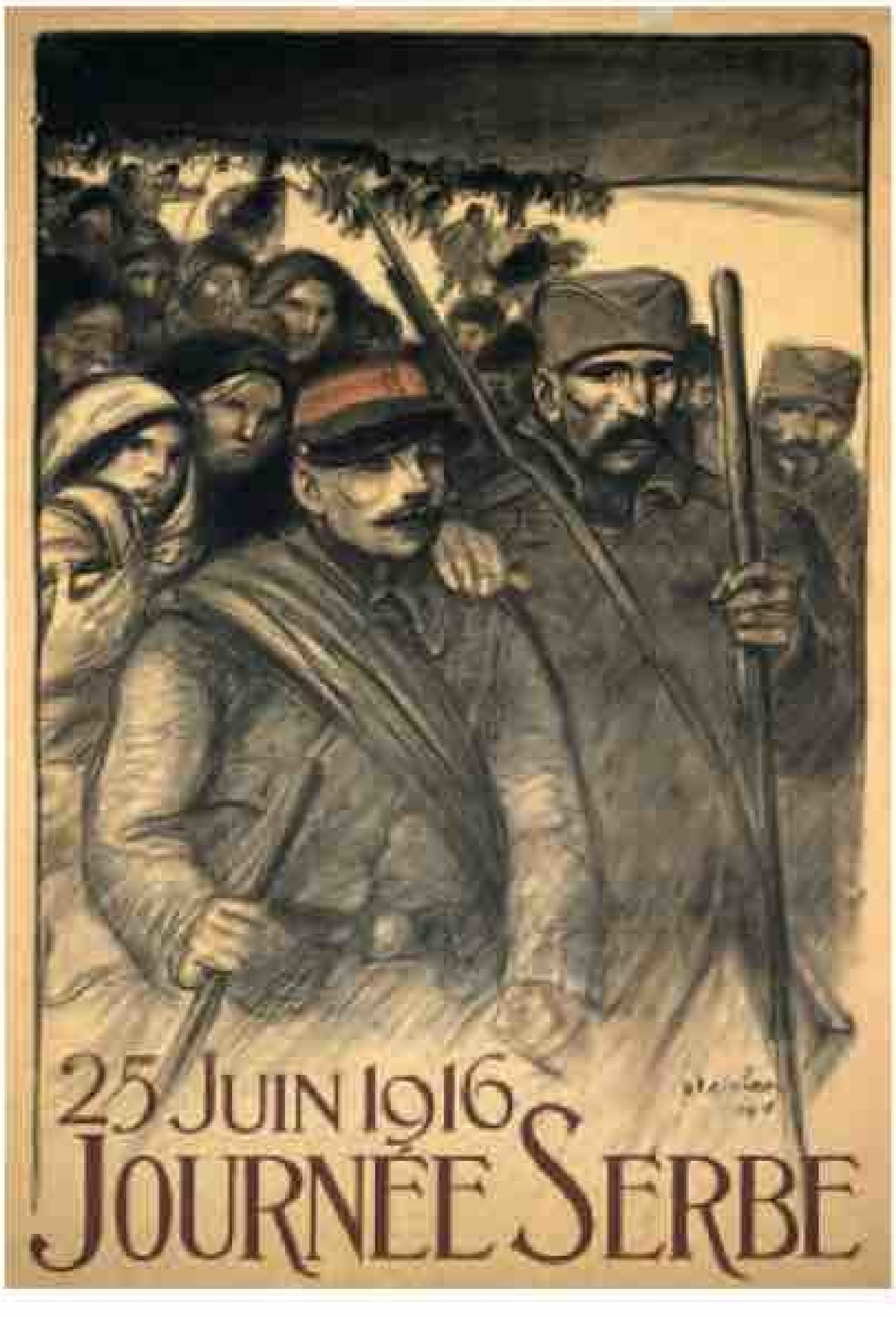


public opinion molders such as Wickham Steed and R. W. Seton-Watson, were plainly annoyed with Serbia's stubbornness. The latter twosome envisioned the new state of the South Slavs in terms of a Central Europe constellation. They feared Serbian "hegemonism" and fell for Italian scare tactics, portraying the Slav monster as "stretching from Vladivostok to the Adriatic." To them, the fact that Emperor Dušan (1331–1354) had one of his palaces adjacent to Scutari, that that city was the capital of the Montenegrin ruling family of Crnojević (1465–1490), that the widow of Serbia's King Uroš (1242–1276) built her monastery there and lived there as a nun, that Scutari had a Serbian school as late as 1850, and that the city was ecclesiastically part of the Prizren Orthodox diocese until 1913—all this meant nothing, or very little.

Once again, the Serbs had an image problem in Western Europe. Again, the British Foreign Office had suspicions regarding Serbian motives. Serbian historian Milorad Ekmečić writes: "The Serbian Government could not get rid of the burden which history has placed upon her shoulders—the prejudice in Western Europe about the historic mission of Serbia, which is to open the door to the Russians in the south of Europe ... Britain viewed Serbia exclusively from that perspective." (*Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914* [War Aims of Serbia], Belgrade, 1973, p. 437).

The Albanian authors, Stefanaq Pollo and Arben Puto (*The History of Albania*, London, 1981, p. 182), assert that there were other considerations. In explaining the admission of Albania to the League of Nations in 1920, they write:

"The unexpected interest in the Albanian cause on the part of London was not unconnected with the petroleum wealth to be found in the Albanian subsoil ... The Foreign Office told the Tirane Government that it could count on Britain's firm support if it allowed the Anglo-Persian Company exclusive rights to prospect and exploit the petroleum resources in Albania. The Government accepted [the offer] and so, on December 17, the British representative, H. A. L. Fisher, declared to the General Assembly that his delegation had undertaken 'a new and thorough study of the Albanian situation' which has convinced it that Albania should be admitted immediately."



La Journée Serbe by Steinlen

World War I poster, published in Paris in 1916, shows a group of Serbian civilians and soldiers as they head into the mountains. When invading forces from Austria-Hungary and Germany pushed into Serbia in 1915, they occupied the capital city of Belgrade, and drove the Serbian army and accompanying civilian refugees across the borders into Montenegro and Albania. One of the major engagements of the campaign took place at Kosovo, the scene of a battle in 1389 between a medieval Serbian army and an invading Ottoman force. The first Battle of Kosovo became an important symbol of Serb identity in the 19th century. Serbia Day was celebrated in June, to coincide with the approximate date of that battle. During World War I, Serbia was an ally of Britain, France, and Russia. Serbia was a bitter enemy of Austria-Hungary. This poster is by Théophile Alexandre Steinlen (1859–1923), a Swiss-born French painter who was one of the leading poster artists in the period of the Belle Époque (1871–1914) in France.

The validity of this contention is beyond the scope of this study, but suffice it to say that Britain did on different occasions support Albanian positions against Belgrade. Moreover in 1921, Britain was influential in the Conference of Ambassadors (this time in Paris), which, in addition to deciding on the borders of the new state, resolved that the territorial integrity of the Albanian state to be a matter of "international interest." Consequently, it was agreed that Italy was to be endowed with the "protection" of Albania within the League of Nations system. This meant giving Italy a hand in Albanian internal affairs, which seemed to put Belgrade on notice of Italian intentions in the Balkans.

Serbian Premier Nikola Pašić had something to say about United States attitudes toward Serbia in those days. He had nothing against Wilson's 14 points or his steadfast defense of the right of self-determination. But he felt that there was a flaw in Wilson's personal insistence on Albania's "independent" status. In the view of the seasoned Serbian politician, an "independent Albania" under an Italian "protectorate" was a contradiction in terms. Pašić believed that it would have been more logical to have the two states, Serbia (Yugoslavia) and Albania, cooperate in defending the Balkan area against intrusions of foreign influences of all kinds. In one report to the National Assembly Pašić declared that on the one hand Wilson "protects Albania from us, and on the other hand, he brings Italy into Albania, the most dangerous enemy not only of the Albanian people, but of the whole Balkan peninsula as well."

In this "exit Austria—enter Italy" scenario Pašić saw the opposite of freedom from foreign intervention in Balkan affairs. In the multinational environment of the Balkans ethnic tensions and national conflicts were not to be dreaded as much—he thought—as the exploitation of those tensions and rivalries by a foreign power. Even if one attempted to understand the concern of the Entente (and the United States) about maintenance of peace in the Balkans, to appoint Italy to be the protector of Albania and, indirectly, the guardian of the peace in the area was equal to assigning a fox as caretaker of the chicken coop, as events in the 1930s were to demonstrate.

Kosovo, ed. B.W.R. Jenkins,
Serbian Western American Diocese 1992, pp. 132–133.

Withdrawal of Serbian army over the Field of Kosovo, 1915

Retreat of Serbian troops in snowy and hostile Albania in late 1915. Drawing by P. Omčikus

Peter, King of Serbia, on his way to exile; young and unarmed recruits, aged 15 to 17, evacuating their cases of ammunition, going toward Prizren, stand around the oxcart on which the old King sits (photo taken by Vladimir Vecić).

Between Two World Wars

Alex Dragnich and Slavko Todorovich

When in early 1920 some 450,000 Schipetars, living mostly in the Kosovo-Metohija region, looked to Belgrade for help and guidance in adjusting to their new status in the family of Slavs, they did not realize how little aid the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes could give, because the entire country was in dire straits. Furthermore, the task of organizing the newly created state was enormous. Leadership fell largely to Serbia, which had spearheaded the unification movement. But to move from the homogeneous Serbian state to one of considerable diversity and four times larger in geographic size, with all the other problems associated with building a new nation, constituted a challenge never before faced.

Understandably, with so many problems of greater urgency, some normal for a war-ravaged country and others new and unanticipated, the central government did not give the Albanian plight a high priority. There were two tasks that seemed rather logical: first, the badly needed re-Serbianization of Kosovo, justified by centuries' long effort by a foreign occupier to denationalize it. The most suitable way to accomplish this was through abolishing semi-feudal economic conditions that prevailed in the area, which meant advancing the agrarian reforms that had long been overdue under the Turks. The second imminent task was to bring the Albanian masses into the modern political process, which had existed in Serbia and was about to begin functioning in the new state. This task was left to the existing political parties, most logically to those of Serbia, but those in other parts of the country were also free to enter the political arena. Albanian Schipetars or Arnauts [ethnic Albanians], as they were called, were in much deeper difficulties than Belgrade ever realized. They were a closed society and new ideas could not easily penetrate. Also, the bitter taste of what Albanians had done in the past influenced the Serbs to keep their distance and to refuse to get involved in the "salvation" of the Albanian minority. The resistance of local "katchaks" was highly visible, as well as the activity of Kosovo Albanians in exile. Last, but not least, the broad masses of the Schipetars in the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes were existing on a very low economic level. With no schooling at all, they were totally dependent for leadership on local hodjas and Muslim overlords. It was impossible to find Schipetar teachers (Albania itself could not provide them), let alone capable administrators, trained policemen, or professionals (doctors, engineers, etc.). Sending a Serbian teacher into an Albanian village meant forcing a Schipetar father to decide whether he would let the Orthodox teacher or the Muslim hodja educate his son and whether he would give up the custom of not sending the female child to school.

Aleksandar, the King of Yugoslavia, attending a Church service in Dečani Monastery

The pressures were enormous, really overwhelming, for the impoverished and uneducated Schipetar. The cultural barrier began to crack only later, when local boys had a chance to serve their military terms in the new army, where they were exposed to modern ways of life and learned to read and write.

Belgrade accepted the stipulations of the Treaty of St. Germain (1920) concerning the protection of national minorities. These included all the great sounding principles of equality before the law, political rights, civil rights, usage of the mother tongue, right to public instruction, religious guarantees, etc. In principle, these sounded great, but how much of scarce resources was the new state obliged to allocate in an effort to achieve all of these aspirations?

The new government was not a wealthy uncle, and Serbia proper (along with Montenegro) was the hardest hit part of the new nation by the devastations of two Balkan wars and World War I. The ideological South Slav euphoria had a very meager material base, which was very much disoriented at that. It was nice to proclaim a principle and

design a program, but when it came to realizing it, the Serbian colonists, the ones who were brought to Kosovo to "re-Serbianize" it, were the most vocal victims of that reality. The problem had nothing to do with nationalism. The state had to make due; there was no UNRRA or other relief agency, and the Hoover European Rehabilitation program concentrated mainly on Belgium.

The insufficient response to the problems of Kosovo and Metohija, whatever the reasons, undoubtedly opened up an opportunity for anti-state (mainly anti-Serb) elements in the area to fan the flames of disappointment. As the armed but spotty opposition to the new state was dying out and life seemed to return to a type of normalcy, the Kosovo program, if it can be called that, was mainly visible through the work of the Special Commission whose task was to redistribute the lands obtained in the agrarian reform. It is estimated that about 60,000 Serbs from Bosnia, Herzegovina, Lika, and Montenegro homesteaded in the region, through the agency of this commission. It was a frustrating task and a tiresome process, consuming great energy, time, and cost, mainly because there were no reliable documents to work with. The land that had belonged to the former spahis and beys had no deeds, and some of this property was claimed by many families and institutions (churches, cooperatives, clans, and tribes) as "usurped" in the past. There were lands belonging to "outlaws" hiding in the woods or who had crossed over into Albania. There were properties so atomized and dispersed that it was impossible to put them together. There were pieces of land that nobody claimed, or that the spahis were not even aware of ownership vested in them. Most of the land available for homesteading belonged to Turks who had left with the Turkish army, or who had moved to Asia Minor. Some of this migration continued until the late 1930s. About 40,000 Turks left Kosovo and other South Serbian regions, and many departed from Bosnia as well. Another 40,000 were Albanians who, being Muslims, declared themselves Turks. The official policy of the Belgrade government was to encourage Turks and Albanians to leave. In the process there were some injustices and abuses, but this was not the intention of the law. Cases of overreaction, revenge, and misuse of authority were reported, but they were a far cry from the situation which existed at the beginning of the century, when the Serbian population was terrorized by the Albanians on the loose with no strong government authority to stop them. In general, it can be said that after 1918 there was no revenge on the part of Serbia against Turks or Albanians because of their misdeeds against the Serbs throughout the centuries.

One lesson that the members of the anti-Yugoslav Kosovo Committee in exile, and local Albanian outlaws, learned was that the Yugoslav army and gendarmerie would not tolerate Albanian excesses as had the Turks. Belgrade could not be blackmailed as Constantinople had been. Attacks on frontier posts or individual terrorists, acts against the police or other authorities were harshly dealt with, and those giving sanctuary to guerrillas were severely punished if they could be located.

Serbian Patriarch Gavrilo performs the rite of *krsna slava*

Military parade of the participants of 1912–1918 wars,
photos from *Pravda* № 58, June 29, 1939

All of this had some unfortunate consequences: namely, it prevented the normal integration of Albanians into the social life of the new state and it antagonized the central government to which Albanians had been turning for help. Finally, it hurt primarily and most of all those among the Albanian population who needed help most.

One should note that Serbs from Serbia itself were the least interested in settling in Kosovo or of profiting from the opportunity. Those who came to Kosovo were Serbs from other areas. Inhabitants of Serbia proper never cast their eyes on neighboring lands, because they had no need for them. This is why a Serbian peasant is still sincerely taken aback when he hears anyone accusing him of "hegemonism." Of all those Serbian peasants in army uniform who roamed the vast latifundias of liberated South Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, and Slovenia—not a single one stayed there after his release from the army. Neither did any one of them show any desire to settle there. They were startled by the number of landless farm laborers in all those regions, and

felt good about helping them to become landowners, providing them an opportunity to freely exercise their political and civil rights. Still, a few years down the road accusations of "Serbian hegemonism" were rife.

What happened in Kosovo after World War I was not just a "change of occupiers," the Serbian master replacing the Turkish one, as some circles like to portray the situation. The fact is that, after centuries of social immobility, Kosovo suddenly went through a revolutionary change. The Serbian liberation of Kosovo, in a small way, resembled the Napoleonic push through Europe. It opened many doors to the Albanians. That they were unable or unwilling to use them is another matter.

One of the most unfortunate things for the Albanian masses of Kosovo was their being abandoned by their leaders. As if that was not enough, these same leaders instigated Kosovo Schipetars to act against the Yugoslav authorities. The mushrooming of "committees for the liberation of Kosovo," in Albania and elsewhere, resulted in the sending of terrorists and irredenta literature into the Kosovo area, sometimes allied with Bulgarian, Croatian, Hungarian, and Comintern terrorists. In spite of such activity, an increasing number of Kosovo Albanians began to realize that accommodation, if not assimilation, was the most reasonable course to follow.

In the main, Serbian political parties took Kosovo seriously, seeing in it an opportunity to fill a vacuum and thereby collect some votes before others gained this support. The leading Radical Party, the strong Democratic Party, the broadly based agricultural bloc, and the Communist Party—all showed up in Kosovo. Already in 1919, the Kosovo Albanians formed their own political organization, called "Dzemijet." They held their annual congresses, published the group's paper Moudjaeda (Struggle), and conducted a variety of cultural programs. In the November 1920 elections Dzemijet elected 8 national representatives; in March 1923 this number grew to 18. Later the membership split, as many found that the strong and influential Serbian parties were of greater benefit and more likely to deliver. By the end of 1925, Dzemijet went out of existence, and the former members either joined the pro-government coalition groups or the opposition coalition.

Joining a Serbian party did not, however, mean conversion, as later developments would show. In 1941, many of those who had joined Serbian parties became protagonists of Great Albania (under Italian occupation). They were the ones that Italian foreign minister, Count Ciano, had as early as 1939 called "daggers pointed at Yugoslavia's back."

If the political consciousness of the Albanian voter in Kosovo was not on the same level as that of most other Yugoslav citizens, it was not the fault of the Belgrade regime. Some of the accusations against Belgrade, even by well-meaning Western liberals, that Yugoslavia was running a "political Bastille" make no sense at all, and reveal a pitiful lack of familiarity with the actual state of affairs. Poorly or not at all educated Muslim voters (whether Albanian or Bosnian) were easy prey to all sorts of political operators, susceptible to bribes, responding to demagoguery, and liable to be affected by various scare tactics. In the Constituent Assembly elections of 1920, 22 political parties and groups participated. Is this a way to run a prison? The Communist Party, which campaigned as a champion of the "rights of national minorities to independence, including the right to secession," came out with 59 seats (out of 419). Many dispossessed Muslim beys and hodjas cast their votes for the Communists (a protest vote), and asked their followers to do the same.

What really mattered was that the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia, thanks to its myopic leadership, made two faux pas at the very beginning: rebellious, it chose the wrong ally; introvert, it locked itself in its own cocoon. The third, and indeed fatal, mistake which it would make much later was to accept the offer to develop within the confines of that very same cocoon (the autonomous province).

Even when in the 1930s it became obvious that Albanians had already begun to participate in Yugoslav day-to-day reality—culturally, professionally, and politically—the residue of the unfortunate 1918 beginning was still noticeable. Perhaps there were too many people around who would not let it be forgotten. To let the forgetting take place required a longer span of time than the 20 years of the first Yugoslavia. When World War II came, the bedlam started all over again. Now, after a lapse of half of a century, forgetting seemingly is not even considered.

It may be instructive at this point to indicate what was happening on the Albanian side of the border. In 1918, as the war ended and the dawn of a new day came to Kosovo, some 3,000 Albanian men, members of the "volunteer army," were poised on the Albanian side of the frontier, waiting for an order to invade and to liberate Kosovo. Their leaders were members of the Kosovo elite that coordinated earlier "revolts" against the Turks at the beginning of the 20th century. Many of them held high positions in the Turkish bureaucracy, and some were members of the parliament in Constantinople (Hasan Priština, Isa Boletini, Bajram Curri, Dervish Mitrovica). All of them relentlessly bombarded the League of Nations with denunciations of Belgrade. None of them paid any attention to the political personalities that were emerging in Albania itself: Ymer Vrioni, Evangjeli Pandeli, Bishop Fan Noli, and "flag bearer" Ahmet Zogu. The members of the Kosovo Committee, over- confident, enjoyed full Italian support, and felt that they could even challenge the Tirana government. Bajram Curri, a member of the Committee, went so far as to assemble a few thousand warriors in the region of Kukes, and sent them to fight the government.

In the years immediately following the world conflict, Albania was still experiencing birth pangs and had no need for an arrogant committee from Kosovo. The country was in strife; the liberals (headed by a Harvard-educated Or-

thodox theologian, Fan Noli) and the conservatives (led by Ahmet Zogu) were seeking to control the government. The chieftain of the Mati tribe, Zogu, was either unusually lucky or especially capable, because he rose to the position of the country's minister of interior at the age of 26. In that position he was ideally placed to watch the conspiracy work of the Kosovo exiles. He charged them with obstructing the normalization of relations with a neighboring country, took away their parliamentary immunity, and made it clear that he intended to bring Albania into the family of Balkan nations. In the meantime, he became head of the government, just in time to face the attempt of the Kosovo exiles to overthrow him. That was either a poorly organized coup attempt or Zogu's position was in 1923 far sounder and stronger than that of the Turkish government in 1911. Kosovo bands in Albania were crushed by Zogu's forces with the support of some Yugoslav units.

The internal situation in Albania, however, was far from stable. In February 1924, an assassination attempt was made on Zogu (in Vienna). In June, the liberals staged a coup, and Bishop Fan Noli formed the government, but his rule was short-lived. Looking for a foreign protector, he picked Moscow. That move alarmed the West, as well as King Alexander of Yugoslavia. Already in December 1924, Ahmet Zogu, leading a motley crew of Albanians, White Russians, and Yugoslav border troops, was back in Tirana, reinstalled as the future leader of Albania (1925–1939). After 1928, as King Zog I, he ruled by a combination of despotism and benevolence. He forbade Albanians to carry guns, outlawed archaic customs (such as vendetta), concluded several treaties with Italy and Balkan countries, secured internal stability, established the authority of the Albanian central government, and gave Albania a sense of national identity. Stavro Skendi describes Zog's contribution as follows: "Whatever his flaws, he made a nation and a government where there had been a people and anarchy." (Cited in Paul Lendvai, *Eagles in Cobwebs*, Garden City, N.Y. 1969, p. 181.)

Relations with Yugoslavia were mixed. Zog conceded St. Naum (Ohrid) in exchange for another border point, but misunderstandings and distrust between the two countries continued. In 1926 Zog signed two pacts with Italy that gave Rome freedom of action in Albania. The Italian army built roads, fortifications, and airports that would later be used in attacks against Greece and Yugoslavia. In 1927, Albania broke diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, but dialogue was reestablished shortly thereafter. Full mutual confidence, however, was never achieved. In the meantime, Albania had some contacts with Bulgarian irredentists and Croatian separatists, with Italian blessings. In 1937, however, Yugoslavia and Italy signed an agreement "not to permit, nor support, on their respective territories any activity that could harm mutual relations," which may explain why certain Bulgars and Croats had to be moved from Italy to Albania.

On January 21, 1939, Count Ciano and Yugoslav premier Milan Stojadinović conferred in Belgrade about the "Albanian question." Stojadinović was told of Italy's intention to occupy Albania, and apparently was promised Scutari in return, as well as the cessation of anti-Yugoslav propaganda with regard to Kosovo. A few days earlier, King Zog had received an Italian plan—in effect an ultimatum—for a reorganization of the state, which amounted to a loss of independence and practical annexation. With 30,000 Italian troops landing at four Albanian ports, Zog fled, and the Albanian parliament offered the Albanian crown to Victor Emmanuel III. In the meantime, Stojadinović had resigned, and Ciano felt no obligation to his successor.

The Italian occupation was humiliating to many Albanians, but the Kosovo Albanians felt rather good about it. Finally, the dream of a Great Albania was to become a reality, after the fall of Yugoslavia in 1941, even if under the aegis of the Italian crown. It meant a reverse of the Serbianization process in Kosovo, with encouragement by the Italians. It also meant the resurgence of hostilities, and the coming of civil war, both in Albania proper and in Kosovo. It meant a new beginning of an old struggle.

Kosovo, ed. B.W.R. Jenkins,
Serbian Western American Diocese 1992, pp. 134–137.

Holy Prince Lazar and Miloš Obilić, featured on Yugoslavia stamps in 1939, celebrating 550th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo

An Albanian extremist killing a Serb Orthodox Abbot of Devič—Damaskin Bošković: Albanian pro-Nazi nationalist (Balli Kombëtar and other Albanian militias) committed terrible crimes against Kosovo Serbs during the World War II in the presence of German and Italian occupation forces.

During the occupation of World War II, about 15,000 Serbs were killed and approximately 100,000 expelled from Kosovo and Metohija. A large number of Serb villages and churches were destroyed and burned down, especially in Metohija. The Ballists also murdered 24 priests of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and Bishop Seraphim of Raška and Prizren was sent to a prison camp in Albania, where he died in exile.

Kosovo in Communist Yugoslavia

Alex Dragnich and Slavko Todorovich

TITO, in seeking to win over the Albanians of Kosovo during his wartime struggle to seize power, led them to believe that after the war they would have the right of self-determination, including the right of secession. But his decision at the end of the war to make Kosovo-Metohija an autonomous unit within Serbia was not warmly received. Nevertheless, several other actions of the Tito regime began to change the character of Kosovo-Metohija rather radically in favor of the Albanians. Some 100,000 Serbs were forced out of Kosovo during World War II, and they were not permitted to return. Moreover, with each passing year, more and more Serbs were forced to leave, between 150,000 and 200,000 in the 20 year period 1961–1981. In the meanwhile, in the period after the war, between 200,000 and 240,000 Albanians were brought in from Albania to the Kosovo-Metohija region—and over the years Kosovo Albanians gained increasing control over events in the province.

Still, at the very beginning of the new Yugoslav regime, there were considerable difficulties between the Albanian masses and their "liberators." For example, the Kosovo Albanians resisted the "voluntary mobilization" drive. In some cases they simply ignored the appeal, and had to be herded together in their mountain villages, marched down to check points, and transported under armed escort to recruiting posts. Animosity grew and became intense. In one instance a shoot-out developed, leaving 200 Albanians dead. In another, 130 Albanians suffocated when they were cramped into a former gunpowder depot. The founder of the Albanian Communist Party in 1941, Miladin Popović, now back in Priština, was killed by a Balli Combetar member, who walked into his office and murdered him in cold blood. It was in that evolving atmosphere that the Supreme Command of the People's Liberation Army issued a decree on February 8, 1945, placing Kosovo under military administration. In a month's time the backbone of the opposition was broken. Ironically, it was broken by those who had praised Dimitrije Tucović (pre-1914 Serbian socialist) for castigating Serbian bourgeois military methods in dealing with nationality issues!

In 1948, the Yugoslav minister of the interior (Ranković) reported to the party congress that past "weaknesses and mistakes" of the Communist Party were in large part responsible for the difficulties. He said that the Party was wrong when it took the position that Serbian partisan units could not survive in Kosovo during the war because of the "chauvinist attitudes of the Schipetar masses." Secondly, the party was wrong because it had "a sectarian attitude in bringing people into the fold of the anti-Fascist front." Ranković did not, however, mention the fact that during the war Kosovo Muslims looked to Albania as their natural ally, and that there were few if any Communists in the area to associate with. Nor did he cite the fact that at least half of the Serbs in the region were overtly or covertly pro-Chetnik. He did admit that the problem of "reeducating" the Kosovo Albanians to soften their opposition to Slav Communists had proved to be difficult.

From the time of the incorporation of Kosovo-Metohija into the People's Republic of Serbia as an autonomous region, it became Serbia's responsibility to demonstrate flexibility and to adopt the right approach to the Kosovo Albanians. Solid preparatory political education and economic support were the right combination, or so Serbia's Communists believed. For a time it seemed as if the formula would work. As the Republic of Serbia kept steadily injecting aid (economic, cultural, and social) into the region, Albanian postwar resistance mellowed, extremists lost their preponderance, and those advising forbearance and self-control gained the upper hand. Some of them were card-carrying Communists, others were not—but both never lost sight of the national Albanian cause in multinational Yugoslavia.

The Yugoslav central government, for its part, had made a commitment to change the way of life in the backward Kosovo-Metohija area. In spite of all difficulties that it encountered, it did not want to see that commitment shortchanged. With all available intensity, it set out to reach its aim—to win over the Kosovo Muslims, just as it had sought to do in the case of the Bosnian Muslims. The former, as reluctant as they may have been, finally obliged. They eased comfortably into the new concept, as they began to realize the advantages.

For the Serbian Communists the problem was somewhat compounded by the fact that they had to break through two barriers simultaneously: anti-Serbian and anti-Marxist. In politically educating the Kosovo Albanian masses, the Kosovo Communists in fact had the task of redirecting

the political thinking of the two-thirds majority of the population, from thinking Balli Combetar to thinking Socialist Alliance. The best way to succeed, they thought, would be to give the Kosovo Albanians what they always craved for: regional autonomy in managing their affairs, cultural identity, the right of self-determination, and even the right of secession (declaratively). In the postwar federalist euphoria there was nothing that the Yugoslav central authorities could have done in terms of pointing to the disintegrating pitfalls of the experiment, lest they be blackened and calumniated as "reactionaries."

What began as the "Autonomous Kosovo-Metohija Region" (1947), became the "Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija" (1963), and ended up as the "Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo" (1969). These may seem to be insignificant semantics, but under Yugoslav conditions it meant ascending from a faceless geographic entity to a "constituent element of the federation." The 1969 formula was subsequently used by the Albanians to demand the status of a republic in the Yugoslav Federation, which could in turn lead to the riddance of Serbia's tutelage. This scary possibility dawned upon the Serbian Communists only later, when the statistics on the rapidly growing Albanian majority became alarming.

Economically, Kosovo was moving ahead in unheard of leaps, with an annual industrial growth rate of 30 percent. With 8 percent of the Yugoslav population, Kosovo was allocated up to 30 percent of the Federal Development Funds. The Kosovo authorities, it was discovered later, used large sums from these funds to buy up land from Serbs and give it to Albanians, clearly a misappropriation. Investment loans were given for periods as long as 15 years, with a three year grace period and an interest rate of a mere 3 percent. Kosovo, always considered one of the "underdeveloped" areas of Yugoslavia, now received priority treatment. In a five year period in the 1970s, for instance, some 150 million dollars were pumped into it annually. Moreover, of one billion dollars of World Bank development credit to Yugoslavia, Kosovo got 240 million or 24 percent. It is estimated that within the past decade some 2,100 million dollars have been poured into the Kosovo economy. Much of the cultural support, social services, and educational aid was never to be repaid (i.e., financed by Serbia or the federation).

In view of all this aid, it is often asked why did Kosovo persistently lag so far behind other parts of the federation? Why is it among the poorest regions of Yugoslavia? Demographic reasons are usually cited, the Kosovo area having a birth rate of 32 per 1,000 (the highest in Europe), and the largest families (6.9 members). If all of Yugoslavia had grown at that rate, its population today would be 50 million instead of 22 million. Other explanations given are Albanian backwardness, lack of management skills, corruption, investing in unproductive prestige enterprises, unrealistic and over-ambitious planning, and growing unemployment (27.5 percent).

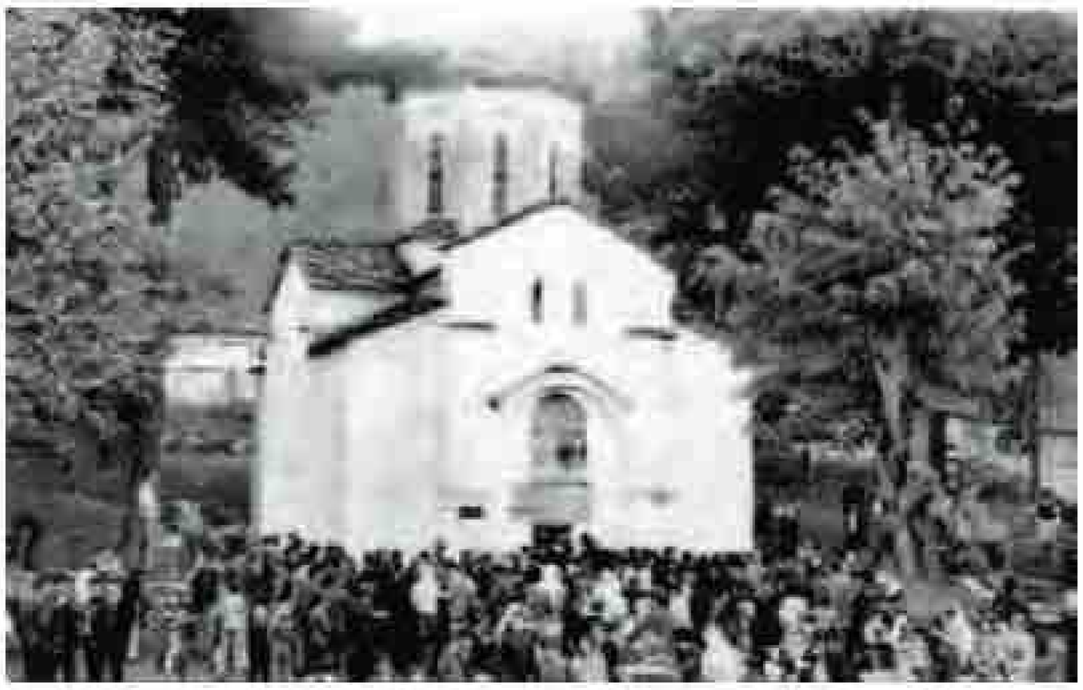
Pro-nazi Albanian demonstration.

Most of the Kosovo Albanians sided with the Nazis in the World War II and launched severe persecutions within the Italian controlled Greater Albania against the Christian Orthodox Serbs in occupied Kosovo and Western Macedonia.

Still others point to paradoxical overeducation in the region. The perennial Kosovo illiteracy problem has been on the way to obliteration: within the first few years after the war, 453 elementary schools, 30 high schools, and three institutions of higher learning were opened. Priština, a city of about 170,000, has over 50,000 college students and 40,000 high school students. For every 1,000 inhabitants of Kosovo there were 30 young people working toward a college degree, which will get most of them nowhere, partly because only 20 percent studied science and technology. Kosovo has some 450,000 high school and university students, who compete for 178,000 working places in the whole regional economy, and about 46,000 of those are in the nonproductive sector. A Yugoslav sociologist has pointed to the tensions and pressures that such "uncontrolled explosion of education" created among the Kosovo elite, who in their unsatisfied urge to succeed became "easy prey" to nationalistic views.

The Albanians tend to blame others for their plight; they are prone to accuse the other republics and nationalities of "exploitation" and see themselves as victims. Can it be that aggressive Albanian nationalism, which used to accuse Serbs of not educating Kosovo Albanians, will now charge Serbs with overeducating Albanians? The real answer to the question of the underdevelopment of Kosovo is not in its lack of progress but in the comparative rates of development, which in other areas is 4 to 6 times higher. Distancing themselves from other Yugoslav peoples by insisting on a separate, ethnically pure, narrow Albanian cultural orientation (which makes them unemployable in a linguistically Serbo-Croatian work environment), Kosovo Albanians have isolated themselves from the rest of the Yugoslav community.

While the economic lag is felt by both Albanian and Serbian inhabitants of Kosovo, the cultural isolation is a singularly Albanian phenomenon. This is why Kosovo Serbs



Serbs from Mušutište and Suva Reka in the monastery of Mother of God Hodegetria in 1980

resent being forced to learn Albanian and to attend schools with instruction in the Albanian language. It is paradoxical indeed that Serbian efforts to bring Albanians in only contributed to keeping them out; that the federative philosophy of freeing peoples for the sake of individual development and the broadening of internationalistic ties in fact imprisoned them in their own nationalistic confines. Serbian Communists are asking themselves in disbelief: after all we have done for Kosovo, is it possible that the Albanians are less happy in the "new communist Yugoslavia" than they were in "rotten royalist Yugoslavia?"

The question is asked because of the unrest, demonstrations, and protests that have taken place in the region in 1968, during the 1970s, and especially in 1981, and because the Communists themselves admit that "the atmosphere is fraught with something bad." Ali Shukrija, onetime chairman of the presidency of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo, put it this way: "... one enters a shop and the salesman behaves strangely. One enters a butcher's place, the transistor radio hums, Tirana is on. One switches on the TV set in Priština, and does not know if he is in Tirana or here in Priština ... And then the enthusiasm for folklore: incredibly aggressive ... one can see Tirana all the time, the lights directed that way ..." (Interview printed in Borba, May 10–12, 1982). Shukrija should not complain. It was the Kosovo Communist leadership that turned the heads of Kosovo Albanians toward Tirana. They did it in their nationalistic ecstasy, when they got rid of the allegedly Serbian-dominated state security service in the late 1960s. At the time that Shukrija heard the radio in the butcher shop humming, the Kosovo security service was in the hands of the Albanians. They were probably listening to the same tune. Shukrija does not tell. It seems perverted logic, therefore, to blame Serbs for the 1968 demonstrations that occurred in several Kosovo cities. Following the 1968 disorders, in which a number of persons was injured, most of the Albanian demands were met. There was one which was not: republic status for Kosovo, but it was soon acquired in fact, if not in name. The 1968, 1971, and 1974 amendments to the Yugoslav constitution, one after another, granted Serbia's autonomous provinces the prerogatives of republics. Kosovo got its own supreme court and its own Albanian flag. Belgrade University extension departments at Priština were upgraded to the level of an independent university. This is when the leaders of Priština's youth turned away from Belgrade and toward Tirana. Belgrade could not provide either Albanian teachers or Albanian textbooks.

Tirana was more than glad to oblige. In 10 years (1971–1981) it sent to Kosovo 240 university teachers, together with textbooks written in the Albanian literary language. At the same time came the aggressive folklore that Shukrija was talking about: Albanian historic and socialist movies, Albanian TV and radio, and sport and cultural exchange visits. The amalgamation was in full swing in plain view of Kosovo Albanian leaders. The latter did not wake up even in 1974, when an alleged "Cominform group" was discovered, or in 1976, when a "movement for the national liberation of Albania" surfaced. When Serbs complained of pressures and "reverse discrimination," their voices seemingly could not be heard because of the ever more vocal clamor of the Kosovo Albanians.

Finally, on March 11, 1981, a routine evening in the student cafeteria turned into turmoil when a wild bunch of youths began demolishing everything that they could get their hands on, which was subsequently depicted as a student protest at the "lousy" food they were getting. After they had beaten up the cashier and broken chairs and windows, the demonstrators took to the streets of Priština, where they were faced by the riot police. Several policemen were injured, as well as students, who were dispersed. The demonstrators reappeared on March 26th, this time in the early morning. Allegedly, they blocked the entrance to three student dormitories in Priština, and talked the students into attending a mass meeting where "student privileges" would be discussed. This was when political slogans were displayed that had nothing to do with student problems. In their enthusiasm, the young ring leaders decided on a show of force in another section of the city by attempting to disturb the running of the so-called "Tito's relay," the annual youth event celebrating the president's birthday. It proved a mistake. The police reacted, and in the ensuing fracas 23 protesters and 14 militiamen were injured. Then on April 1st, as demonstrations spread to other Kosovo cities, with political demands dominating the riots, three groups of demonstrating citizens assembled in front of the building housing the Kosovo Province Committee of the Communist Party in Priština. According to a Belgrade weekly (NIN, April 12, 1981), the slogans read: "Kosovo-Republic," "We are Albanians, not Yugoslavs," and "We want a unified Albania." By the time the evening was over, two demonstrators and two militiamen had been killed.

A member of the presidency of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist League [Party], Stane Dolanc, held a news conference in Belgrade on April 6th. Contend-

ing that the Party leaders had been caught off guard by the riots, he depicted the Kosovo events as the consequence of the "horrendous dynamism of the progress of our society, dynamism which in 36 years spanned in essence an entire century ... "He said that the melee was the deed of 2 to 3 hundred hooligans," that the "Kosovo militia was 80 to 90 percent Albanian," and that the two militiamen who were killed were both of Albanian nationality. When it was all over, the Yugoslav press reported that 11 persons were dead and 57 wounded.

Tirana sources, as well as some Albanian sources in Yugoslavia, insisted that 1,000 or more persons were killed. An American Embassy source in Belgrade estimated that 200 to 300 were killed. It would seem certain that the number killed was far greater than the Yugoslav press reported. At the above mentioned press conference, Dolanc tried to minimize the significance of the continuous migration of Serbs from Kosovo, but at the Devič Monastery near Priština, Mother Superior Paraskeva seemed to be running a better data collection center than the Central Committee of the Party in Belgrade. Standing in the monastery courtyard and pointing her finger to the surrounding mountains, she spilled out data with the precision of a computer. The delivery was somewhat monotonous, if distressful: "Let us start with the village of Poljana, 48 or 49 [Serbian] families, all gone; Kraljica, 68 families, all gone; Ljubovac and Dugovac, around 60 homes, all gone; Gornje and Donje Prikaze, 30 homes, all gone; Klina, some 28 families all gone; Novo Selo, 28 families, all gone; Lavuša, there were 25 homes, all gone; all these people moved out; Oluža, there were 12 homes, all gone; Trstenik, some 45 families, all gone; then Čikatovo, at one time 60 homes, and Glogovac with 70, no one around any more; Broćana, 28 families, all gone; Krš Brdo, 18 families, all gone; Ludović, of 12 families not a single one there.Then this village over there, Banja, well this one I don't know." The stunned reporter interrupts the litany: "But where did all these people go?" "To Serbia, where else," responds Mother Superior, matter-of-factly. She then related how she and her sister nuns, 30 of them, lived since 1947 in a state of actual siege, battling the Albanian youths who harass them day and night, throwing stones, raiding the monastery forest, vegetable gardens, animal sheds. "...I was beaten, had broken ribs, my head was bloodied 10 times... We must say the militia came often, but what's the use..." "But how do you defend yourself?," asks the reporter. Mother Paraskeva looks at him for a moment, then adds: "God protects us, who else?" (Mother Paraskeva's interview was published in the Serbian Orthodox Church publication, Pravoslavlje, May 15, 1982).

Why was a Serbian nun so well-informed? There are two reasons: first, her personal interest in the people she knew so well, and second, the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church in May 1969 instructed all ecclesiastical personnel of the Ras-Prizren diocese to collect all pertinent data on all instances of attacks on the clergy, churches, and church property committed by citizens of Albanian nationality in the Kosovo area. This order resulted from growing expressions of concern and alarm, both from members of the Serbian population of Kosovo and from Serbian priests who thought that the leadership of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade was not doing much to protect the Serbian faithful. Even after the Kosovo riots of 1981, such expressions were heard. For example, in February 1982, an "open letter" was addressed to the Holy Synod of Bishops by a group of priests from the deanery of Tamnava (town of Ub in Serbia proper), asking the Serbian episcopate "why the Serbian Church is silent" and why it did "not write about the destruction, arson, and sacrilege of the holy shrines of Kosovo."

The Holy Synod of Bishops had appealed to the official authorities of the Republic of Serbia, as well as to the Federal Executive Council, listing concrete cases, but the situation was not rectified. So on May 19, 1969, the bishops appealed to President Tito. In his reply of May 23, he expressed his regrets and agreed that the reported incidents were in violation of the constitution. He promised to do everything possible to prevent such incidents and lawless acts and "to secure for all citizens a safe life, as well as the security of their property." He wrote that their letter, together with his stated opinion on the need of taking firm steps for the protection of the law, would be sent to the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia.

This exchange did not, however, mark a change in the safety of Serbian sacred places in Kosovo, nor did it alleviate the deep-seated worries of Serbs in the area. The migration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo continued, and was becoming one of the most pressing political issues for the Serbs generally who knew about the situation. Naturally, it was the Serbs who were most deeply and emotionally concerned both with the issue of migration and the continuous trend of Albanian vandalism against Serbian monasteries and churches, attacks on the Orthodox clergy and nuns, and desecration of cemeteries and national monuments.

Life had become increasingly unpleasant for the Serbs and Montenegrins, not so much because they were a minority, but because of the pressures to leave Kosovo. Direct or subtle, these pressures involved discriminatory practices at work, obligatory instruction in Albanian in the schools, lack of influence in politics, threats of various types, the stealing of livestock, and the futility of appealing against seizures of personal property to courts staffed by Albanians. Thus, faced with general animosity and outright pillage, the frustrated victim finally decides to abandon everything and flee.

Indicative of the trend are the population statistics. In 1946 the Albanians made up about 50 percent of the population of Kosovo, but by 1981 it was 77.5 percent. The corresponding percentage for Serbs and Montenegrins had dropped to about 15 percent (Yugoslav statistics list Serbs

and Montenegrins separately). Thus, as the Albanian goal of an ethnically pure Kosovo became a reality, that reality became increasingly unbearable for those who could not pack up and leave.

According to the findings of the Kosovo Special Committee that inquired into the matter of emigration, in the period 1971–1981, over 57,000 Serbs and Montenegrins moved out of the area, confirming the continuous nature of the trend. Parents found that their children had been intercepted while going to school or coming home. Serbian women were raped. Serbian girls were assaulted or kidnapped by Albanians. Farmers found their crops damaged. Elderly citizens who stayed home got letters or telephone calls that upset their peace of mind. Unfriendly slogans or symbols were sprayed on the walls of Serbian homes under cover of darkness.

The Kosovo Albanian authorities were also anxious to break up the compactness of Serbian areas. To do this they would, for example, build a factory in a solidly Serbian settlement. Under the population key of the Yugoslav government, 80 percent of the workers in that factory had to be Albanians, who then would be brought in, and thus break up the concentration of the Serbs in a settlement. Belgrade's Politika (June 3, 1983), two years after the 1981 events, headlined in big letters: MONTHLY—400 EMIGRANTS. The article reported that 10,000 Serbs and Montenegrins had moved out of Kosovo in the previous two years. Kosovo as a whole, it reported, has 1,435 settlements, 666 of which are without a single Serb or Montenegrin, and in 147 settlements they make up only 3 percent of the population.

Another reporter (for *Pravoslavlje*, May 15, 1982) tells of two Montenegrins seen digging in the cemetery of the village of Petrovac: "We moved out in the early spring, but came back to get our deceased mother ... It became unbearable to be here any longer. Now that the village is called Ljugbunar, we could not have a water system, but the Albanians are getting it. There is electricity now, and a paved road as well, but what's the use, there was no place for us here any more... "The chronology of complaints against Albanian aggressiveness as published in the periodical of the Serbian Orthodox Church (*Glasnik*, July 1982) reads in part:

1969: The ruins of the ancient Serbian church near Veliki Trnovac were converted into a rest room, and a donkey was found inside...

1970: The cellar of the Dečani Monastery was broken into several times...

1971: The Orthodox cemetery in Petrič, all tombstones smashed and the acacia forest trees cut. Albanian youngsters attacked Serbian women on their way to the service in St. Nicholas Church in the village of Mušutište, near Prizren...

1972: The main door of the church in the village of Vinarac, near Kosovska Mitrovica, was found broken and removed; the same damage was done to the church in the village of Dobrčan, near Gnjilane; in Prizren the Church of St. Nicholas was repeatedly damaged; in the village of Sipolje, near Kosovska Mitrovica, 15 tombstones were smashed; in the village of Srbovci, 8 tombstones, and in the villages of Opteruša, Orahovac, and Ratinje, the same thing. The monastery woods in Mušutište raided twice this year, some 30 trees cut down. The nuns who opposed the vandals were beaten and exposed to the worst obscenities. Forest trees belonging to St. Demetrius Monastery in Preševo were cut down and sold openly at the local market.

Archimandrite Makarije, abbot of Dečani Monastery

1973: An Albanian cutting a tree on church property wounded the priest who tried to stop him; St. Mark's Monastery Church was found with the main door removed, the iconostasis smashed, books torn, and candleholders broken.

1980: A professor of the theological school in Prizren was injured in a street attack; the woods of the Holy Trinity Monastery, near Prizren, raided by five Albanians who cut 64 trees; in the night between March 15/16, at 3 a.m., the old guesthouse building—with one wing serving as a library and the other as a reliquary shrine—of the Peć Patriarchate Monastery was set afire and burned down...

1981: The Saint Uroš Church in Uroševac had 10 windows broken; 38 tombstones at the cemetery of the village of Bresja, and 6 in the village of Stinga smashed; the church at Uroševac raided once again, irredentist slogans written on the wall of an adjacent building ...

1982: Cemetery tombstones in the yard of the church in Kosovska Mitrovica were broken; the Devič Monastery lost 30 trees from its woods, the monastery sow was found killed with an ax, and the access road blocked by bulldozed huge stones.

Does all of this look like ugly Albanian nationalism or just plain vandalism on a rampage? Serbs and Montenegrins are traumatized, especially since they are getting no answers. Kosovo leaders, such as Ali Shukrija, admit publicly that Kosovo events "have disrupted relations ... traumatized Kosovo Albanians, as well, I can state that openly. It has been a shock to them, too" (Borba, 10–12, 1982).

But such declarations do not satisfy Serbs and Montenegrins. They are looking for deeds, not words. They see no energetic and prompt intervention by local authorities, no attempt to bring to justice those responsible for such acts. They want stiff sentences, purging those in authority, and the clear-cut establishment of who is responsible for all of this: the entire Belgrade policy or the particular interpretation of that policy by the Kosovo leaders." After all, the president of the Kosovo Provincial Committee of the League of Communists is a member of the Presidium of the Party's Central Committee. Does he not report to his comrades in Belgrade what is going on in Kosovo? Is he not asked about what they must have read in the papers or were told by the patriarch's office? Is this some kind of conspiracy of silence, a cover-up, a deceitful stratagem? Questions, questions, questions ... With the degree of independence that the Yugoslav media have today, such a hot issue cannot just be swept under the rug.

True, there have been a few trials, closed to the public. Why closed? Members of "illegal" organizations have gone to prison. But what of Kosovo's top Albanian leaders? Public resignations have been proffered by 2. Is resignation the extent of their penalty? The rector of Priština University, the editor of the literary journal, and a few provincial government secretaries were removed from their positions, but slated for other jobs. Is this any way to deal with persons in leadership positions?

What really caused disaffection in Serbian and Montenegrin public opinion was that Kosovo security forces and the police were unable to come up with the identity of the arsonist or arsonists who set fire to the Peć Patriarchate Monastery. That blaze shook Serbian public opinion. But the more that Belgrade insisted on learning the truth, the less it got. Kosovo officialdom clammed up. The news-hungry Serbian press began its own investigative reporting, and that made everybody unhappy. The Kosovo Communists accused the reporters of being snoopy sensation seekers. Croatian and some Serbian Communists felt that such efforts were counterproductive, but the broad public did not get what it really wanted—an official response and not news reports.

At this stage, the issue is not only complex, but so emotion-laden that it may be too much to expect clear thinking. A Belgrade University professor, an ethnic Albanian (Halit Trnavci), denounced "the blind nationalistic fanaticism" of the Kosovo Albanological Institute and the Kosovo Academy of Sciences, and asserted: "By their declaration of hatred and intolerance toward the Serbian and Montenegrin people in the Kosovo area, they harm the Kosovo Albanians first of all ... We all know that Kosovo harbors the most important and greatest monuments of Serbian medieval culture. For centuries, throughout the rule of those who were our common enemies ... hundreds and thousands of Albanians protected those Serbian monuments like their own homes, their own children, like their own national shrine... "But can such an appeal reach the minds of his compatriots in Priština, drugged by nationalist euphoria?

Forbearance is one thing, but resignation, submission, and acquiescence in their own defeat, especially on the Kosovo issue, is historically un-Serbian. Unless Marxism has won over nationalism and blunted the Serbian sense of history, Serbs cannot become disinterested in their own heritage. Judging by the surge of national intonation in numerous literary works, theater pieces, movies, and art works, the Serbian spirit is very much awake. It is very much alive in intellectual circles, unabashedly evident in the ranks of the youth, displaying national symbols and singing old nationalistic songs, and manifested by the emergence of popular respect for the role of the Serbian Church in the latest national plight.

Today, books about Serbia's history are best sellers. Contemporary literati, writing about the sufferings, massacres, and sacrifices under the Croatian Ustashi, Bosnian Muslims, and Albanians, suggest that the reaction of Serbs may lead to dangerous disillusionment with the official slogan of "brotherhood and unity." As Serbia gropes trying to recharge its atrophied national spirit, those who contributed to the atrophy seem concerned that they not find themselves outside the mainstream of Serbian public opinion. It is clear that 1984 is not 1944. One wonders if to Serbian Marxists there is a crucial difference between being out of touch with a social class and being out of touch with the whole nation.

Kosovo, ed. B.W.R. Jenkins,
Serbian Western American Diocese 1992, pp. 156–160.

The Suffering and Persecution in Kosovo and Metohija from 1945 to 2005

Compiled by Fr. Savo Jović

THE DRAMA AND TRAGEDY OF KOSOVO is not new. It has lasted for more than six centuries. The actors in this drama have been many and various.

The living and authentic testimonials of the Bishops of Raška-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija, Vladimir, Pavle, and other witnesses, collected in this book demonstrate more clearly than the sun and reveal the true causes of all that has occurred and continues to occur in Kosovo and Metohija today. From these documents it is evident that today's ethnic and every other imbalance on this fateful European territory is not the result of a natural process and healthy historical development but of permanent violence, expulsion, grabbing and destruction of the Serbian people, its holy shrines and its property.

The basic rule of God's justice and man's says: There is no statute of limitations on crime. Viewed in the light of this historical truth and the tragic reality of the bombing of Serbia and her Kosovo and Metohija (1999), and certain aspirations and intentions already then present by global centers of power secretly or openly advocating giving Kosovo independent status are nothing but the legalization and extension of crime and violence. The only difference being that this time this is not being done in the name of jihad or fascism or Bolshevism but supposedly in the name of human rights and democracy!

The goal of the testimonials in this book is to serve as a wake up call to the violence eclipsed consciences of the powerful of this world, in the hope that they will finally judge and decide about Kosovo "according to neither father nor uncles but the True God's justice" (epic poem). And that means: in accordance with God's incorruptible justice and true humanity.

Introduction

For the Serbs Kosovo and Metohija are far more than a mere geographical concept or a reminder of the medieval power of the Serbian state and the official seat of Serbian archbishops and patriarchs; they are a part of them, like their heart and soul, and that is what many people in the world today who are discussing the final status of this province cannot or will not understand and comprehend. For the Serbs Kosovo and Metohija is a holy shrine where everyone "who has ears…" can and should hear the voice of the Lord: "Put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground" (Exd 3:5).

Unfortunately, some of today's powerful world leaders do not want to hear these words; on the contrary, they support who, not just in the past few years but for many decades, have been expelling the Serbs from their cradle and from their homes, destroying and desecrating their holy shrines.

The great and violent migrations in the 17th and 18th centuries are well known but these migrations and expulsions reached their culmination in the 20th and this 21st century. The effect of Serb expulsions during the period from 1945 to 2005 is greater in the total sum than all the aforementioned great migrations.

On the pages that follow I have tried to demonstrate through the reports of the bishops of Kosovo and Metohija and other persons who visited or stayed in this province preserved in the Archives of the Holy Synod of Bishops that the migration of the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija was not a natural socio-economic process but always the result of violence. This expulsion had the goal of grabbing and usurping others' property, acquired through sacrifice and hard work.

Thus, the systematic violence of the Albanians against the Serbs caused them to leave their homes almost every day in the period from 1945 to 2005. Anyhow, until the 1980s this violence against the Serbs was tolerated and stoked by the Communist authorities headed by J. B. Tito, which it skillfully hid and kept secret before the world, at the same time sending into the world pictures with a glossy and embellished historical reality. Only after the vicious murder of Danilo Milinčić by Albanians and the Holy Martyr Deacon Avakum-like torture of Djordje Martinović did the regime break its silence but its speaking up did little good because it was already very late, almost too late, to change the picture that had been framed for decades in the minds of the world's powerful leaders.

Nevertheless, despite that picture I hope that all possibilities for initiating serious talks have not been exhausted, and that a consensual, just and reasonable solution will be

Archimandrite Teodosije with the Italian commander who protected Dečani Monastery

Bishop Nikolai (Velimirović) with the students and professors of the monastic school in Dečani Monastery

A wedding in Pištane village, 1961

found that will ensure normal living conditions for all those living in Kosovo Metohija today. That the many holy shrines of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo and Metohija will be preserved, and that all expelled Serbs will return to their homes in Kosovo and Metohija.

It is my humble hope that this will be my small contribution toward changing that picture, and that those deciding on the final status of Kosovo and Metohija will make a just solution that will satisfy both the Serbian people and the Albanian minority.

On St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan), 2007

Protopresbyter-stavrophor Savo B. Jović

Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up;
Fighting all day he oppresses me.

You number my wanderings;
Put my tears into Your bottle;
Are they *not in Your book?*

Deliver me from my enemies, O my God;
Defend me from those who rise up against me.

I am weary with my groaning;
All night I make my bed swim;
I drench my couch with my tears.

Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer:
preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked,
From the rebellion of the workers of iniquity.
(Ps 56, 1, 8; 59, 1; 6, 6, 7; 64, 1,2)

The Year 1945

It is well known that during the occupation the Diocese of Raška and Prizren was divided into three state regions: the largest part was given to Albania (under Italian occupation), and the two smaller ones to Serbia and Bulgaria. From the part given to Albania almost a third of the Serb population emigrated to Montenegro and Serbia because the Albanians undertook mass murder of Serb settlers, especially in the area of Mt. Goleš and in Miloševo. All settlers' churches between Prizren and Djakovica were destroyed. Also destroyed was the church in Koriša, where the residents were old-timers. Devič Monastery was torched and destroyed, its forest cut down, its property confiscated. The other monasteries, especially Dečani, suffered much damage: almost all their tillable land was confiscated, their forests cut and burned down, their vineyards and orchards cut down and ruined.

The remaining Serb population lived in great poverty, especially in the cities. The church parish in Prizren did

much to alleviate the poverty by collecting donations and distributing aid to the poor in money and heating fuel. The Holy Synod of Bishops also sent Bishop Serafim of blessed memory repose larger sums of money on three occasions to meet the needs of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren (№ 2873/zap. 427 from 1942).

Upon the repose of Bishop Serafim on January 13, 1945, who because of wartime conditions and the winter season had to be buried in Tirana next to the mausoleum of Serbian soldiers who died in World War I, the Holy Synod of Bishops appointed His Eminence Metropolitan Josif of Skoplje the administrator of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren.[1]

Metropolitan Josif immediately interceded with representatives of the new government to open the Seminary in Prizren but unfortunately, the Holy Synod of Bishops received an answer from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Kab. № 611/45 from July 3, 1945, signed by the minister for Internal Affairs, Vlada Zečević, saying:

"We have been informed by the Military Command of Kosovo and Metohija that the building of the seminary in Prizren is being used by military authorities. In addition to this difficulty, there are many other reasons that make it impossible to reopen the aforementioned seminary at this time. Upon investigating all circumstances, it is our opinion that this matter should not be insisted on at this time. The main reason is that Prizren today is inhabited by a population that is 75 percent Albanian; should the seminary be reopened, they would not comprehend this properly at this time. Death to fascism—freedom to the people."

The Holy Synod of Bishops sent a request in this regard to the Commission for Religions of Democratic Federal Yugoslavia, № 2545/45, saying:

"The administration of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren has sent the Holy Synod of Bishops a telegram containing the following: 'The district council in Prizren has confiscated the furniture of the Prizren Seminary with the explanation that the furniture was obtained from subsidies given by the state to the church. Act to follow, № 237. Court prosecutor priest Čedomir Simić, December 26, 1945.'

Upon informing of the above, the Holy Synod of Bishops has the honor to request that the Commission for Religions intercede with those competent to order the District Council in Prizren to return the illegally and illegitimately confiscated furniture of the Prizren Seminary.

At the same time, the Commission for Religions is asked to secure a general order to state officials and the entire country to spare the Serbian Orthodox Church from similar illegal actions."[2]

It its reply from January 2, 1946, which is signed by the director of the general section, Milan Parezanović, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Democratic Federal Yugoslavia says: "In regard to your act № 2545 from December 28, 1945, you are hereby informed that the District People's Council—Prizren has been sent an act of the following content:

"The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church has informed the Presidency of the Federal Government that this council has confiscated the furniture of the Prizren Seminary with the explanation that the furniture was obtained from subsidies the state gave to the Church.

In our opinion this act is illegal and illegitimate. In the interests of correct relations between the state and the Church it is necessary to return the confiscated furniture immediately to the Prizren Seminary.

Send a report when this is done.

Death to fascism—Freedom to the people!"

Unfortunately, the problem relating to the Seminary welcomed Bishop Vladimir of Mukačevo-Prjaševo, whom the Holy Synod of Bishops by its decision № 1388/zap. 326 from August 16/3, 1945, appointed administrator of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren.[3]

By his act, № 21 from January 5, 1945, he informs the Holy Synod of Bishops that immediately upon his arrival in Prizren he undertook measures for the authorities to turn the church property they had occupied over to him.

"Today, for example, he says, during another visit to state representatives with Mr. Prota Milan Trifunović and Mr. Professor Petko Trifunović in regard to the latest incident of confiscation of furniture from the Seminary, I again asked that in the future the property of the church be left alone. To this I received the categorical reply that this was not the property of the Church, that the people's government had the right to do what they will with it and that everything has been turned over to the Council for People's Property.

As far as the Bishop's residence is concerned, we were told that this building does not belong to the church but to the Russian state and that Russian consuls lived there. And that the building of the Seminary, I was told, was property of the people and was not left to the church but to the people.

Upon listening to this, I made the following rebuttal: The Bishop's residence has always the property of the church. It is true that at one time Russian consuls lived there but they paid rent. The Church also has a title to this building and can call a large number of local citizens who will testify that the Russian consuls who lived in it were only renters.

Regarding the Seminary building, I made this rebuttal: it is the property of the Church and has been bequeathed to her for her purposes carried out for the national and religious aims of our people in this region. For this there is also much proof that the Church is in the right, that she cares for these buildings and considers them her own. His

[1] Archive of the Holy Synod of Bishops (hereafter, AHSB), № 176/zap. 68 from 1945.

[2] AHSB, № 2545/45.

[3] AHSB, 16/1947.

opinion remained unchanged and he directed us to provide evidence of our right."[4]

The Year 1946

At the request of the Holy Synod of Bishops, Sin № 1815 from July 4, 1946, His Grace Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren submitted a report on the situation in some monasteries and churches from which the attitude and behavior of the new government representatives toward the Church and her property can be seen.

The report says:

1) For *Visoki Dečani Monastery*:

All the buildings in the monastery complex, with the exception of four monks' cells, the kitchen, the pantry and the refectory, have been occupied by the District People's Council for Kosovo and Metohija to be used for a children's recreational center and settlers' families.

The Royal residence and the Prizren residence are in use for the children's recreational center, and Miloš's residence and the servants' residence are in use for housing for settlers' families.

In the village of Dečani, the Local People's Council has occupied the monastery building called the Mill—Powerhouse for use as a local post office and Youth Center.

The monastery administration is not receiving any rent for any of the aforementioned buildings.

2) *For Gračanica Monastery:*

Gračanica Monastery in Kosovo owns a building in the monastery courtyard occupied immediately after liberation by the Local People's Council in Gračanica. To this day this building houses the offices of the Local People's Council, the People's Front, the Youth Center, conferences held by the People's Front, the Anti-Fascist Women's Front, youth groups, various Young Pioneer events, dances, etc. In addition to this, they also occupy the monastery barn, the arcades, etc. The secretary of the Local People's Council occupies four chambers where he resides with his family.

The above report is sent with the request to do what is necessary in order to free this building because the same is being ruined more and more with each passing day, as well as its furniture, fixtures, etc., while the monastery's Administration lacks adequate space.

3) *For the church in Priština:*

According to a report by the first parish priest of Priština, the church of St. Nicholas Church in Priština owns two buildings that have now been confiscated.

The old primary school in Hadži Jovanova Street № 1 has been occupied by the III Region Youth Center, i.e. some chambers serve as the III Region Youth Center and others as offices of the III Region.

The church building in Nemanjina Street № 16 has also been occupied by the VI Region Youth Center and is today being used as a Youth Center.

The residents in these buildings are not paying any rent to the Church administration.

3) *For the church in Novi Pazar:* (...)

4) *For the church in Prizren:*

The building in 99th Street № 8 in Prizren, which is owned by the church parish of Prizren, has been occupied almost since the day of liberation by the City People's Council and houses the people's primary school for which they are not paying rent although asked to do so.

5) *For the church in Ljubižda*, ecclesiastical administrative district of Prizren:

Two buildings in the village of Ljubižda owned by the church parish of Ljubižda have been occupied by the Local People's Council in Ljubižda. One of them serves as the offices of the Local People's Council, and the other as a primary people's school in Ljubižda, for which no rent is being paid.

6) *For the buildings of the Prizren seminary:*

All buildings of the Prizren seminary have been occupied by state authorities since the liberation. They are using them to this day. To this day they have not paid any rent.[5]

In a meeting on March 22, 1946, the Holy Synod of Bishops discussed the confiscation of the furniture and inventory of the Seminary in Prizren, as well as the arrests of Professor Petko Trifunović and Purchaser Vasilije Kruljikovski, and in this regard decided that the Presidency of the Holy Synod of Bishops, together with the competent Bishop, would take care further care about the remaining inventory of this Seminary confiscated by state officials.[6]

In this regard, Bishop Vladimir, the administrator of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren, informed the Holy Synod of Bishops by act № 428 from March 18, 1946, that state authorities in Prizren returned the confiscated items to the Church for her use, with the exception of furniture, with a request for instruction on the items' storage.

On March 28, 1946, the Holy Synod of Bishops asked Bishop Vladimir to provide a list of items/inventory for the Seminary in Prizren.[7]

In a meeting on June 19, 1946, the Holy Synod of Bishops approved a report from Bishop Vladimir, administrator of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren, regarding a petition submitted to competent state authorities that the Seminary in Prizren be reopened, noting that the preserved inventory was being guarded by Petko Trifunović, a former professor.[8]

At the same time, the Holy Synod of Bishops postponed a decision on Bishop Vladimir's recommendation (from May 9, 1946) that a part of the removable inventory (blankets and linen cloth for bedding) be transferred to Belgrade until it received confirmation whether or not the Seminary

[4] AHSB, 1948.

[5] AHSB, Syn № 55/1946.

[6] AHSB, Syn № 736/zap. 13/46.

[7] AHSB, Syn № 784/zap. 62/46.

[8] AHSB, Syn № 1527/zap. 203/46.

would resume its work, asking Bishop Vladimir, as the administrator of the Diocese, to take care that the property of the Seminary was well looked after and guarded.[9]

In regard to a report on cases of misapplication of the Law on state record books by some state authorities and officials, as well as by the Local People's Council in Tutin (district of Novi Pazar) in the Diocese of Raška and Prizren—which confiscated the citizen record book from the Administration of the Serbian Orthodox parish in Tutin with the explanation that it was state property, as well as that, on October 15, 1946, a petition was sent regarding this and two other cases to the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia with the request that these three concrete orders, being contrary to the relevant Law, and in the interests of proper public service and for the protection of legality, be rescinded and their execution halted, the Holy Synod of Bishops, in a session on October 31 that year, decided to wait for a response by competent officials.[10]

In a meeting on October 30, 1946, the Holy Synod of Bishops adopted the recommendation of the Executive Council of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren and approved that the building of the Seminary in Prizren be leased to the District People's Council for use as a secondary school boarding house.[11]

It is clear under what sort of pressure this was done if we look at other reports arriving to the Holy Synod of Bishops. Thus, Bishop Vladimir sends the letter of the elder of Devič Monastery, Fr. Makarije Popović, which says:

"On June 23, 1946, a delegate from the district council in Prizren, vice-president of the local council from Lauša Halim Bajram, and some other Albanians, came out to divide the monastery land. Before beginning the division, the president of the District People's Council Brajim Trnava said in front of a group of Albanians and Serbs that churches are completely unnecessary. He said that the mosques could stay because they serve as places of worship, whereas churches serve for gathering wealth. The Albanians there were very pleased, while our Serbs were aghast. After the division, more land went to the Albanians who worked the land during the occupation than to the Serbs who have worked it always. I was advised by a delegate from the district council that the monastery has no right to land because it is destroyed, and that it was decided back in March 1946 that all of the monastery's land was to be confiscated. I asked the delegate whether the land on which the ruins were located was also to be confiscated. He said that it was not and that in his opinion we could do work there. This commission met in the afternoon.

The morning of the same day I had gathered the Serb youth of Lauša to help me repair the road to the monastery and clear the ruins. Halfway to the monastery, a Serb [political] youth activist from Srbica turned all the young people back. Only five of the older ones stayed and helped me repair the road. That afternoon the president from Lauša Haim Bajram came and criticized the Serbs for coming to work. He said, 'We do not want the church anymore, and because you came to work, I will force you to do volunteer labor every day.' This is how the will of the people is being heard, from five or six Albanian criminals and arsonists to resolve the fate of Devič.

On the third day of Pentecost the child of Šaban Rama from Lauša stole a donated decorative cloth from the holy Reliquary (of St. Joanićije) [St. Joannicius]. When I referred the matter to the council, they said the child really should not do that anymore. Moreover, the Albanians from Lauša, the hamlet of Vojvodići, and the village of Rezalo rest their cattle each day under the domes of what remains of the church. When I chase them away, they reply, 'Orefaš lirija populit'—'now we have freedom for the people.' I asked some local Albanians to buy beams for a house. They answered that they have some but would not sell them for Devič. The district authorities are uncooperative, and give the excuse that the state has nothing to do with the church.

I had hoped this year to get the mill and half from the property in order to do something. I cannot get wheat from the faithful because they are forced to sell all their surplus. If someone wanted to bring something anyway, he would be caught on the road and everything confiscated because they do not permit the transport of wheat without a special permit.

In order to be able to rebuild Devič, a special and firm order is necessary from the Ministry, and they will not give it. Moreover, every day in this area renegades are killing eminent Serbs. For example, they murdered a teacher from Rudnik, several Serbs from Krnjinac and an Albanian from the district who wanted to build a house for Serbs and Montenegrins who had been torched.

Therefore, I must inform Your Grace that despite my best desire to do so I cannot begin any kind of work on rebuilding in such difficult days of obstruction and hatred by the surrounding Albanians. We will continue to collect donations and when the time is right, Devič will be made by those who destroyed it. Therefore, I will be returning to the Patriarchate (in Peć).

If Fr. Archimandrite Viktor, who proposed the rebuilding of Devič, is of the opinion that this can be done, I suggest that he himself come to savage Drenica, and I will collect donations for him toward that end," concludes the letter of Hieromonk Makarije (Popović).

In his act, № 1036 from July 1, 1946, Bishop Vladimir says that actions such as this by the authorities and such bad and illegal behavior toward Serbian holy shrines and representatives of the Church had touched him to the bottom of his soul, and that he had filed a protest with the local District People's Council and appealed against such treatment.

[9] AHSB, Syn № 1524/zap. 209/46.

[10] AHSB, Syn № 2290/, 2415/ and 2430/zap. 268/46.

[11] AHSB, Syn № 3179/zap. 376/46.

"From the above cited report, continues Bishop Vladimir, we see what injustices and illegalities are being carried out against the Serbian church and her representatives, who are carrying out their duties and seeking to protect the holy shrines of the Serbian people, which it built by the sweat of its brow to guard its faith and its nationality in them. Occurrences of the sort described in the aforementioned report should be strongly condemned and not tolerated in any state or jurisdiction.

I am not just saying this as a Bishop of the Serbian Church and a Serb but as a citizen of this country who cares a lot about order, about legality, about justice and peace in it, as well as about the fact that all citizens, regardless of their religion and nationality, should be equal in their rights when they conduct their civil duties properly and in accordance with the law. Cases like this and others similar to them, of which I have informed state authorities, pleading that they be prevented, are not permitted for even the most ordinary of citizens, who in this concrete case have overstepped both their rights and their responsibilities.

As I am cognizant of my words and my responsibility before both God and men, I am not afraid to say the truth: that with this hostile position toward the Serbian Orthodox Church the peace we desire and the necessary consolidation of the country cannot be achieved. Such cases will provoke condemnation in the soul and justified protest among the Orthodox population, as well as in every other true believer, even him who is not Orthodox, but a Catholic, a Muslim or a Jew."[12]

The Year 1947

By another act, № 38 from January 23, 1947 in Prizren, Bishop Vladimir in Prizren sent the Holy Synod of Bishops the report of the Administration of the monastery of the Peć Patriarchate saying:

"On the property of the holy Peć Patriarchate there are quite a few monastery houses in Budisavci now occupied by serfs who work the land; all land has all been confiscated, and therefore the houses, too. There is a church in the center of Budisavci and next to it a house inhabited by two families, Priest Velimir Sekulić has moved into three chambers on the upper level, in that third room there is a bed for a cleric arriving on business or traveling where he can rest or spend the night. The local council decided to confiscate this room, and upon doing so they moved a family into it, there is absolutely no room to turn around. I believe that this was done to force the priest out of the monastery house and thus close the church, leaving the priest to run as far away from it as he can. He would run away now but he cannot find other accommodation.

Therefore, I ask Your Grace to intercede with competent authorities to move out this family that has moved in because we need the room and it is terribly crowded. All this was all done by the Local Council in Stub-Budisavci."[13]

In regard to the report of Bishop Vladimir, the administrator of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren, that those competent in the Local People's Council in Sredska failed to return the church record books of the second parish of Prizren despite several requests, in its meeting on May 8, 1947, the Holy Synod of Bishops lodged a protest with the Presidency of the Government of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, asking that the record books be returned.[14]

Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren then, by his act № 515 from April 16, 1947, sent the Holy Synod of Bishops a second report from the elder of Devič Monastery, saying that "the cattle of the villages of Vojvodići and Rezalo are mercilessly destroying what remains of the forest expected to be allotted to the monastery. I have asked for protection orally several times but the state officials are completely indifferent.

Adem Hailović of Vojvodići, about 40 years of age, a shepherd, is the leader encouraging all the shepherds from that village to keep their cattle near the monastery. They are not doing this out of the need to graze them but out of demonstrated spite toward Devič Monastery. This village should bear the full and justified responsibility for the monastery being in dilapidated condition. During one month of my residence here, we have done anything else except clean cattle manure out of what remains of the church. The other leader of the shepherds from the same village is the son of Ukšin Uka, who is 16 or 17 years of age.

On the other side of the monastery, the young forest growth is being destroyed by the cattle from the village of Rezalo. We have the means to build a house in Devič and other refuges but we are powerless to stop these tyrants from carrying out their tyranny.

We ask that you intercede with competent authorities for the protection of the forest of Devič Monastery."[15]

There is no information in the archive of the Holy Synod of Bishops that such an intervention took place but there is that the situation did not improve. On the contrary, from reports Bishop Vladimir received from monastery and parish administrations and which he forwarded to the Holy Synod of Bishops, we can see that conditions deteriorated further.

Thus, a report from the parish priest of Ranilug, in the ecclesiastical administrative district of Gnjilane, says:

"On the eve of the feast of St. Sava the church in Ranilug was completely demolished: all the books were torn to shreds. Only one linen cover on the altar table was spared, while all other coverings, the Gospels, one cross, the antimension, the royal doors, the drapes on the royal doors,

12 AHSB, Syn № 1830, July 6, 1946.

13 AHSB, Syn № 55/1955.

14 AHSB, Syn № 1461/zap. 327/47.

15 AHSB, Syn № 3/1947.

the service book, the candleholders—all this was smashed and scattered throughout the church.

Various icons hanging on the wall were smashed, only the vessels for Holy Communion on the altar were spared and nothing else. The tongue from the bell in the bell tower was removed and taken.

In the morning I prepared and set out for church when the sexton and two tutors, who had gone ahead of me to prepare the fire, came to me in tears and wept as they told me everything that had happened in the church. When we came there the spectacle was indescribable, not the greatest barbarians could have produced it. The Local People's Council and the Police have been advised," concludes the parish priest of Ranilug in his report.

The Bishop, on his part, writes that he has informed the District People's Council for Kosovo and Metohija in Priština and the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Government of the Federal People's Republic in Yugoslavia in Belgrade of this act, asking them for protection.[16]

Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren informed the Holy Synod of Bishops that the state authorities demanded a taxed request for permission to hold a meeting of the Provisional Trusteeship of the church parish of Istok, and that this meeting was attended by their representative, who signed the meeting minutes.

In this regard, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided on June 27, 1947, to send a protest to the Presidency of the Government of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, asking that state authorities not interfere in internal church affairs.[17]

On October 9, 1947, the Holy Synod of Bishops discussed, and joined to the relevant dossier, the report of Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren that officials of OZNA [security agency of Communist Yugoslavia] in Gnjilane had confiscated all documents that the bishop's deputy in Gnjilane had gathered in accordance with notice Syn № 780/zap. 140/47, with information on the suffering and persecution of the Serbs during World War II.[18]

The Year 1948

By another act, № 439 from April 17/4, 1948, the Bishop sent the report of the parish priest of Crkoleš, № 32 from April 13, 1948, forwarded to him by the Bishop's Deputy in Peć, saying:

"I wish to inform the Bishop's Deputy's Office in Peć that the Local Council of Crkolež has thrown the parish archive out of the parish office and moved it to the Cooperative although there were other buildings nearby. I complained to the District authorities but nothing was done; therefore, I would like to ask you to inform competent church authorities to intercede with higher state officials to free my parish office, which is my own building where they have put the Cooperative and their office merely to obstruct the performance of church rituals and the maintenance of the parish administration."[19]

[16] AHSB, Syn № 6/1948.

[17] AHSB, Syn № 2041/zap. 561/47.

[18] AHSB, Syn № 3069/zap. 831/47.

Church-people gathering in Zemanica, the feast of Transfiguration, 1960. The Ethnographic Museum, Belgrade.

With regard to the confiscation of the church in Uroševac for the storage of food, Bishop Vladimir, by act № 1967 from September 9, 1948, sent the District People's Council for Kosovo and Metohija in Priština an act of the following content:

"From church officials in Uroševac we have received the very sad news regarding the confiscation of the church for the storage of food. This fact is not only regrettable but also illegal and unconstitutional and thus we ask ourselves in wonder: how it is possible for such things to happen and be done when they are contrary to the laws that the State itself has signed and thus obligated all citizens, first and foremost, its own officials, to respect them and carry them out scrupulously. This church has been confiscated contrary to the wishes of the faithful who gather there to pray, who pour out their feelings and their wishes there in order to receive consolation for their souls and renewed strength to live and work for their own good and the good of their people. By actions such as this the authorities are confiscating [the faithful's] only consolation and possibility to pray to God and carry out their religious needs in their church, a right given them by the State Constitution.

Such an act is all the more regrettable because it was carried out just before the church's patron saint's day, which is a traditional celebration of the Serbian Orthodox people, and which they celebrated even under the difficult days of their enslavement under the Turks while, however, their own people's government obstructs it and prevents it from taking place.

[19] AHSB, Syn № 6/1948.

Giving respite to our pain, by this act we appeal to the State Authorities to return the church of Uroševac immediately to the people to be used for the purposes for which the church was intended."

"In sending the above," says Bishop Vladimir, "it is our honor to inform the Holy Synod of Bishops that we have also informed the State Commission for Religious Affairs of the People's Republic of Serbia of this matter, asking it to take action on its part in order to immediately return this place of worship to the church for her use, and we ask that the Holy Synod of Bishops on its part, if it feels it is necessary, supports our petition."[20]

In a meeting on September 29, 1948, the Holy Synod of Bishops discussed Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren's report from September 9 that state authorities confiscated the church in Uroševac for the storage of food, regarding which he informed the District People's Council for Kosovo and Metohija, and the Commission for Religions of the People's Republic of Serbia.

In regard to this conversion of a Serbian Orthodox church into a warehouse, the Holy Synod of Bishops lodged a protest with the same Commission for Religions, asking that the church be immediately freed and returned to its owner.[21]

On the basis of Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren's report from July 17, 1948, that he informed the Commission for Religions of the People's Republic of Serbia of various breaches by government representatives against the Church with a request for protection, from its meeting of August 6, 1948, the Holy Synod of Bishops sent a protest to the relevant Commission against hostile acts—by irresponsible individuals and state officials—against the Serbian Church in the villages of Smira, Vitina, Žegra, Vlaštica, etc. in this Diocese.[22]

In the same meeting on August 6, 1946, the Holy Synod of Bishops, in anticipation of results from Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren's intervention with the Commission for Religions of the People's Republic of Serbia, joined a copy of the protest against the occupation of the parish home in Nikoljača near Prizren to the relevant dossier.[23]

The Year 1949

In regard to the confiscation of all record books of the first and second parishes of Peć by the City People's Council in Peć with notice to the priests that they are not allowed to keep any other record books, Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren asked the opinion of the Holy Synod of Bishops regarding the legality of such an act, taking into account that Holy Synod of Bishop circulars № 4205/48 and 243/zap. 4 from 1949 ordered that priests acquire new record books for further record keeping.

The Holy Synod of Bishops reacted to this on April 24, 1949, by sending a protest letter to the Federal and State Commissions for Religions with the request that this illegal ban be rescinded.

In the Synod archive we find information that the Holy Synod of Bishops in its meeting on June 17, 1949, sent Bishop Vladimir an act of the Ecclesiastical Court of his Diocese and a report by the first parish priest of Podujevo about the ban on religious processions sent to the Office of the Patriarchate and signed by the deputy of the local Bishop.[24]

The same was done with a repeated report about the same ban pronounced to the parish priest of Vračevo from a meeting of the Holy Synod of Bishops on June 22, 1949, with the remark that the Holy Synod of Bishops does not receive acts directly from the Ecclesiastical Court with the signature of the bishop's deputy but only with the signature of the competent bishop.[25]

In a meeting on October 21, 1949, the Holy Synod of Bishops discussed the response of the Commission for Religions of the People's Republic of Serbia to the protest against the ban on keeping record books in Peć, according to which the Ministry of Internal Affairs determined that the ban applied to keeping record books that did not serve private purposes.

The Holy Synod of Bishops joined this response from the Commission on Religions to the dossier and sent a transcribed copy to Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren with the request that he verify whether the confiscated record books were subject to the provisions of Article 48 of the Law on state record books, kept by the clergy after May 9, 1946, for purely internal church evidence.[26]

In regard to a report by Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren that the church in Orahovac was occupied a second time by state officials for the storage of sunflower seeds, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided on December 1, 1949, to send another request for intervention to the Commission for Religions of the People's Republic of Serbia to free the church and return it to the church administration for normal religious use.[27]

On December 8, 1949, the Holy Synod of Bishops acted similarly in regard to Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren's report that the City People's Council in Uroševac had again confiscated the church in that city.[28]

In the same meeting, the Holy Synod of Bishops sent a request to the Commission for Religions of the People's Republic of Serbia to free the Bishop's residence in Prizren (the office of the Diocese and the apartment of the Bishop of Raška and Prizren), which had been confiscated by the City People's Council at the beginning of November 1949 for use as a boarding house for students of the Teachers'

[20] AHSB, Syn № 16/1948.
[21] AHSB, Syn № 3095/zap. 867/48.
[22] AHSB, Syn № 2743/zap. 772/48.
[23] AHSB, Syn № 2624/zap. 777/48.
[24] AHSB, Syn № 1762/zap. 499/49.
[25] AHSB, Syn № 1838/ and 1839/ 49.
[26] AHSB, Syn № 2802/zap. 827/49.
[27] AHSB, Syn № 3040/zap. 908/49.
[28] AHSB, Syn № 3153/zap. 941/49.

School, and return it for the use of competent church authorities.[29]

In regard to the report of the bishop's Deputy in Peć that local authorities confiscated all church record books kept up to March 23, 1949, and orally advised him that in the future no record books, even private record books, must be kept, the Holy Synod of Bishops on December 22, 1949, asked Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren to advise whether the confiscated record books were those opened after May 9, 1946, or those kept prior to May 9, 1946, in which subsequent entries were also made after that date.[30]

Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren by an act from December 26, 1949, sent a report by the Bishop's deputy in Priština that on December 4 of that year military patrols occupied all approaches to the church in Podujevo, and prevented both the priest and the people from entering the church and carrying out religious services.

Following discussion, the Holy Synod of Bishops joined this report to the relevant dossier.[31]

Lunch in the meadow, near Priština, 1918

The Year 1950

In a meeting on January 27, 1950, the Holy Synod of Bishops sent Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren the report of the State Commission for Religions of the People's Republic of Yugoslavia (№. 70 from March 3) that the District Council of Kosovo and Metohija had undertaken measures to empty the church in Orahovac and then turn it over to church authorities for use.[32]

In regard to a report by Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren that the Executive City People's Council in Prizren issued a decision retaining the building of the Ecclesiastical Court and the Diocese Executive Council and ordered that these jurisdictions move to offices in the Seminary, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided on January 27, 1950, to appeal to the Commission for Religions of the People's Republic of Serbia for intervention with competent authorities to rescind this decision.[33]

The State Commission for Religious Affairs of the People's Republic of Serbia responded to this (№ 1023/49 from February 9, 1950) "that the City People's Council in Prizren has changed its decision on confiscation of building of the Ecclesiastical Court for housing the Teachers' School and—with the agreement of the local Bishop—has housed it in the building of the Bishop's residence, while the decision of the Council on the removal of the fence of the Cathedral remains in effect."

In a meeting on February 14, 1950, the Holy Synod of Bishops sent this decision to Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren.[34]

[29] AHSB, Syn № 3154/zap. 942/49.

[30] AHSB, Syn № 3266/zap. 969/49.

[31] AHSB, Syn № 3358/49/zap. 30/50.

[32] AHSB, Syn № 246/zap. 70/50.

[33] AHSB, Syn № 278/zap. 72/50.

[34] AHSB, Syn № 311/zap. 106/50.

In regard to contradictory news received regarding the destruction of the church in Djakovica, on March 2, 1950, the Holy Synod of Bishops asked Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren to verify this news and submit a report.[35]

Upon receiving Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren's report that the church in Djakovica had, indeed, been completely destroyed, the Holy Synod of Bishops on April 25, 1950, sent a protest to the state Commission for Religions of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia against such serious violations of the law against the vital interests of the Serbian Orthodox Church and her holy shrines.[36]

In the meanwhile, Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren sent the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the District People's Council in Priština asking that a land parcel designated for the building of a parish home in the village of Mušutište not be confiscated, and requesting appropriate intervention.

In a meeting on March 17, 1950, the Holy Synod of Bishops sent His Grace Bishop Vladimir's act in certified copy to the Patriarchate Executive Council with a recommendation for intervention with the Commission for Religions of the People's Republic of Serbia for protection of the land parcel.[37]

With respect to the complaint of the Executive Council of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren sent to the District People's Council for Kosovo and Metohija regarding the illegal confiscation of a church land parcel in Prizren, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided in a meeting on March 23, 1950, to await the response of the relevant Commission.[38]

[35] AHSB, Syn № 413/zap. 134/50.

[36] AHSB, Syn № 870/zap. 280/50.

[37] AHSB, Syn № 511/zap. 188/50.

[38] AHSB, Syn № 629/zap. 213/50.

On March 23, 1950, the Holy Synod of Bishops sent the report of the State Commission for Religious Affairs of the People's Republic of Serbia that the church in Uroševac was freed and turned over for the use of church authorities to Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren.[39]

Since Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren had intervened with the State Religious Commission of the People's Republic of Serbia to prevent the destruction of the fence around the Prizren Cathedral, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided in a meeting on April 25, 1950, to await the results of the intervention.[40]

The Year 1951

Besides Bishop Vladimir, the Holy Synod of Bishops also received reports about the difficulties of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija from priests, monks and nuns, among them Prota Stevan M. Dimitrijević, who says:

"While involved with this year's examinations in the Prizren Seminary, I learned about our religious and national situation there. On days when there were no exams, I went to the neighboring monasteries of St. Mark and the Holy Trinity, and also visited other places nearby. On my return after the end of exams I visited Djakovica, Visoki Dečani Monastery and the monastery of the Peć Patriarchate in Peć. Although I imagine that from the accounts of His Grace Bishop Vladimir of Raška and Prizren the difficult situation—both his personally and of our Orthodoxy in general—is for the most part well-known on the other side, I nevertheless consider it to be my duty to inform the Holy Synod of Bishops about only some of our most serious misfortunes that I have seen and heard about. It is possible that the people, frightened by the great terror of the enemy during the occupation, were still afraid afterward in freedom to tell their Bishop everything. But now, when the treatment of the Seminary and religion in general is such that we can breathe and speak more freely, it may be useful to repeat things we already know but about which we could do nothing to rectify mistakes and injustices. We can only hope that the time is right for that and that the highest representative office of our Church can take steps and offer help, serving His Grace Bishop Vladimir as reason and motive to create cooperation on the spot for rebuilding of ruins and protection from further savagery and destruction. He has won both the love of the people and the trust of the autorities with his mild appeals, and could quietly begin this restoration and succeed in it.

The main mass campaign for the eradication of our churches and our people was initiated by the Albanian Muslims immediately after the arrival of the Italian occupier. The monastery of St. Mark above the village of Koriša, where there are 20 Serb households, was completely demolished, all buildings were destroyed by the Albanians from the village of Kabaša in the hills above the monastery. During the Balkan War and World War I, also, they plundered all the monastery's property, carrying off the doors, the windows and even the iconostasis and its doors, which they put on the paddocks where they enclose sheep. Now even more destructively they leveled everything with the ground, again shattering the cover on the tomb of Simo Igumanov, which they also broke into pieces and scattered during the last war, and after that war we collected them from the area with students from the Seminary and glued them with cement. Now they have even toppled the bells from the bell tower. Some believe that the pieces rolled to the river and were buried in the sand, and there are rumors that the smaller bell remained whole and was secretly sold to some Catholic church. We need to investigate this.

It is hard to believe that these savages would leave metal that is so expensive these days to roll and be buried in the river. It has either been sold or is being hidden in the houses of Kabaša. This could be established by Our Serbs in Koriša could find out, and offer to buy the pieces and give some sort of reward. One of the two monastery bells was enormous, poured in Moscow in 1857 but it cracked during ringing and the Igumanov Endowment had it recoated. It will be able to assist greatly once again in the restoration of the monastery of St. Mark because of the location of the tomb of its founder. A Council for restoration needs to be formed in Prizren that includes the Koriša Serbs and preparations can begin for this difficult but realizable undertaking. I have said something about this although privately and without authority.

What can make us happy and refresh us in our concern about the general situation in Prizren is the restoration of the antique endowment of King Stephen the First-crowned, the Most Holy Theotokos of Ljeviša, later dubbed by the people St. Paraskeva, which is being masterfully done. I have asked engineer Slobodan Nenadović, who is dedicated to directing this work, to once again visit, study and propose that the cave above the monastery of St. Mark where St. Petar of Koriša lived his ascetic life be placed under state protection. In front of these, an artificial wall was restored in the time of King Milutin and Emperor Dušan connecting [the monastery] with the cliff and the hermitage of the Saint, a magnificent endowment that became a place of pilgrimage, a gift to the holy shrine lasting for centuries until our own time. The fresco remnants in the hermitage, and the main pillars with the preserved domes of this important antiquity deserve for their originality in both architecture and icon writing to be declared a national monument and placed under the protection of a state institution for the protection and preservation of our antiquities. If this was done, then the monastery of St. Mark as the closest location would be like before the supervising guardian of this original antique holy shrine. St. Mark's was once a metoh [church estate] of St. Peter of Koriša; after violent

39 AHSB, Syn № 631/zap. 207/50.

40 AHSB, Syn № 895/zap. 283/50.

destruction it was transformed into an independent and important monastic and educational family. His Grace Vladimir by his kindness will be able to send this attentive director of the restoration of the Most Holy Theotokos to study the hermitage of St. Petar of Koriša and prepare a proposal that it be proclaimed a national antiquity, while the Holy Synod here in Belgrade can intercede with those competent to ensure that the proposal is adopted. The restoration and maintenance of the monastery of St. Mark would thus be permanently secured.

In the year 1943 Albanian prime minister Mustafa Kruja with his large entourage of ministers and Albanian fanatics raised an entire campaign against us and our religion under the auspices of the Italian occupation. At a public gathering, he said that Prizren is the future capital of Albania when it includes Metohija, Kosovo, Sandžak and the other side of Mts. Šar and Korab, Ohrid and Pelagonija. There is little he failed to jabber about against the Serbs and Yugoslavia on his triumphal travels among his bloodthirsty and half-savage compatriots. In the village of Orahovica, in Podrima Prizrenska, a mixed settlement, he said to the Albanians: why did you leave Dečani, Gračanica and other Serbian markers, why didn't you destroy them? He came to Visoki Dečani Monastery and as he gazed from the entrance at the magnificence of the church, he said in the presence of the monastery brotherhood and other Serbs there, 'Whoever built this church for himself has made himself a great monument' and then, turning toward his escort and the mass of Albanians, he added, 'But don't you forget this is an Albanian tomb.' Minister Kol Biba was with him, together with Xhafer Deva the organizers of the murder or better said the fundamental eradication of the Serbs. Their hellish fall was felt most of all by the Serbs of Peć and in the Peć nahija [Turkish sub district]. They expelled and murdered the new Serb settlers, who had partially replaced those Serb old-timers of Metohija they had deported after the Serbian-Turkish wars from 1876 to 1878 with terror, looting and murder from their homes to Toplica and other newly liberated parts of Serbia.

These new Serb settlers built churches for themselves, mostly on the foundations of older church sites but with this sort of instigation from the Albanian ministers and further constant undermining from there, all the Serb churches were destroyed in the villages of Rastvica, Gradište, Donji Rakiš, Parcaj, Netac, Ponoševac, and even the old church in Brnjača on the other side of the Drim River, near Orahovac in Podrima Prizrenska, a village inhabited by Serb old-timers. In the village of Rastvica they even removed the foundation of the church and destroyed the Serb cemetery. In the former location of the church they made bricks last year for the collective, and now the Albanians are using it for their own purposes. All of these churches were destroyed during the occupation. The destruction was done in such vile fashion to destroy every Serb trace, as if they had never been there. Even the fruit trees and vineyards owned by Serbs were destroyed to the root. Those owners who returned to ruins and ash heaps were left with only a little yard around their houses while all the land improved by their labor was confiscated and used to form state-owned farms, while they, now landless, work for the Albanians for a daily wage and suffer terribly. After all, Serb churches are hardly treated better today even outside the district of Djakovica. Not far from Peć the consecrated church of the village of Vitomirica was transformed into a warehouse for all sorts of things. And the same thing is done with the church in Orahovac, district of Podrima. When they want, they take the keys and store whatever they want in the church. After whatever is in it is used up, they return the keys only to take them again when they want. In Velika Hoča in the same district a memorial chapel to the fallen chetniks [Serbian patriots] of Laza Kujundžić has been turned into a co-operative warehouse.

The most drastic savagery was the destruction of the new church in the small town of Djakovica. It was built as a memorial church to the soldiers killed in the wars between 1912 and 1918. And their bones that could be gathered in the area were brought there. The local parish priest, the late Luka Bulatović, was most active in the building of this true landmark and decoration of the town and was himself buried next to the church. It occurred to some Albanians that this mausoleum church should be destroyed so that they could use the same material to build a monument in the same excellent location to Emin Durak, who was proclaimed an Albanian national hero after being killed as a partisan [member of the Communist resistance] during the occupation. The monument was built on a marble foundation and on it are three figures: an Albanian, a Serb and a Montenegrin, supposedly as a symbol of brotherhood and unity but ungrateful Albania revealed itself prematurely and denounced this slogan, which is desirable but presently unnatural and unrealizable because of their fanaticism. The planner was some Catholic in Zagreb but they say that not even five percent of Albanians express any piety when they walk by.

We should honestly admit that local Albanians were friends and protectors of the few Serbs, some 70 households, who remained in Djakovica during the Ottoman occupation because they were useful and necessary tradesmen (saddle-makers, weavers, potters, etc.), and because the Muslims of Djakovica had traveled, worked among and grown accustomed to Serbs in Bosnia, Kosovo and other Serb regions, mostly as blacksmiths and innkeepers. Their tolerance had its roots in the period before the construction of the Salonica-Kosovska Mitrovica railway, when most of the trade of the central Balkans with the West was done by way of Scutari by the old Roman road crossing the great Drim at Spas in the direction of Djakovica and there divided in two, one road leading northwest through Peć, and the other leading east through Prizren. Stories are still told about the Djakovica old-timers' demonstration of religious

Mara and Nikola Savić with their children, Prizren, 1923

tolerance during this tragic crime. The destruction began in organized fashion from the beginning of 1950, more precisely, on the feast of St. Sava. They say that a Muslim priest and a dervish passed there that day and asked in surprise what was going on. When they heard the explanation, the Muslim priest grabbed his hair and cried out as if seeing a great evil. It is also said that there some Muslim citizens who claimed that no good would come from the destroyed church: let them take two of our mosques but for the sake of our honor, the Serbian church should not be destroyed and no quarrel made between us and the Serbs. But those who had initiated this demonic act and who knew for whom they were doing it and why could not be influenced by such reasonable and foreseeable advice. In their senselessness and without shame, they used the bricks of the destroyed church to build public toilets. Real Muslims would not even have thought of doing something like this. The property of a religious community, no matter which one, was holy for them. But the corrupt servants of impossible and unimaginable Greater Albania saw it differently. They even brutally rejected the request of Prota Bulatović's widow to transfer the bones of her husband from underneath the ruins to a grave with the cynical and sarcastic falsehood that this was already done. This destruction was carried out in accordance with pathological political-national plans being injected from Albania, for centuries the maidservant of Istanbul and later, as an independent country thanks to the spilled blood of our people, the mercenary of former Austria, then Italy, and now the betrayer of the Slavs... in battle against us, its liberators and sponsors.

That this destruction was neither the result of indifference nor even ill disposition toward religion in general but only against Serbs and Orthodox Christianity can also be seen from the fact that in Djakovica there are two Roman Catholic churches—the parish church with its great tower, which dominates over the city and its preponderance of minarets, and the monastery of the Holy Archangels with its two towers—that have not only not been touched but have even been helped in every regard even though there are far fewer Roman Catholics in Djakovica than Orthodox Serbs. But they are Albanians by nationality and for the supporters of Greater Albania the same as Muslims. Generally speaking, not one Catholic church or Muslim mosque in all of Metohija and Podrimlje Prizrensko was touched nor used for profane warehouses. (...) We must mention that the dome on the church was so solidly and firmly built that they had to use explosives to destroy it. For the foundations not even explosives could help to remove them and they just leveled them with the ground.

Here we have just the most visible attacks on the Orthodox religion. If further similar actions are not seriously discouraged and satisfaction is not given to the injured sentiment of the Orthodox Serbs, a risk to the interests of the other side could result. Our state authorities should be informed more about this and asked to issue an order to local authorities to take a little bit of care and undertake measures against individual enemies and destructive oppressors. In Prizren in the Orthodox cemetery grave markers have been and continue to be broken, while in the old military cemetery there all have been destroyed. Even in religiously mixed villages crosses are not left on the graves. His Grace Bishop Vladimir and his local church officials are unable to do anything if the Church is not fundamentally protected by state authorities from tyranny and harassment. In order that this whole region can see and hear that the Orthodox Church has not been left without protection, it is necessary:

1) To give approval for the restoration of the church of St. Mark and the desecrated monument to the deceased great philanthropist and educator Simo Andrejević-Igumanov in it. The diocese authorities have covered a part of the roof over the completely stripped, inside and out, monastery chapel and installed a door, so the Albanian shepherds of Kobaša stop driving their cattle into it to rest. But they broke down the door and continue to defile this place unobstructed. We should allow the forming of a council for the restoration of this monastery by the citizens of Prizren and the Serbs from the village of Koriša, where the monastery has a house that should be the center of the restoration of at least one building in the monastery itself. The residents of Kobaša must be removed one way or another, and they should help the restoration with beams and other materials, thus at least partially compensating for what they have taken and destroyed in it. The Igumanov Endowment would support this restoration in different ways, and the people would do its part on this occasion. This monastery, like the monastery of the Holy Trinity nearby, which thanks to the deserving Abbess Matrona is flowering and progressing were the sanatoriums of the nation and recovery centers of the people. The Albanians also were received and found support in these monasteries where they sought heal-

Serbian Families in Prizren 1900–1945

Four Serbian girls from Skutari, 1916–1917

A Prizren family with five children: a postcard, Prizren, ca. 1930

A Family, Prizren, ca. 1925

Serbian family in Prizren, early 20th century

A boy with two girls, Prizren, ca. 1935

ing. In this regards, we also need to ask the local central government and administration to protect our monuments and antiquities, to investigate and put the hermitage of St. Peter of Koriša under State protection.

2) In Djakovica, in the location where there is an old Orthodox chapel in a time worn building more resembling a shanty than a house, we need to build an impressive church with monies obtained for our destroyed new Djakovica church and reuse the building materials from it. This would certainly require the influence and authority of our State. This would be proof that the Orthodox Church of that area is not stripped of its rights. It would be a reminder to the inconsiderate part of the Albanian population, and a message to the secret agents of Albania: Keep your hands to yourself!

The local Serbs there are convinced that the Djakovica Muslims, who see our community and their own future among us with sober eyes, would view the building of our church with joy and the lifting of a burden on their souls, a rectification of the injustice done to us. We should expect that they would even materially assist this undertaking. While for our threadbare and poverty stricken new settlers, as well as for the old-timers throughout Metohija thinned and decimated during the occupation, mere news of satisfaction for our Orthodox faithful in Djakovica would be an invigorating spiritual injection. They will awake spiritually and in their productive work they will dedicate themselves even more to revitalization and reinforcement of state creation in their liberated homeland. Our Bishop and clergy, and all the Orthodox will be given through these two satisfactions equal civil rights and enable them to use their authority and work to be even stronger builders, the spiritual cement in the reinforcement of our national and state unity, the previous religious tolerance and actions of the Serbian Orthodox Church will be justified, and motivation and approval given for even more agile work in that direction.

3) Ask competent higher authorities for an order to local border officials to thoroughly check those who are fleeing from Albania to our country: are they really political emigrants, who have international and our own moral rights and asylum, or are they fleeing from the savage and infertile rocky mountains for cultivated Metohija and the fertile Prizren plain, a pre-planned fortification of their element in our country, the mobilization of a Greater Albania, and increased suffocation of the Serbs in their classic homeland? Many Serbs in Prizren and even in Peć are selling their houses and other property, and it is being bought exclusively by Albanians, who are building their nests in purely Serb nooks, even the smallest and most remote. The consequences of this should be carefully considered, and we should keep in mind that they are highly organized and have a secret plan for secession. They are busy working while our people are confused and disunited.

I ask the Holy Synod to forgive me for disturbing it directly with my unsolicited observations. It was my hope that I would find His Grace Bishop Vladimir here, so I could also inform him and seek his blessing for my intention but he has already departed. The matter was too time sensitive to seek consensus by an exchange of letters. But I believe he will not have any objections to what I have said because if anything on which I have reported is undertaken and successfully completed, it will represent an improvement for his difficult and in many things powerless position and situation."[41]

The Holy Synod of Bishops and the Patriarch also received a letter about Albanian misdeeds from Jovan Gligorijević, a retired judge from Belgrade, Kralja Milutina Street 16/III, who sent a letter to Serbian Patriarch Vikentije on June 28, 1951, saying:

"I feel compelled to present the real situation in Metohija to Your Holiness personally and in writing, like to our old patriarchs, on the basis of my observations, especially in Djakovica and in general, after spending some time there this year, as follows:

Numerous literature (*Plač Stare Srbije* [The Cry of Old Serbia] by Serafim Ristić and many others), newspapers in our own country and abroad are clear evidence to what extent the Serb people of Kosovo and Metohija has been the victim of brutal eradication: numerous lives, plundering of property, violence in various forms, torching of homes, churches and monasteries, in a word bloodthirstiness that has never been seen in the remotest reaches of world history by malicious a-national elements under the rule of the Turkish government. The persecution, cries and weeping of the enslaved Serb commoners, distressed and mired in bondage, culminated on the day when that pain was felt by all the free people in Serbia and Montenegro, who arose to arms and with its armed forces and allies fought the war of 1912, which brought it victorious glory, broke the chains of slavery of five centuries, and liberated its brothers by blood and faith, avenging Kosovo and the fallen heroes, knights, nobles and great leaders of the state on the battlefield on St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan), June 15, 1389.

The well-known Serb generosity did not provoke lust for revenge after liberation in the sense of the adage 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' but on the contrary, the malicious element was given the possibility of reform, cultural enlightenment through schools and various societies, all in the interest of a fraternal community, that they might live with us in love and harmony. Thus, all those various quarrels that arose from those numerous victims under slavery were forgotten. (...) Unfortunately, this extended hand of reconciliation was not understood by the anational elements as a general blessing but more like weakness, the inability of our government to run things, and consequently after a time they returned to their old trade with their actions in 1915: to attack, to murder and plunder the Serbian people, their old instinct for revenge was awoken.

41 AHSB, Syn № 95/1951.

This was the same while our government was in place, as well as on the occasion of the withdrawal of the Serbian army and people into the gorges of Albania in 1915.

When even this was not enough, after World War I, in 1921–1922, they created the Kachak movement on the basis of murder and plunder, which cost many of our people their lives until the army stepped in to stop them. Interestingly enough, as soon as they again felt themselves free after that, they created an illegal terrorist organization, the notorious Kosovo Committee, which ordered the composition of a list according to which they began to assassinate our people of influence (e.g. Jera Mališić, president of the village municipality in the district of Peć; Miraš Božović from Djakovica and many others), the list later being discovered during an investigation by the federal prosecutor in Peć.

"(...) During the World War II occupation all these anational elements torched the homes of our settlers, plundered them, destroyed everything they had, raped the women, forced them to flee to the place of their birth, to return whence they came, not even allowing them take with them the smallest amount of food and clothing, and there were entire columns of unclothed and unshod people fleeing the region where they had worked acquiring their property for 20 years, coming unknowingly into the range of the wartime jaws of the enemy. They did not spare the Serb old-timers, either, killing, beating and plundering many of them during the time of the occupation (...).

After the liberation of 1944, we again forgot all our endured suffering, victims, discomfort, troubles, fear and various forms of misfortune so that we could do it all over again, as our people are wont to say, creating brotherhood and unity between us and giving them, as minorities in Kosovo and Metohija, I would even say, too many schools, a bigger number than Albania would have opened for them had it by some chance occupied the region because it could not afford to support the number of schools they enjoy today in our state for the purpose of their cultural development, so that together with us they can raise their primitive element in our free country and our national region.

However, what happened was this: while we, on the one hand, are demonstrating to them that we are humane, compassionate, people in the real sense of the word, they, on the other hand, are digging a hole for us in our own country by destroying our churches and monuments. What the enemy occupier did not want to do, they did, these anational elements; they destroyed our remaining, eighth on the list in the district of Djakovica, monument—the mausoleum church in Djakovica. It was built of hard material with five domes and a mausoleum for the safeguarding of 400 coffins containing the bones of all the fallen soldiers in the wars from 1912 to today for the liberation of the district of Djakovica, a complete masterpiece, modern, in the spirit of modern technology. This monument was built and major work completed in 1936–1939, the only things missing were plastering and consecration for the church to be opened.

Such a grand memorial church, valued at more than two million dinars, was a thorn in the side of their fanaticism, of which the anational elements of the region can never be freed. For these reasons and political ones least of all, so that one cannot see that there are Serbs in Djakovica, they managed to vent their fury on our holy shrine and destroy it, beginning on the feast of St. Sava in 1949, and then a year later almost to the day—not brick by brick, as buildings are normally destroyed but in a violent and barbaric manner—using mines, which were handled by experts brought in from the nearby Deva mines. The air pressure raised the bricks to a great height and they would then fall on the roofs of houses and down on the ground in the streets (...).

In order to somehow camouflage the destruction of the church, deflecting all complaints and suspicion from themselves since they supposedly had nothing to do with this, they came up with a way of perverting the actual situation, as if the Serb people themselves had asked that this be done (...).

In Djakovica the Muslims have 18 mosques and 12 tekias, the Catholics have two or three churches, and the Orthodox have only the aforementioned chapel, 48.5 square meters in surface area, and this incomplete new mausoleum church. From the liberation from the Turks in 1912 to the present day, it had not occurred to anyone to seek the destruction of anyone's house of worship, while these a-nationalists are now destroying ours, supposedly telling the Communists that they do not tolerate houses of worship while, interestingly enough, not destroying one of their own nor even attempting to do so since the liberation of 1944.

The Kosovo and Metohija areas have understood the autonomy given them very wrongly and arbitrarily, as if they were a state within a state, and that they are able to do whatever they want in the interests of their national affairs (...).

Today through the abuse of their authority they are also terrorizing our Turkish element—the Turkish minority, refusing to allow the children to attend Turkish schools, e.g. in Peć. They did the same thing with our Serb children during the occupations of World War I and World War II. They know very well how to carry out assimilation, estrangement from one's people and expulsion."[42]

Bishop Vladimir, by act № 2014 from December 24/11, 1951, informed the Holy Synod of Bishops that he "received an act under № 245 from December 17, 1951, from the administration of Visoki Dečani of the following content:

"It is the administration of Visoki Dečani Monastery's honor to inform Your Grace that on December 10, 1951, the monastery received a visit from an official of the Municipal People's Council from the Committee for Education and Culture, Mr. Ratko Karakušević, who presented an act by

42 AHSB, Syn № 95/1951.

the same Committee empowering the aforementioned to remove from the Dečani treasury old historical weapons that have thus far been guarded in the monastery as its property, and to transfer same to the District Museum in Priština. The monastery administration recorded and turned over the requested weapons (29 pieces) since this Administration has the earlier act of Your Grace, № 1469 from September 12, 1951, in which act you gave the Administration general power and orders not to resist their demands with respect to such matters in order to avoid unnecessary correspondence without seeking from you any further decision, etc. In accordance with your above cited act, this Administration acted thus and did not resist.

At the same time it is our honor to inform Your Grace that it received an order by oral notification from the (state) custodian of the monastery that without the Council and its approval the number of brother monks must not increase nor anyone be received for a longer time of residence; otherwise, the Administration will be held responsible.

At the time of the confiscation of weapons Mr. Ratko Karakušević, an official of the Committee, orally ordered the elder of the monastery to give the key of the Holy Church to the state official, the custodian of the monastery, who was appointed a while ago and lives in the monastery. Taking into consideration all that is described above, we wonder how long this sort of attitude toward the monastery will last, and we also ask Your Grace for further instructions."

In submitting the above, it is our honor to ask the Holy Synod of Bishops to intercede with the competent office so that the confiscated keys to the holy church necessary for daily morning and evening services which are regularly carried out in this holy shrine are returned to the monastery, as well as that the monastery not be denied the right to increase the numbers of its brotherhood, which in the present situation is so negligible that it is unable to perform all tasks in the monastery itself, the monastery parish and the monastery's property in timely fashion. If the monastery is denied the rights to increase the present numbers of its brotherhood and if the keys of its holy church are not returned, the present Administration will be forced to leave the monastery, and thus this great holy shrine of the Serbian people will be left without priests, something that so far has not occurred even in the days of our most difficult bondage.

In the end we note that the present brotherhood in this monastery during the time of the past war remained in the monastery although in life-threatening danger, a fact that we can state with certainty saved it from being torched and destroyed by the occupier and prevented the theft of its historical sacred relics, which are still guarded in it completely intact.

Enclosure: Copies of the act of the District People's Council № 53127/51 and the record regarding confiscated weapons."

The Year 1952

The letter of Ž.M. Marinković, the rector of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Prizren to the Holy Synod of Bishops under № 1367 from November 5, 1952, says:

"During the course of the previous and the present school year some young Albanians whom we do not know attacked our students physically and threatened to beat and fight with them. One of these young men struck Gojko Mrdja, a fourth-year student, in the back with a rock as he was returning in the evening from vigil services in church. On that occasion, upon receiving a written report from Gojko Mrdja, I undertook steps with the local Department of Internal Affairs of the District People's Council and asked that our students be protected from violence. The competent official (responsible for criminology) promised he would investigate and undertake necessary measures.

With this act I am enclosing a copy of the written report of student Mrdja, as well as the accompanying act of the Department for Internal Affairs for your information."

Enclosure:

Serbian Orthodox Seminary, № 1344, October 28, 1952 in Prizren

To the Department of Internal Affairs of the District People's Council in Prizren:

"It is my honor to submit this report by a student of this school with the note that some young men not known to us, who I have been told were Albanians, have on several occasions ambushed the students of our school, in groups or individually, in front on the entrance to our courtyard and in the street, during the day and in the evening and usually at first dusk, provoked them and threatened to beat them up although our students have done nothing to do them.

For example, at the end of the last school year, in the month of June, some unknown young Albanians beat up two of our students (Milivoj Ćirić, who has now graduated from this school, and Zdravko Stefanov, now a student of the second year) in the middle of the day in the Serbian cemetery where they were peacefully sitting and studying their lessons.

At that time, I let the incident pass, not wishing to further exacerbate the conflict. But since the violence against our students has continued into this school year, I feel it is my responsibility to inform the Department of this, and to most kindly request that the students of the school entrusted to me be protected from further violence and new incidents prevented, which may become even more serious if they are not halted in a timely manner."[43]

By act № 1080, June 13 (May 31), 1952, Bishop Vladimir informed the Holy Synod of Bishops that Hieromonk Venijamin (Bošković), the acting elder of Binča Monastery in the ecclesiastical administrative district of Gnjilane, sent him a letter of the following content:

[43] AHSB, Syn № 132/1952.

"You know that I am seriously ill and for a year now I have not left my room, I spend most of my time lying in my bed. I was thus lying in my bed on May 3 of that year when at approximately 5:00 p.m. six people I did not know broke into my room: one was wearing a military uniform with a Titovka [narrow cap worn by high officers of the Yugoslav Army] on his head, the others were in civilian clothing, and one was wearing a blue uniform. The one in the military uniform and one in civilian clothing without a hat stayed with me, and the others went out.

The one in civilian clothing sat in front of me and cracked eggs, of which there were about 100 in two baskets. Then he threw both baskets with the eggs at me, he threw a plate with food in it at me. Then the one in the uniform climbed on top of me, stood on my chest and began to choke me; the bed broke from the weight and I fell through. Then he ordered me to get up on the part of the bed that had not fallen through; when I sat up, the one in civilian clothing removed the petroleum lamp and emptied it on me, wanting to set me on fire but he did not have a match. Then he emptied a jug of water on me.

Then the one in the military uniform kicked me all over my body, while the one in the civilian clothes hit me with a stick on the head, the face, everywhere. The one in the military uniform said to me, 'You read the Holy Scripture, give sermons and lie to women, and they bring you eggs: since you are sick, why don't you leave from here?' I answered that without the orders of my authorities I was not allowed to leave from here. Then they continued to beat me until I fell unconscious, and only an hour later a servant came from Binča and neighbor Raša and Milena Petrović.

As he was leaving, the one in the military uniform said to me, 'Get lost from here within 24 hours or we will throw you out the window.'

Heavily beaten, I was forced to leave the monastery, turning over the keys to the bishop's deputy. What was done after, I do not know. I went to the hospital and after 23 days the doctor released me, still unhealed, with broken ribs, for home treatment.

With great fear and horror I was forced to return to Binča to take my identity papers, and if I survived this, to go somewhere else to live the rest of my life. After everything that was done to me here, I cannot live in this monastery in eternal fear for my life. Hence, I would like to ask you to most urgently chose a monastery where I can receive decent support and care. In Your Grace's diocese only Dečani is able to do this. If you cannot place me in Dečani, then please ask the bishop of Šumadija to receive and house me, in a monastery able to support me, of course, because I was born in Šumadija in Arandjelovac. If Your Grace does not resolve the issue of my residence favorably in the nearest future, I will be forced to take my own life or to ask the Marshall to hide me somewhere. I am deeply convinced that Your Grace will not allow these things to befall me, a sufferer for the faith and a priest-monk for 37 years but that Your Grace will urgently find a solution where I can decently live the little life I have left after being beaten."

In presenting the above, it is my honor to request that the Holy Synod of Bishops intercede with the State Commission for Religious Affairs of the Presidency of the Government of NR Serbia so that this serious and impermissible act against an old and sick priest be investigated, those guilty found and exemplarily punished in accordance with the law, as well as that similar cases be prohibited and prevented from occurring.

We have also informed the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Government of NR Serbia of this matter."[44]

By another act, № 590 from March 19/6, 1952, the Bishop said that he received the following report from the parish priest of Uroševac under № 27 from March 12, 1952: "In the year 1935 a church was built in the village of Duganjevo near Uroševac. The church was built by local residents of the village with the financial assistance of the city of Uroševac, the area and abroad. Our emigrants from the USA sent forty thousand dinars at that time for the construction of the church. The church was built right in the cemetery and served for a time as the chapel. The interior of the church is completely finished, there are beautiful frescos; the only thing necessary is to consecrate it.

On March 9, 1952 the People's Front of the village decided to destroy the church and use the material to build a culture hall. The destruction of the church began today."

Under № 28 from March 17, 1952, the same parish priest sent us the following addendum to the above report:

"In connection with my report of March 12, 1952, № 27 I would like to subsequently advise you that the church in the village of Duganjevo was completely destroyed using explosives on March 13, 1952. The material from the church is being transferred to the town square of the Peasant's Work Cooperative.

I am presenting this to you for your information and further action.

In forwarding the above, it is our honor to inform the Holy Synod of Bishops that the local parish priest intervened regarding this matter with the Local, District and Regional People's Councils in Priština in order to stop the destruction of the newly built church but all was in vain and the church was completely destroyed."

The State Commission for Religious Affairs of the Presidency of the Government of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia sent the Holy Synod of Bishops an act, № 169 from August 1, 1952, of the following content:

"In response to your act № 816/zap. 195 from April 1, 1952, we wish to inform you that we have checked and determined that nothing was done in the village of Duganjevo that would harm the religious sentiments of the local Orthodox population. It is true that a building was destroyed there but it was not a church. In 1935 the local resi-

[44] AHSB, Syn № 74/1952.

dents of Duganjevo built a building they intended to transform into a chapel, although they have a church only two kilometers away. This new building was never completed. It was never consecrated in order to perform religious rites in it and it served as a warehouse. Now the local residents have changed their intent, and believe that it is more useful to destroy this building and use the material to build a culture hall. The parish priest of Uroševac did indeed intervene with the Regional People's Council AKMO to prevent this building from being destroyed but the District People's Council could not intervene, since the destruction of the building was already completed at the time that the intervention was sought. If the property interests of the church have been harmed, it is free to assert its rights through regular channels and seek compensation."[45]

The Year 1954

In his act E. № 406 from March 27/14, 1954, Bishop Vladimir yet again informs the Holy Synod of Bishops of difficulties in his Diocese and says:

"We have observed that there are still acts based on self-will carried out by government officials toward church property. There are frequent instances of apportionment of high taxes, confiscation of church land parcels and buildings. A monastery building has been confiscated in the village of Dečani. In Peć people have been prohibited from using the entrance from the main street to enter the chapel, the church offices and the parish home, and are required to use another entrance from a side street even though the main entrance is owned by the church. In the village of Ljubižda the People's Council is using a church building for its offices but pays no rent. When rent was requested, the Council brought the church's ownership into question. Since there is no deed and no one wants to receive witnesses to prove the church's ownership even though it is a well-known fact, thus matters remain. These are just some of many examples.

The situation in the monasteries is hardly better (...). Devič Monastery is slowly but surely being raised from the ruins. The living quarters have been built and the destroyed church repaired. (...)Visoki Dečani Monastery was assessed an especially high tax, as was Devič. Visoki Dečani Monastery was apportioned such a high tax, 176,000 dinars, that there is no way it can pay it from its regular income but is forced to sell some of its real or movable property in order to pay the outstanding taxes. An appeal did not help (...). The property situation of the monastery is not in the best state. During the confiscation of the monastery property, the tillable land next to the monastery was taken away, and the monastery was left with 15 hectares of untillable land 15 kilometers from the monastery. Devič Monastery was forced to buy land because almost all of its land was confiscated by agrarian policy. For these reasons none of the monasteries has any savings, and their incomes are barely covering their expenditures. Only two monasteries, Devič and Holy Trinity, have managed to build one residence each."[46]

Bishop Vladimir then says: "In connection with the Holy Synod of Bishops' notice № 2578/zap. 832 from November 10, 1954, we are pleased to submit the following report:

1. The following has been expropriated from Devič Monastery:

a) 2.36 hectares of untillable land in Velika Hoča, district of Prizren, which has been planted with a vineyard by the Peasants' Cooperative in Velika Hoča without any compensation;

b) Three shops in Vučitrn with compensation of about 50,000 dinars, which as of this day has not been paid;

2. From Visoki Dečani Monastery the building called Centrala in the village of Dečani by 'some sort of decision' by the District Council in Djakovica from 1945 which was not sent to the monastery Administration, and without any compensation by the People's Council of the Dečani Municipality. A court complaint has been initiated but to this day the court has not issued a decision and continues to postpone;

3. From the church parish in Prizren a land parcel was confiscated next to the church of the holy Bogorodica Ljeviška without a decision or compensation, and the courtyard of the Cathedral as well as the courtyard of the Bishop's residence for a park. The church in fact has no objection to the fact that a park was planted there and is cared for by the People's Council of the municipality of Prizren but it cannot accept its expropriation because it is a small land parcel 10 meters wide right next to the north doors of the Church. The delegate of the Commission for Religions in Belgrade and the delegate of the People's Council of the municipality of Prizren and the church parish in Prizren have found a compromise solution but it appears that the People's Council of the municipality of Prizren has failed to adopt it;

4. Expropriated from the church in Priština are two shops of hard material with a land parcel of 27 square meters in Nićiforova Street № 79 with compensation of 7,815 dinars in government coupons;

5. Expropriated from the church in Vučitrn is a land parcel of 0.0571 hectares with compensation of 11,590 dinars, which has not been paid. the People's Council of the municipality of Vučitrn has built a residential building on this land parcel.

6. The church of Berevac in the district of Nerodimlje has given a land parcel for the building of a school under the condition that the church be compensated for the value of same but the People's Council of the municipality in Štrpce has not done so to this day;

[45] AHSB, Syn № 3/1952/60.

[46] AHSB, Syn № 111/1954.

7. Binča Monastery has had its entire 10 hectares of forests confiscated and in the process no care was taken to leave the monastery at least 10 hectares of spare and forested land to which it has a right by law;

8. Before the war Gračanica was given 100 hectares of forests by the Agrarian Trusteeship. After the war the monastery got nothing of this forests, although it has a right to 30 hectares as a cultural monument;

9. The meadow of the church in Mušutište in the district of Prizren was expropriated with compensation of 100,000 dinars, which has still not been paid;

10. A land parcel of the church in Dvorani in the district of Prizren was expropriated with a decision and without ;

11. A field of the church of Velika Hoča in the district of Prizren was expropriated by the Peasants'-Viticulturists' Cooperative without exchange or compensation and a vineyard planted on it;

12. A land parcel of 47 ares [1 are = 100 square meters] was expropriated from the church of Novi Pazar but the compensation has still not been paid;

13. Back in 1945 and 1946 the churchyard of the church in Kamenica was confiscated without any decision and buildings were built there for the use of authorities and organizations, i.e. factories. No compensation for this was given to the church in Kamenica;

14. By the decision of the Court in Kamenica a church land parcel was expropriated and a hotel was built on it. An appeal was submitted to the District Court in Gnjilane, which overturned the decision of the lower court but to this day it has not issued another decision to give appropriate compensation in either money or land.

15. In similar fashion a field was confiscated from the church parish in Kamenica, which one year ago filed an appeal with the Regional Council in Priština—the Agrarian Court but so far there have been no results. A while ago the parish priest intervened but as of this day there have been no results. To this day the matter rests with the Regional Council in Priština.

In submitting the above report, it is this diocese's Executive Council's honor to note that the diocese's Executive Council has directed church parishes and monastery administrations to initiate legal proceedings for the restoration or compensation of expropriated property; however, it appears that the church and monastery administrations are meeting with little success."[47]

The Year 1955

Bishop Vladimir submitted to Holy Synod of Bishops a report from the administration of Gračanica Monastery in which a brother of this holy shrine, Hierodeacon Jevdokim, writes:

"In the year 1948 upon order of the Regional Council of Kosovo and Metohija the Administration of Gračanica Monastery turned over chambers of the monastery living quarters for the use of a [Communist] party school, which continued to use them until February 4, 1950. Of the chambers in the monastery building—the monastery at that time had only one monk—in agreement with the monastery administration of that time the monastery was left with only a small room and the kitchen. After the departure of the party school it was determined that the monastery building, which had been in excellent condition during the entire time of the occupation, had been significantly damaged during the two years of its use by the school. (...) No rent was paid for the use of the building the entire time. The question must be asked: Who will pay for the damage that was done?

Now the building has been taken over by the Yugoslav Army, which is using it as a warehouse. By the decision of the District Council the Administration of the monastery was supposed to have turned over the entire building to the Yugoslav Army, which means that according to the decision the monks were forced to leave the chambers they were using. The Administration submitted an appeal against this decision to the District People's Council (registered with the DPC in January 1950 under № 1011) with the request that the chambers necessary to the brotherhood be left to it (...).

The state Police has also occupied certain monastery chambers. We ask that it move from the monastery building and find appropriate facilities for itself in the village. The national police have converted the chapel into a detention center.

It is necessary to sent a commission as soon as possible to inspect the roof of the church and the residence, which are leaking, and are now covered with a thick layer of snow. It is necessary to repair the roof so the frescos do not suffer as a result of the dampness.

We ask that an appropriate sign be placed in the main entrance to the monastery courtyard so that people know that Gračanica Monastery is a historical monument under the protection of the state.

With the permission of the District People's Council, the Žegrap company constructing the industrial railway has moved into monastery chambers and converted the monastery courtyard into a parking for commercial trucks."[48]

The Year 1958

The suffering of the Serbian Orthodox Church and her faithful continued during the time in office of his Grace Bishop Pavle of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren. Immediately upon his enthronement, by act № 400 from October 11, 1958, he reported to the Holy Synod of Bishops the following:

[47] AHSB, Syn № 53/1954.

[48] AHSB, Syn № 55/1955.

"The parish priest of Vitomirica in the district of Peć on the feast of the Holy Evangelist Mark, May 8, 1958, performed the usual religious service in the destroyed church in the village of Suvi Lukavac circling around the church without going further than two meters away from the walls of the church. The judge for crimes of the Municipal Court in Peć by its decision Up. № 797/58 from July 8, 1958 sentenced Dimitrije Šundić and Dragutin Šundić, farmers from Djurakovac to 15 days in prison. The sentenced men appealed the sentence to the Council for Crimes of the State Secretariat for Internal Affairs AKMO in Priština; however, by its decision Up. II № 844 from July 21, 1958 it rejected the appeal, enforcing the aforementioned decision of the judge for crimes of the Municipal Court and, in order to make the decision even more legal, further added that allegedly a religious procession had taken place through the village, even though the decision of the judge for crimes did not state this.

Both the decisions state that the accused were punished for holding religious processions through the village to a location where a church had formerly stood, and this location, they had determined, "was not a facility that the religious communities had established for the conduct of religious rites."

In fact, no religious procession took place through the city but only around the church and not more than two meters distant from the walls of the church, which is permitted in accordance with article 13 of the Law on the legal position of religious communities. As far as the allegation in the decision of the Council for Crimes AKMO that the aforementioned church, where only the walls remain, "is not a facility that the religious communities had established for the conduct of religious rites," we note that the Orthodox religious community, due to the fact that the enemies of the Orthodox Church and the Serbian people during the course of five centuries of bondage under the Turks destroyed Orthodox churches, not only during war but in peace, which was repeated, unfortunately, in the last war by the Ustashe in the region of the so-called Independent State of Croatia and the Balists in Kosovo and Metohija, was forced to recommend to its clergy that Divine Liturgy also be held in the ruins of churches at least once a year on the patron saint's day of the church or on some other feast day. Hence, the Council for Crimes AKMO [wrongly] stated that church ruins were not facilities that religious communities had established for the conduct of religious rites.

Moreover, it is impossible to imagine that the legislator in the aforementioned article 13 of the Law on religious communities wished to bring the Serbian Church, which suffered for centuries and in the last war together with her people, in a subservient position with respect to other religions and confessions, i.e. that by banning the conduct of religious rituals in destroyed places of worship, because only Orthodox places of worship were destroyed during the enslavement by the Turks and in the last two world wars, which would in fact leave them without a place to pray to God, something that is permitted to Catholics, Muslims and Protestants in their places of worship, which no one had destroyed."[49]

The Holy Synod of Bishops decided on October 29, 1958, to intervene with the Commission for Religious Affairs of the People's Republic of Serbia with respect to the sentencing of Dimitrije and Dragutin Šundić from Djurakovac to 15 days in prison for carrying religious banners around the destroyed church in the village of Suvi Lukavac, district of Peć.[50]

In act № 52 from March 5, 1959, Bishop Pavle said that he received the following report from the Administration of Devič Monastery under № 53 from November 20, 1958:

"On November 1, 1958, at 9:00 p.m. Jelena Lapoćanin-Hristić, 13 years of age, who arrived in the monastery when she was less than two, left the monastery. She had come, i.e. been brought in January 1948. Her absence, as soon as it was observed, was immediately reported to the National police, so they could look for her. On the same day she was found in Rezalo, where she been taken for a 12 year-old Albanian boy. When asked how and when, she said that three Albanian men had come for her in the night, one of them carrying a rifle. She was taken to the house of the latter, who is called Malić Gaši from Rezalo, and asked whether she wanted to be wed to a boy of 12 who tended sheep in the monastery or this man, who was already married. She replied that she wanted the boy and because the wedding party of an older brother was taking place, she stayed there two or three hours before she was returned to the house of the married Malić Gaši, and then again returned to the wedding party.

When further questioned who knew of this and who was the intermediary because she was young, a child so to speak, she said that the Albanians had told her that she should leave the monastery, and that in the monastery cattle herder Sima Stanković, a 62 year-old Serb, told her the same thing. After hearing the witnesses and the accused persons, it was established that she was taken, i.e. deceived, to be wed to a boy of 12, when in fact she was taken for a married man. It is probable that the pathetic Serb Sima received good money from Malić Gaši and that she was sold. When the police took her from the Albanian house, on the road near the Devič brook, Malić waited with a rifle, probably thinking that the police would turn her over to Devič, and as soon as the police left he could would take her by force.

I wish to note that the first police patrol that found her in Rezalo with the Albanians did nothing to bring her back but continuing to perform its duty told her to report the next day to the police. I begged and pleaded with the commander to send a second patrol to get her lest she be ru-

[49] AHSB, Syn № 25/1958.

[50] AHSB, Syn № 2939/zap. 741/58.

ined. And the second patrol brought her. The police wanted her to return to the monastery but I said that she had no place any more in Devič, and that I was afraid they would take her by force again and perhaps attack the monastery in the process, that there might be casualties. I begged that she be placed as a minor in a children's home because she had no relatives anywhere; her mother is also a wanderer who goes from monastery to monastery. She could stay in the home until she reached adulthood. The monastery had to pay travel expenses and a day's salary to Belgrade and back for an official of People's Municipal Council of Srbica, who took her to the Moše Pijade Home in Belgrade, where she was lodged. I would add that the police took her for a physical examination and that she was not ruined. The commander filed charges against Simo Stanković, Gaši Malić and his minor brother but unfortunately this Administration has been informed by the Public Prosecutor in Kosovska Mitrovica that the complaint was rejected and advised that we file private charges with the court. We neither dare nor desire to sue because we are already afraid they will seek vengeance because they are vengeful."[51]

The Year 1959

By act E. № 196 from May 12, 1959, Bishop Pavle then informed the Holy Synod of Bishops regarding the permanent departures of Serbs as follows:

"The situation in the monasteries has improved negligibly. Dečani was left with 30 hectares of land in accordance with the law: 15 hectares near the monastery but in such a way that in the middle of the land (left to the monastery) a relative of one high official received two hectares of orchards, while the other 15 hectares left is far from the monastery and to the side, land that no one will want to work, and the monastery cannot work it itself. The diocese executive council has agreed that the monastery should renounce these 15 hectares because they only raise the tax bracket on the other land. To this day the government has not concluded this matter, and the monastery owes tax for the year 1954 forward when this land was returned to it from the disbanded Farmers' Cooperative. (...)

During the year 1958 two very terrible events took place. Namely, the Albanians abducted a 12 year-old Serb girl from Devič, who had been raised in the monastery since the age of two, and demanded that she wed either an Albanian boy aged 12 or a man aged 34, who already had one wife. With difficulty the police managed to reclaim the child and transfer her to Belgrade to a home for minors. She could not return to the monastery because of the danger of abduction and vengeance. Devič Monastery has been restored from ruins but is not fenced in. We must use all the powers at our disposal to ensure this is done.

There is another problem whose consequences could be catastrophic for those of us in this region. That is the constant permanent departures of our population. When I visited Devič this winter, the householders of the last three houses of the closest village, Ludovići, came and offered their land to the monastery for sale, or they will sell it to the Albanians. In Turkish times, before World War I, there were 17 houses in that village and an equal number of Albanian ones. After the (other) war, several households left. After the last war, six remained. Now the last three are leaving. The same thing is happening in other areas. In Vitomirica near Peć, which was settled after World War I, there was not a single Albanian house. Now there are 100. In Dobruša before the war, there was not one, and now there are 160 (Albanian ones), etc (...).

Last year there was an incident of brutal violation of the fundamental rights of the faithful guaranteed by law. In the village of Suvi Lukovac near Peć, two men, Dimitrije and Dragutin Šundić from Djurakovac, were sentenced to 15 days in prison for attending, along with others, religious services in the ruins of a chapel and circling around the church, not through the village but around the ruins. Their appeal was rejected by the Council for Crimes in Priština with the explanation that church ruins are not facilities that religious communities can establish, in the spirit of article 13 of the Law on religious communities for the conduct of religious rites. Although the sentences were served, I complained to the Regional Council because of this treatment of us Serbs. We cannot believe that the legislator in the aforementioned article sought only to prevent the Orthodox Serbs from conducting religious services because our churches were destroyed because of our position on freedom both in Turkish times as well as in the last two wars, which was not the case with the churches of the other two faiths, which have places where they pray to God. If we are nevertheless to be considered guilty on this account, then the priest should have been punished as well, and I, too, as the representative of higher ecclesiastical authority who ordered that religious services be conducted on the ruins of churches destroyed by Ustashe and Turks (...).

The other general difficult is pressure, through schools and other organizations, on the consciences of children and adults due to which the Serbs of this region are frightened and do not dare to express their religious sentiments."[52]

The Year 1960

Bishop Pavle by act № 164 from May 7, 1960 then presented the following:

"1) The reparation of the chapel in the village of Zupče, municipality of Zubin Potok, near Kosovska Mitrovica, is being obstructed. During the occupation the enemy removed the roof tiles and roof frame from the chapel. Only

51 AHSB, Syn № 121/1959.

52 AHSB, Syn № 2/1959.

the bare walls remained. When the people from this church parish tried last summer to repair the chapel, they were called to a village conference and roughly reprimanded. Their response brought them prison sentences of one month each and a 3,000 dinar fine. The chapel remains uncovered.

2) In the village of Mušnikovo near Prizren, there is an ancient cemetery near the church of St. Paraskeva. The local organization of the Socialist League has appointed a council there that sells the grass from this cemetery-courtyard and does what it pleases with this money, as well as with the funds from the church without the permission or control of higher church authorities. (They gave the money to the village for the construction of a power station.) Upon the appeal of the diocese Executive Council the District Court judged that the council is legitimate. The higher court rescinded the decision and returned it for re-judgment. Two years have passed and the matter is not yet closed.

3) In the village of Vrnica near Vučitrn the situation is similar. The Municipal People's Council of Nevoljane has utilized a legal provision regarding general state ownership of cemeteries and courtyards; thus, it oversees the cemetery and sells the grass in it. Upon appeal by the church administration the People's Municipal Council upheld its decision."[53]

The Year 1961

In the next act, E. № 136 from April 27, 1961, Bishop Pavle again informed the Holy Synod of Bishops regarding permanent dislocation:

"Our permanent difficulty is the uncontained permanent dislocation of our population, more or less from the entire territory of the Diocese. The only reason they give is fear of reprisals by the Albanians and the Turks in the event of some sort of political complication in the region. Occasionally we are all witness to their attacks even now For example, after my visit to Kosovska Kamenica and the incomplete chapel in the village of Koretin, the next night all the windows on the chapel were smashed. Last year, on the eve of the trial in Prizren of a saboteur from Albania, someone set fire to the gate in the courtyard of the Cathedral in Prizren. This year in the cemetery (in Prizren) all porcelain portraits were smashed on all the Orthodox monuments, including the one on the monument of Bishop Vladimir. Others say that the government favors the Albanians of whom there are many among government officials who work together and ensure every legal loophole for their own kind, while the Serbs are stuck with all the difficult duties, always presented in legal form. The Serb members of the Party also take part in this, apparently to avoid being accused of discrimination, etc. Our people cannot endure this economically, and they are leaving. Of course, there are other reasons, too: industrial jobs, better opportunities for educating their children, etc. which are understandable and justified but the two first ones are the primary ones and I am convinced that the worrisome extent of the permanent dislocation stems from them."[54]

By act № 276 from August 23, 1961, he also describes the behavior of the Albanians toward Serbian holy shrines which is spreading throughout Kosovo and Metohija:

"I have been informed by the monasteries of Visoki Dečani and the Holy Trinity in Prizren of an unprecedented, to this degree impudence in the destruction of monastery crops, vegetables and fruits. This is being done not just by children but by adult Albanians who come and help themselves to whatever they want. When reprimanded by the nuns or other staff in the monastery, they are arrogantly confrontational, even going so far as to attack and threaten to beat them, swearing at them and threatening that this is not Serbian but Albanian.

I will also be informing the Commission for Religions in Priština of this but I ask the Holy Synod of Bishops to undertake steps to legally protect those of us here."[55]

The Year 1962

In the next act E. № 132 from May 11, 1962, Bishop Pavle says:

"The people here are truly like sheep without a shepherd, left to fend for themselves, and it is therefore no wonder that it is confused and shaken in its faith under the onslaught of every possible trouble blowing over it in strength. For the main part, I have reminded them to guard what is most important—their souls and the honor of their people, for the general good, inherited from our holy ancestors (...).

The monasteries are having a lot of difficulties with respect to preserving their forests, gardens and orchards from violence, looting and robbery by young and old, mostly Albanians, who when reprimanded by monastery staff want to attack and beat them, swearing and threatening that this is not Serbian but Albanian. An Albanian inflicted a physical injury on a nun who was chasing his sheep from the monastery meadow. A similar fate befell a student in Dečani and a servant in Sokolica Monastery. I have asked the Commission for Religions to investigate the matter and undertake necessary measures to ensure us (Serbs) the rights the Constitution guarantees to all. We are not left alone even in church.

A young priest in Velika Hoča near Prizren got into a conflict with the local organization, and then with the authorities, with respect to collecting non-monetary donations from the faithful. He was sentenced to 15 days in prison. The authorities have let him know that he is not wanted there. During a fight that occurred there, in which a mem-

53 AHSB, Syn № 154/1961.

54 AHSB, Syn № 190/1961.

55 AHSB, Syn № 67/1962.

ber of the Party was hurt, an attempt was made to demonstrate that the priest had taken part in the fight or organized it, even though the fight arose out of a personal altercation and had nothing to do with the priest. His untactical position is also partly to blame for the resulting situation but in fact it is more an attempt to prevent religious work among the faithful. There was no priest there for years and now a sort of religious awakening has caught the attention of the members of the Party. Moreover, the village is purely Serb and the authorities are alert to make sure that nothing national should appear there (...).

This year the permanent displacement of our (Serbian) element has continued even more intensively, both among settlers and Serb old-timers from every part of the Diocese. Over 200 households have left from the administrative district of Gnjilane during the course of the year; and 70 households have left from the parish of Vrbovac, which was small to begin with. Sudden departures are also going on from the region of Priština since last year. In the village of Komorane after the war there were 40 Serb households, and now there are 12; Novo Čikatovo had 48, and now there are 22; Donji Zabel had 18, and now there are four; Veliki Belaćevac had 23, now there are only three. During the course of the year 81 households permanent left from the parish of Goleš. This is the second biggest problem in this region. In 1912 the percentage of Serbs relative to other nationalities in Kosovo and Metohija was 35 to 40%. Today it is only 25%."[56]

In the next act № 34/966, Bishop Pavle says:

"I received a report from the Administration of Sopoćani Monastery that during the celebration of the feast of St. Sava this year only child could be found to recite, whereas in previous years there were 10–20, as I myself saw on St. Sava's Day in 1964. That is because last year after St. Sava's Day the children who recited were beaten by the teachers, who threatened them with poor marks and expulsion from school, gave them no schoolwork for a longer period of time, would not examine them, etc.

Additionally, the report states that their teachers forbid them to go to church, to take communion, they force them to eat fatty foods during the first week of the Great Fast, etc.

I ask the Holy Synod of Bishops to undertake steps with the competent authorities to eliminate such actions because they demonstrate the tyranny of individuals without the Law, and lead to poor relations between the authorities, on one hand, and parents and representatives of the Church, on the other."[57]

The Holy Synod of Bishops in a meeting on March 18, 1966, adopted the recommendation of His Grace Bishop Pavle, and submitted a copy of the report to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Federal Executive Council. At the same time, it urged His Grace Bishop Pavle to also write on his part to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Serbia.[58]

The Year 1967

His Grace Bishop Pavle by act № 12 from February 13, 1967, forwarded to the Holy Synod of Bishops a report by the elder of Dečani Monastery regarding the attacks by Albanians on this monastery in which he says: "On February 11, 1967, I received a visit in Visoki Dečani Monastery from an official of the Forest Administration from Dečani who, not knowing that the timber (in the monastery forest) had already been cut down, advised me that we were not to cut it and told me that the peasants from the village of Dečani had filed a complaint claiming that the present monastery forest had always been theirs. I refused to obey the official and will attempt to transfer the timber to the monastery estate.

The psychosis among the Albanians is far worse than during the occupation and the desire to steal never leaves them. The ringleader of all this is a descendent of a former Dečani "duke" [Albanian protector of the monastery] whom the Patriarch rewarded with a golden ring, Ali Lan from Dečani. Their appetite for the timber awoke because they would make enormous money because the timber is first-class.

Despite the decision of the Secretariat (for financial affairs AKMO № 03–1630/58) regarding the monastery forest in our powerless hands we have even stronger evidence that today's monastery forest was never owned by the peasants from Dečani. This was established by an ad hoc commission in 1929, which sent its legal representative Ramadan Usena to the village of Dečani and he showed the borders of the monastery forest. Consequently, they cannot prove anything except lies. What can we do when the Albanians are in power and are trying to make it impossible for the monastery to survive.

We inform you of this unfortunate occurrence and ask that you undertake urgent measures to prevent theft of the monastery forests, while I on my part will not fail to resist no matter the price. If anything new develops in connection with this matter, I will advise you immediately."

The Year 1968

Bishop Pavle then also sent the Commission for Religions of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo, № 162 from February 28, 1968, the report of the Administration of Gorioč Monastery:

"In immediate proximity to this monastery there was a forest owned by the lumber camp of Istok. When the lumber camp cut down the forest, the citizens from the area

[56] AHSB, Syn № 24/1962.

[57] AHSB, Syn № 1143/zap. 169/66.

[58] AHSB, Syn № 1143/zap. 169/66.

The Patriarchate of Peć dormitory burned in 1981

A view on burnt dormitory of the Patriarchate of Peć, 1981

began to cut down the forest belonging to the monastery. First they were cutting at night but now they have begun cutting by day with groups of ten or more people even coming with wagons. This is the formal destruction of the monastery's forests. We have gone to stop them from this destruction and were pelted with rocks until we retreated for they would have smashed our heads. Then we went to the National police several times and filed formal complaints against some people whose names we were able to discover; nothing has been done with these to this day, therefore, we ask for Your Grace's intervention to stop the destruction of the forest. So far we have counted 300 stumps and all were among the biggest trees. As Your Grace is aware, this monastery has no (land) with the exception of very little meadowland and this forest, so if the forest is destroyed it will be left with nothing. Moreover, in addition to the material damage, there are other important consequences from this destruction as follows:

1) The monastery itself is located on a hilltop that is gradually eroding and once the forest is destroyed, what will hold the earth?

2) The same is true of strong winds and since the large hill above the monastery is also rocky, there is nothing to stop even the smallest falling rock.

3) Finally, the natural beauty of the monastery's surroundings, which has been declared a cultural monument, is being ruined."

We are submitting the above report and asking for urgent intervention to prevent the further cutting down of the monastery forest, to open an investigation to find those guilty for the timber already cut down and to compensate the monastery for the damage that has been done.

In connection with this, we are free to remind that this is not an isolated case because the forests of Devič Monastery near Srbica, Sokolica Monastery near Kosovska Mitrovica and St. Mark's Monastery near Prizren are being massively and illegally timbered, and attacks are also being carried out against the forest of Visoki Dečani Monastery, regarding which we have already intervened several times with the Council.

These cases incite us to think and ask ourselves: what has been encouraging the neighbors of Orthodox monasteries during the past two years to attack their property, i.e. the property of the Serbian Orthodox Church?"[59]

Bishop Pavle then informed the Holy Synod of Bishops regarding new suffering and permanent departures by Serbs:

"I served and addressed the people on the church patron saint's days in Nerodimlje, Koš, Štrpce, Velika Hoča, Pasjane and Lipljan, and consecrated the church and bell tower in Babljak. The church was completed and appointed before the war but until now it had not been consecrated. In the village of Pasjane near Gnjilane, where I served on the feast of the Transfiguration, I heard the story of the suffering of 'St. Bosiljka', a young girl from the village whom the Albanians abducted at the end of the period of Turkish rule and wanted to make Muslim by force but she tore off the Muslim pantaloons in which they dressed her and refused to eat. When they saw they could do anything with her, they hacked her to pieces and threw her into the road. The peasants collected the pieces that were not scattered by the dogs and buried her in the church. Her mother, from the eminent family of Rajčić, upon hearing how Bosiljka had perished, said, 'When she thus protected her honor and faith, I have no reason to weep but to sing'!"

Requiems, memorial services and memorial days, reverence of the deceased in general is still alive among the people. In several places, out of piety toward the decease, the people fenced in fenceless cemeteries of their own initiative because they could not wait for the municipal administrations, which according to the law own the cemeteries, to do it.

59 AHSB, Syn № 121/1967.

Morale in the villages is high and the birth rate is good. It is only thanks to this fact that despite the intensive permanent departures in the post-war years, the total number of Orthodox (Serbs) in the Diocese is not less than before the war. In the year 1940 there were about 250,000; the number is the same today, which means that all the new growth has left. But in terms of percentage the balance has shifted to our detriment. The ratio of Orthodox to Muslims before the war was 1:2 but now it is 1:4.

Although an agreement has been reached regarding the fence of the church in Kosovska Kamenica, i.e. that the church itself rebuild the wall that the post-war government destroyed in order to reuse the materials, personnel changes in the municipal assembly have brought new difficulties, a ban on further construction, etc.

During the occupation Albanian Balists destroyed the roof on the small church in the village of Zupče near Kosovska Mitrovica and destroyed in completely. On several occasions the peasants have tried to repair it, the diocese Executive Council intervened but as of today a permit has not been secured. In more than 20 years time has destroyed whatever remained.

A constant problem is the permanent departure of our population from all of Kosovo and Metohija. The tempo of this departure seemed to be somewhat reduced this year but the tendency of departure and the reasons for doing so remain the same; we can even say it has been reinforced. It is true that after the Fourth Plenum and the resulting reorganization of the Security Service explanations such as this for the departure of Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija are also being presently seriously: allegedly, this was done by Ranković and his clique so that the departure of Serbs would give them arguments against the Albanians! To what extent he deserves credit for the departures and to what extent numerous other factors, we do not know for now. What we do know is that after the Fourth Plenum, the presented shortcomings of Ranković and other officials of the Security Services are being ascribed to Serbs in general, and that the situation now is even more difficult and serious."[60]

Bishop Paul (Pavle) then informed the Holy Synod of Bishops of Albanian attacks on church property:

"In addition to all other problems, with each passing day it is more and more difficult for us to protect our (church) property. Recently, local Albanians have set their sights on the forests of the monasteries of Dečani, Gorioč and Devič, having already destroyed the forest of the monastery of St. Mark. Just in the month of April of this year the diocese Executive Council received four letters from Dečani regarding the destruction of the monastery forest. Although this winter the authorities refused to allow the monastery to cut down trees in its own forest until a dispute with the Albanians, who have of late been claiming that it is their forest, is solved, at the same time they have

Consecration of the reconstructed dormitory of the Patriarchate of Peć after being set on fire in 1981 by ethnic Albanian extremists

cut down 11 thick logs 8–10 meters in length and 123 thinner ones, which was merely observed and counted. In the middle of the day on May 18 this year, in the afternoon, the abbot and brothers found three Albanians in the forest with a full wagon of logs and five other cut ones next to the wagon. They were reported to police. A day earlier, a group of Albanian minors aged 14–16 years used some sort of tool to dig through the 60 cm thick stone wall around the monastery estate, making an opening of 80 cm in diameter. Whether this was done with the intent to steal something or in order to disturb and worry in the sense of the advice we are frequently given: 'If you don't like it—leave!' or both, who knows?

The situation is similar with the forest of Gorioč Monastery where 4–5 wagons arrive in the middle of the day, cut down and take away. Appeals to the Municipality and the police have not helped.

We have complained about all this to the Provincial authorities but without success.

During the 10 years that I have been in the Diocese, the situation has not changed. What I have written before remains completely valid today. The lack of younger priests and even more of priest-monks is quite apparent.

But even more fatal is the lack of Orthodox population because even what is left of it is constantly leaving. On several occasions the newspapers have written about this problem, emphasizing that the motive for the permanent departure of Serbs is of an economic nature: seeking the possibility of better employment, schooling of children, etc. This is true, especially since in Kosovo and Metohija we have the principle that employment must be proportional to the percentage of each nationality's representation. Three-quarters of the population is Albanian; therefore, they get priority consideration for 3/4 of available positions. Since the Serbs have previously been over employed with respect to their percentage of representation because

[60] AHSB, Syn № 12/1967.

the Albanians lacked professional cadres that are only now maturing, presently and from now on no Serb will be able to get a job until the quota allotted to the Albanians is met. The Serbs, it is understood, will have no other option than to seek jobs in other areas or abroad, which will further reduce their numbers. But in addition to these economic reasons, there is also organized pressure by the element whose majority has for centuries, to this day, viewed theft as the best economic model and understood its only freedom only as the possibility of mistreating others.

These are the reasons why most peasants, farmers and even retirees are moving, although laborers and intellectuals are moving more out of the former motives. But in the end the result is the same: With every passing day there are fewer and fewer of us."[61]

Bishop Pavle by act № 162 from February 28, 1968, forwarded to the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of the petition addressed to the Executive Council of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija regarding a report by the Administration of Gorioč Monastery that the monastery forest had practically been destroyed by locals, who had cut down 300 trees. First, they did this at night, then they began to do it by day as well, and suddenly 10 or more men with wagons were coming together. When the nuns attempted to stop them, they pelted them with rocks until the nuns fled. They reported this to police but in vain.

The Holy Synod of Bishops submitted a copy of this report to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo.[62]

The Administration of Dečani Monastery (act № 41 from April 3, 1968) wrote His Holiness Serbian Patriarch German:

"A month ago the Albanians from Dečani beat up forester Milivoj Lakićević just because he had filed complaints against some of them for the stealing of timber.

At the same time an Albanian conductor stabbed a Serb bus driver seven times and seriously wounded him just because he would not drive an overloaded bus as the Albanians ordered him to do.

Recently in Labljani in Kosovo the anniversary of Skenderbeg was celebrated in a Serb village. A Serb man asked why it was being celebrated in a Serb village and as a result he is laying in agony in Priština hospital.

A week ago an Albanian from Ratiš (parish of Dečani) chased Stanica Pešić [a Serb woman] from her house and property. She has appealed to all possible authorities here without success.

The following families from Dečani had their land and forests usurped: Zarije Pavlović, Mirko Stevanović, Milorad Joksimović, Blagota Nikčević, Milorad Djašić, Pavle Djašić and the Abramović family from Drenovac. These people have no one to whom they can appeal and if they did, such an appeal would not help."

Upon the recommendation of His Holiness Patriarch German the Holy Synod of Bishops decided (Syn № 1409/zap. 208 from April 4, 1968) to send a photocopy of this letter to the following:

- President of the Federal National Assembly, Mr. Milentije Popović,
- President of the Federal Executive Council, Mr. Mika Špiljak,
- Federal Commission for Religious Affairs,
- President of the Socialist Republic of Serbia Assembly, Mr. Miloš Minić,
- President of the Socialist Republic of Serbia Executive Council, Mr. Djurica Jojkić and
- Socialist Republic of Serbia Republic Commission for Religious Affairs.

At the same time, everyone was asked to give their full and urgent attention to this matter and that it be investigated in order to protect the faithful of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the region of Kosovo and Metohija.

In support of this, all the aforementioned individuals and bodies were provided with a copy of the letter of the Provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments (№ 02–2641 from April 3, 1968) stating the following:

"This Institute is the frequent recipient of written and oral petitions and appeals by the administrations of individual monasteries and churches (Gorioč, Zočište, St. Marko of Koriša, Buzovik, Dečani, the Peć Patriarchate, etc.) with respect to damage inflicted by unknown persons and illegal forest cutting.

On our part we have sought protection from the Commission for Religions of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija and the Provincial Secretariat for Internal Affairs. We wish to also make you aware of this problem and ask that measures be undertaken on your part both through ecclesiastical and through state bodies, in order to protect endangered cultural monuments, their property and the source of their existence."

Miloš Minić replied to this petition (April 17, 1968) to His Holiness Patriarch German:

"Today I received your letter № 1409/zap. 208 from April 4, 1968.

In accordance with my authority I will forward your letter with the attachments to competent bodies responsible for determining the actual situation and undertaking measures according to need for which they are empowered by law."

The Holy Synod of Bishops acknowledged this information."[63]

In connection with this, Milo Jovićević, the president of the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs (letter № 154 from May 29, 1968) wrote the following:

"With regard to your petition describing cases of illegal cutting of the monastery forests and some illegal acts to-

[61] AHSB, Syn № 1121/1968.

[62] AHSB, Syn № 1036/zap. 146,19.03/68.

[63] AHSB, Syn № 1632/zap. 246./68.

ward members of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo and Metohija, we are in a position to advise you that necessary measures were immediately undertaken to verify the claims made in the petition, as well as to prevent eventual arbitrary acts, as can be seen from the following:

After learning of the content of the petition, the president of the Provincial Executive Council Ilija Vakić, together with several officials of the Provincial Council and the president of the Municipal Assembly of Peć, visited the Peć Patriarchate. On that occasion comrade Vakić asked the representatives of the Peć Patriarchate with respect to relations between local state officials and the monastery administration as well as other questions related to the work of the monastery. The elder of the monastery (the abbess) informed the representatives of the Provincial council that relations between the monastery administration and local state officials in Peć are very good, that the monastery administration enjoys their understanding with respect to its requests and that they consequently to the national authorities. During the conversation she emphasized that the monastery administration periodically experiences difficulties provoked by irresponsible individuals who are damaging the monastery property by illegally cutting the monastery forest, smashing gravestones, windows on the church, light bulbs in the yard, writing insulting words, behaving in an impolite manner, and that there are occasionally thefts of small items. The abbess stated that in these cases police officials lend assistance. She also said that such persons are damaging not only monastery property but also the property of the social sector.

On the same day, the aforementioned comrades visited Visoki Dečani Monastery. In a conversation with the monastery elder, Abbot Makarije Popović, it was concluded that the monastery has no problems that would require special engagement by state officials.

Makarije said that a year ago there were attempts to illegally cut the forest but that state officials prevented this in time. On this occasion Makarije mentioned that far more socially owned forests had suffered than monastery forests. He presented no other problems in connection with Visoki Dečani Monastery.

On the basis of the above, it can be concluded that the claims in the petition are exaggerated and that there is no pre-planned campaign by the Albanians against the Serbs, all the more so because irresponsible individuals have acted similarly with respect to the property of the Islamic religious community. For illustration purposes, we will state that recently in Kosovo and Metohija 14 mosques have been robbed and various items removed from them: rugs, wall clocks and other items. The perpetrators of these thefts have been found and captured. They originate from the ranks of Albanian nationality, which proves that these persons do not care which religious community they steal from and their goal is illegal taking of the property of others for their own use.

Newspaper cuttings from the Serbian press, 1980s

As far as the situation in other monasteries is concerned, it is similar to the aforementioned monasteries. The Provincial Executive Council through its officials has undertaken necessary measures to prevent such occurrences."

A transcript of this letter was given to His Holiness Patriarch German and provided to His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren."[64]

In regard to this His Grace Bishop Pavle forwarded to the Holy Synod of Bishops a letter from the Administration of Dečani Monastery that stated the following:

"The report of the Federal Commission for Religions from Belgrade № 154 with respect to Visoki Dečani Monastery is essentially inaccurate. I told President Ilija Vakić that the problem of the monastery church is current, and that this was thoughtless and faceless robbery. I informed him that this was the third attempt to steal the monastery forest. The first was in 1899, the second from 1915 to 1918 and the third unfortunately from 1966 to today. I explained to him that the national police was powerless to offer us help even if it wanted to do so, and that I have reported all cases to the National police in Dečani and the diocese Executive Council in Prizren. I confirmed that this was a pre-planned campaign by the Albanians toward monastery property, although I do not believe that the government supports them 100 percent in this. I concluded the conversation with them by saying that if the federal commission accepted the tyranny of the Dečani Albanians it would be—robbery.

I asked for protection and I did not say that it was unnecessary from the authorities. The earlier reports of the

64 AHSB, Syn № 2127/ zap. 388, June 7, 1968.

Administration of the monastery are not exaggerated and I cannot renounce the claims I have made because I still have not gone mad.

On April 3, 1968, I spoke about this with the president of the Commission for Religions from Priština Mr. Mustafa Hodža and secretary Golub Gojković. When asked how I was, I responded 'worse than in Turkish times and during the occupation. Even in those times we lived in better conditions than during the past two years. During Turkish times the monastery abbot was escorted by Turkish soldiers, while today I must take care that no one shoots from the side. Petitions do not help nor are they addressed in timely fashion. You came here, for example, to give me permission for cutting on April 3, while it ended on March 1. At that time I also explained to them about the violence of the Albanians toward some Serb families, which I have also reported to you. They could not promise anything and instead tried to convince me and that's how things ended. I informed the diocese Executive Council of this with act № 42 from April 4, 1968.

Please be assured at all times that there is no hypocrisy on my side and that I can and dare to write what I say wherever the ax may fall.

I said that the state forest had suffered more than the monastery forest because there is more of it in the first place, and that they are guarding the monastery forest from each other in order to divide it among themselves and that despite this thefts occur daily."

The Holy Synod of Bishops provided this conversation to the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs with the request to form a mixed state-church commission to investigate this matter, taking into account the significant differences in content between the report of the Administration of Dečani Monastery with respect to the letter of the Federal Commission for Religions."[65]

To this the Federal Commission for Religions replied (on November 11, 1968) as follows:

"In re: Your correspondence number 3475/zap. 620 from October 15, 1968.

We have again forwarded your correspondence under the number and date above relating to Visoki Dečani Monastery to competent officials of the Socialist Republic of Serbia. With our correspondence № 154 from May 29 this year, we informed you of the real situation with respect to Visoki Dečani Monastery. That is how we were able to give you a response with facts that we obtained from competent officials who conducted the verification on the scene.

The Federal Commission for Religious Affairs is not able to accept your proposal for forming a mixed state-religious commission that would investigate this and similar cases on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija.

As soon as we receive a response from competent officials in the Socialist Republic of Serbia, we will inform the Synod of Bishops regarding this matter in timely fashion."[66]

By act № 41 from April 3, 1968, the Administration of Dečani Monastery wrote directly to the Serbian Patriarch:

"Your Holiness,

It is my honor to report to Your Holiness regarding unfortunate events in Kosovo and Metohija by the Albanians toward the Serbs as follows:

It has been two years already that Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija have the feeling that unfortunately the slogan about 'Brotherhood and Unity' has not moved from the starting point of its inception, and not by the fault of the Serbs but of the Albanians who are again demonstrating their primordial hatred toward the Serb. We are in a more difficult situation that during the occupation, Austrian and Turkish. Then we had at least some rights, while now it is as if we have lost everything. The appearance of violence, thefts in the middle of the day, insults and threats are an everyday occurrence.

You will certainly hear what all is being done in Kosovo and Metohija with the Serbs from others, too, because everything is happening with lightning speed, and God only knows if we will not soon need another Arsenije Crnojević for the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija!

My goal is to inform you of what is happening in the vicinity of Dečani Monastery. You already know of attempts by the locals of Dečani to take away the monastery forest on the basis of hearsay, and they may yet succeed because illegal acts are being carried out on all sides.

Here are several facts for your information:

A month ago Albanians from Dečani seriously beat up forester Milivoj Lakićević just because he had filed complaints against some of them for the stealing of timber.

At the same time an Albanian conductor stabbed a Serb bus driver seven times and seriously wounded him just because he would not drive an overloaded bus as the Albanians ordered him to do.

Recently in Labljani in Kosovo the anniversary of Skenderbeg was celebrated in a Serb village. A Serb man asked why it was being celebrated in a Serb village and as a result he is laying in agony in Priština hospital.

A week ago an Albanian from Ratiš (parish of Dečani) chased Stanica Pešić [a Serb woman] from her house and property. She has appealed to all possible authorities here without success.

The following families from Dečani had their land and forests usurped: Zarije Pavlović, Mirko Stevanović, Milorad Joksimović, Blagota Nikčević, Milorad Djašić, Pavle Djašić and the Abramović family from Drenovac. These people have no one to whom they can appeal and if they did, such an appeal would not help.

65 AHSB, Syn № 3475/zap. 620, Oct. 15, 1968.

66 AHSB, Syn № 3475/zap. 620, Oct. 15, 1968.

I am appealing to you, our Serbian father, to help us by using your authority with the government in Belgrade. This news is 100% from original sources and I personally can vouch for its accuracy.

If that is your wish I will continue to inform you in the future about everything so that at least you have facts about our unenviable situation in Kosovo and Metohija.

Please forgive me for disturbing you with this type of news for Pascha but I had to do this, said Fr. Makarije in the conclusion of his letter."[67]

Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren by act № 500 from June 22, 1968, wrote to the Holy Synod of Bishops as follows:

"The Administration of Devič Monastery has sent the Executive Council of the Province of Kosovo and Metohija in Priština a petition with the following content:

"The Administration of Devič Monastery, which is under the protection of the State as a cultural-historical monument, hereby submits the following complaint and asks for your protection.

It is well known to everyone that Devič is in an isolated location in the forest and inhabited only by women. The closest village to it is Vojvodići, and our municipality is Srbica, which is 5 km distant from the monastery itself. Every year we have, as our Municipal police are already aware of, damage done to our property by our neighbors from the villages of Lauša, Rezalo and Vojvodići, who allow their cattle to enter our fields planted with corn, white wheat and potatoes and our meadows. This has been reported to the Municipality and to the national police, and a sort of reconciliation was achieved. This year has been horrible. We have filed reports and complained orally to the municipality and Kosovo and Metohija, as well as to the police several times.

On May 28, 1968 we submitted a written complaint and request to the Municipal Committee and the national police in Srbica against the sons of Osman Azem Deljević from Rezalo, who attacked the elder of Devič Monastery, Abbess Paraskeva, hit her with a stick, then broke into the rooms of our workers and demanded their bell, which had been removed from their cattle caught in the wheat. The women of our workers were afraid because their husbands were at work, and they also entered into our chambers demanding their bell. We ask whether any man should be so free as to enter into anyone's house and among other people's women? We filed a complaint with police, the police came out to the scene but they also threatened the police that they would report them to Kosovo and Metohija for protecting Devič.

On June 13 I went out to the estate-meadows, which were being mown. When I was near our water mill, I was approached by the same son of Osman Azem Deljević from Rezalo who fought with me on May 28, 1968, who grabbed me by the arm and twisted me, almost breaking me, when a young man ran up and shouted, 'No, for God's sake, what are you doing.' I immediately called our laborers who were mowing the meadow and the sisters in the garden; when he saw them he ran away. This was in the afternoon at about 4–5 o'clock. I immediately went to the Police and the officer on duty heard me out and made a report. Today, June 14, 1968, at about 9 o'clock one of them came to Devič itself and warned me not to go down because men from Rezalo were waiting to kill me. I do not know what to do or to whom to appeal because this is intolerable. We women do not dare go by ourselves to or own property because we are constantly being threatened and told: you have no business here.

They allow their cattle to enter freely into our corn, gardens and meadows. What are we supposed to do when someone else comes and destroys all our hard work in a few hours. We asked them nicely but to no avail; they threaten us and throw rocks at the sisters.

We have enclosed our property with a wire fence and they cut it to be able to allow their cattle to enter. They seek to inflict damage upon us at every step. We beg you, if there is a provision of the Law to end this and take us under protection because we are women, it is sad that we must go out on our own property in fear. There are masons building right next to Devič and when they came for lunch, someone stole their hammer, trowels and other things. Not a day passes by that they do not disturb us, do not threaten and beat us. We ask ourselves: what is going on? We complain and nothing happens, they are more arrogant and sure of themselves. We beg you to take us under your protection and stop this violence."

The above is forwarded to you for your information, wrote Bishop Pavle, noting that a special meeting regarding this matter was held in Devič Monastery on June 25, 1968 which was attended by the president of the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and the Autonomous Province and a representative of the Municipal Assembly in Srbica where it was promised that in the future the monastery would be given full protection for the lives of its staff and the property of the monastery."[68]

On August 24, 1968, the Administration of Devič Monastery also wrote to His Holiness Serbian Patriarch German:

"Your Holiness, bless,

We know that you are concerned with great worries and affairs by virtue of the fact that you are at the helm of the holy Serbian Orthodox Church and that therefore we should not further burden you with our burdens and problems. But troubles force us to unburden ourselves to Your Holiness, as our spiritual guardian, and to ask for paternal and archpastoral assistance and protection.

We cannot, Your Holiness, live for persecution by the Albanians. We simply do not know what to do to defend ourselves from terrorist attacks of the residents of the neigh-

[67] AHSB, Syn № 1409/1968.

[68] AHSB, Syn № 2731/1968.

boring villages of Lauša, Rezalo, Vojvodići, Batale. Hardly a day passes that their shepherds, grown youths and men, do not allow their cattle to enter our fields, meadows, orchard, vineyard. We have asked and implored them in a nice way but all in vain. They force their way onto our property, destroy our gardens and crops, and on top of that threaten the sisters and pelt them with rocks. They say, 'what can you do and what do you want? Your time is past, move away from here!'

When we find their cattle causing damage and capture it, they come and force their ways into our barns to take away their cattle. Some of them even come in front of the monastery and argue with us about cattle and damages but with an ax in their hands. We report all this to our local state officials but our reports do not result in any sanctions or repercussions, which makes the aggressors even more arrogant and insolent. This arrogance and insolence goes so far that some of them—unfortunately, we do not know who—has spread rumors throughout all of Drenica and even all of Metohija how they, the Albanians, supposedly killed and cut up Abbess Paraskeva out of vengeance. This news spread as if carried by the wind and consequently many of our peasants from Peć, Mitrovica, Vučitrn, Priština, Uroševac, Dečani and even from afar have come to the monastery to see for themselves. Even Abbess Fevronija from the holy Peć Patriarchate came for this reason. Generally speaking, we have the impression that something dark and evil is happening, of systematic terror whose goal is expressed in the words of the violent actors themselves. Those words, for us truly dark and portentous, follow almost every one of their 'accomplishments' like a refrain. They are brief but all too clear: 'this place is no longer yours! Move away from here, what are you waiting for?'

In all honesty, these are not just rare individual attacks but general insecurity and violence, following from the fact that all other monasteries on the territory of Kosovo and Metohija are under the same or similar pressure, as well as our faithful in the cities and especially in the villages throughout the Kosovo flatland and tame Metohija.

Because of all this we are addressing Your Holiness and beg you on our knees to take action personally and through the Synod with competent officials of higher state authorities so that we and our people here can get at least some degree of protection from this intolerable terror.

Most warmly and most humbly thanking Your Holiness in advance, begging for your holy archpastoral blessing and prayers, kissing your Holy right hand, we remain always the loyal obedients of Your Holiness."

Upon the recommendation of His Holiness Patriarch German, a transcript of this letter was submitted to:

- the Federal Commission for Religions,

- the Republic Commission for Religions of the Socialist Republic of Serbia,

- Djurica Jojkić, president of the Executive Council of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and

- Mr. Miloš Minić, president of the Republic Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia,

with a request for the protection of church and material property, monks and nuns, as well as our faithful in the region of Kosovo and Metohija."[69]

President of the Serbian Assembly Miloš Minić responded to the Serbian Patriarch on September 23, 1968:

"I have received your letter of September 16, 1968, with enclosures. The president of the Republic Executive Council, comrade Djurica Jojkić, received from you a letter of the same content and I have been informed that he has given orders to competent officials to investigate the incidents to which your letter relates and act in accordance with the law.

Confirming receipt of your letter I also wish to inform you that it is my opinion that what the president of the Republic Executive Council has done is sufficient to establish the real situation and undertake necessary steps in the event it is established that it is necessary to undertake necessary steps for the protection of the law."

In his petition (№ 600 from September 17, 1968) sent to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija His Grace Bishop Pavle wrote the following:

"This year especially since the feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos to today the damage is visible and inconsiderate. Around August 29 the Albanians drove 18 head of cattle into the monastery meadow. We captured the cattle to charge for the damage. They took advantage of a moment when we were serving, forced open the gate and drove away the cattle. I filed a report with the National Police in Dečani. Every day Albanian youths aged 25 years and less mercilessly steal from our property. They pick walnuts, apples, plums and pears. So far they have halved our crop. What is worst of all they come with bags and steal our corn and then sell it to those who roast the ears whole and then sell them. They have not done this in the past. On September second our guard Miodrag Lazarević and novice Svetomir Popović captured known thief Muškolaj Čauš (age 18) who has a gang of 15 youths under the age of 15 on the monastery property. When called to come down from a fruit tree and leave, he tried to attack them with a knife with the worst of insults. In such a situation they were forced to resist him. This young man has been reported many times for the theft of monastery timber. All for nothing. There are many of those whose names we cannot know because they run away. That is the situation and there is no help from anywhere.

It is our honor to submit the above for your information with the request that a halt be put to the theft of fruit from the monastery property, which is the result of the ineffectiveness of the constables on the one hand, the arrogance of the thieves, which has been especially evident

[69] AHSB, Syn № 3055/zap., Sep. 6, 1968.

in the last two years and lack of authorities among the constables, on the other hand."

A transcript of this was forwarded to the Federal and Republic Commissions for Religious Affairs in Belgrade with a request for "intervention with competent officials to protect Dečani Monastery from this violence and enable it to live an undisturbed life, which is presently threatened by the Albanians."[70]

In addition to this, His Grace Bishop Pavle (on September 17, 1958, № 588) also sent the Commission for Religious Affairs in Priština this petition:

"The Administration of Dečani Monastery has submitted the following to us under № 44 from August 26, 1968:

Your Grace, we do not know what to do for attacks from neighboring Albanian villages: Lauša, Rezalo, Vojvodići, Batale, etc. Not a day passes by that the shepherds from these villages, who are grown youths, do not allow their cattle to enter our corn, our orchards, meadows and gardens. We have asked them in a nice way [not to do this] but it is all useless. They enter the property, they cut up our squashes, puncture our watermelons, ride bicycles through the meadows, threaten the sisters, saying, 'What can you do and what do you want?' When we capture their cattle, they pelt the sisters with rocks and take the cattle by force. This is horrible.

On August 24, 1968 the oxen of Adem Deljaj from Rezalo were caught in the corn and the sisters captured them; however, they came in the evening, forced their way into the barn and drove out the oxen. On August 25, 1968, the cattle of Muharem Deljaj from Rezalo were caught in the orchards, and that's how it is every day. The shepherds of Vojvodići and Batale with them, it goes without saying, freely allow they cattle into the meadows as well as into the corn and everywhere else. We report this to the authorities but they are not afraid of anyone, they come and they threaten, they appear with axes and threaten. We don't know what to do. On August 24, 1968 the police came out to the scene and promised it would undertake measures but as of today everything is at a standstill. They also enter our vineyards, bringing their dogs so they can attack ours. They have picked all our peaches, they break off our grapes that have begun to mature as well as the green ones, it is a state of anarchy. We beg you to help us, what can we do.

We ask Your Grace to please be so kind and forward our request to the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade in the hope that the Holy Synod of Bishops can take actions with competent officials so that we and the other monasteries have at least some degree of protection from this now unbearable terror."

We are forwarding the above report with a delay because we were hesitant in this monastery (and not only in this monastery in Kosovo and Metohija) and after promises by the President of the Provincial Commission for Religious Affairs in Devič Monastery itself on May 25, 1968, in the presence of the Commission for Religions of the Socialist Republic of Serbia that necessary measures would be undertaken to prevent the inflicting of damage to the monastery by the destruction of fruits on the monastery property and permitting the entry of cattle into monastery field, destruction of orchards and fruits out of malice and attacks on the nuns themselves would reach its culmination after the newest social reforms, either because it offers them greater daring to once again close this monastery by forcing the nuns to leave from the monastery, so they can destroy it again as they did during World War II, or because they have felt that security officials are not offering sufficient protection by punishing wrong-doers.

It is with regret that we must state that this monastery, which celebrated five hundred years of its existence enslaved by the rule of the Ottoman empire, was ultimately destroyed to the foundations in 1941 by the residents of neighboring villages and that after enormous efforts for its restoration in a land that is now free, it is now without peace and freedom in constant fear for its life and in work whose fruits the neighbors destroy unpunished out of spite."

The Holy Synod of Bishops also forwarded this correspondence to the Federal and Republic Commission for Religions in Belgrade."[71]

His Grace Bishop Pavle also sent the Holy Synod of Bishops act № 612 from October 20, 1968 in which he said that an act with the following content was sent to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo in Priština:

"We received a report from Devič Monastery that on July 16 of this year two young men, passing next to the monastery building by the river, offered two bombs to child shepherds, urging them to toss the bombs on the monastery hay. When the children refused, the young men said that they would do it next time themselves. The sisters have reported the incident to police.

We have also been informed that visitors to the monastery on the feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos (August 28) this year have complained that they were attacked with rocks by children of Albanian nationality as they were on their way to the monastery between Klina and Srbica, and Srbica and Lauša.

We have also been informed that damage is constantly being done by allowing cattle to enter the monastery property and crops. When the sisters capture the cattle, the owners arrive and free the cattle by force, threatening the sisters with knives (e.g. Djemail Hadžija and Vesel Rizahi from Rezalo on August 25, 1969).

We ask the Commission to undertake serious steps to prohibit such cases of threatening, intimidation and violence, and that wrong-doers are found and held accountable in accordance with the Law.

[70] AHSB, Syn № 3477/zap. 621, Oct. 15, 1968.

[71] AHSB, Syn № 3501/zap. 622, Oct. 15, 1968.

Манастир Девич, говори игуманија Параскева:

– Пуштају псе на наше овце, а стоку у нашу летину. Секу шуму, руше ограду. Подмећу децу да нас гађају камењем. Псују. Пред монахињама се раскопчавају. А милиција? Милиција дође и оде. Они што су нам палили стогове сена, на суду су отворено рекли да ће паљевину да понове. Један ме претукао, остала сам инвалид, али су га огласили неурачунљивим. После неколико дана тај, тако неурачунљив, отишао је у војску. Нисам знала да и такве примају . . .

Овом разговору присуствује свештеник из Вучитрна. Додаје:

– А људе је тешко зауставити на Косову. Некад се и могло, али после учесталих силовања немамо више аргумената. Кад останеш без части, шта ће ти огњиште?

Игуманија Параскева

У Пећкој патријаршији, Грачаници, Девичу, Светој Тројици, као и у многим српским црквама остале су само жене. Тако је и у Манасији, Раваници, Љубостињи, Каленићу и десетинама других. Ове се жене моле свом Богу али притом копају, ору, музу, сеју, жању, перу, кувају, зидају, граде и изнад свега чувају као рођену децу, коју немају и коју неће имати, највреднија наслеђа свог народа. Шта би било од манастира и црквава да није тих мајки Февроније и других сестара и мајки? Не романтичан већ истинит, неулепшан одговор могу пружити људи из Завода за заштиту споменика културе, као и многи други. Није онда никакво чудо што мржња уперена против ових жена понекад добија обележја симбола. И није претерано и незаслужено ако те жене узмемо у одбрану као што бисмо бранили рођене мајке и рођене сестре. Наша мушка, друштвена и политичка част тиме не би била оштећена.

Арсеније Јовановић

Mother superior Paraskeve of Devič complaining on pressures and theft from local Albanians, 1986

We have sent one copy of this act to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Federal Executive Council, and another to the Republic Commission of the Socialist Republic of Serbia.

Taking into account what had already been done, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided to add this to the dossier and to await the results of the intervention."[72]

The abbot of Dečani, Fr. Makarije, wrote Bishop Lavrentije on September 9, 1968:

"Please give us some of your olive oil as our lanterns have a great tendency to go out."

We are in great difficulties here. We are being robbed more and more each day. We report this to the police and the diocese Executive Council in Prizren but little help. They are powerless to help us. On our property they have halved our fruit crops by stealing. We are snatching what can be snatched from them. The situation is horrible. Last night an Albanian wounded policeman Marković with a revolver. He has undergone surgery and one of his kidneys has been removed. Who knows if he will live. Yesterday they also attacked the only Serb house in Streoce, that of Milutin Mijović and his two adult sons. Milutin got an ax to the head and they ordered him to leave the property or they would torch it. The chase has begun again like three months ago and God only knows where all this is leading. I am afraid for my young ones, that they will run away out of fear. I am not even thinking about it but waiting to see what God and fate bring me. At least it will be talked about."[73]

Bishop Lavrentije informed the Holy Synod of Bishops of this, which then sent the President of the Serbian Assembly a letter, act № 3055/zap. 502 from September 16, 1968, with the following content:

"Once again we have gotten concerning notification from the administrations of our monasteries and churches in the Kosovo-Metohija province regarding serious and irresponsible actions by the Albanians in this region toward our priests, church property, actions toward our faithful, etc. All this has also been discussed by our Holy Synod of Bishops in a meeting on September 5 of this year, which decided to provide you with transcripts of this appeal and warning, asking you to consider them and give them your full attention so that our churches and monasteries as well as their servants and other faithful can be protected from anarchy and permitted to live and work in peace and without fear in our free Country."[74]

President of the Serbian Assembly Miloš Minić responded to the Serbian Patriarch on September 23, 1968:

"I have received your letter of September 16, 1968, with enclosures. The president of the Republic Executive Council, comrade Djurica Jojkić, received from you a letter of the same content and I have been informed that he has given orders to competent officials to investigate the incidents to which your letter relates and act in accordance with the law.

Confirming receipt of your letter I also wish to inform you that it is my opinion that what the president of the Republic Executive Council has done is sufficient to establish the real situation and undertake necessary steps in the event it is established that it is necessary to undertake necessary steps for the protection of the law."[75]

72 AHSB, Syn № 4799/zap. 765, Nov. 4, 1968.

73 AHSB, Syn № 3133/1968.

74 AHSB, Syn № 3055/1968.

75 AHSB, Syn № 3431/1968.

The Year 1969

The Administration of Devič Monastery with its act № 25 from April 25, 1969, wrote to Serbian Patriarch German.

"The Administration of Devič Monastery, as a cultural-historical monument which is under the protection of the state, is submitting the following complaint and asking for protection.

Devič Monastery is located in the so-called Devič desert, five kilometers distant from its municipality of Srbica. Our property is located half a kilometer from Devič itself. Every year, beginning in the spring, we have disputes with the surrounding villages, which are several kilometers distant from Devič. We have submitted complaints, appeals and reports but all in vain.

Here is what happened on April 4, 1969. I had gone out to the property to show them where they were to sow. On that same day at about 12 noon I set out for Devič. Since there is a shortcut over the property called She-Bear's Creek where we have a entrance gate made of sticks, that is the exit I took and turned with my back toward the road that leads to Rezalo, I closed the gate. At that moment, I felt a strong blow behind my bad with a gnarled staff across my left arm—because I have no right arm. The blow was so strong that I lost all sensation in my arm and practically fainted. I began to cry and call for help while he continued to beat me on the arm, back, knees; I had no strength to defend myself. Calling for help, I cried and shouted for help. If a shepherd from Vojvodići had not seen me and rushed to my aid, the son of Adem Deljević from Rezalo would, I believe, have killed me because he hit me so mercilessly and furiously that my one arm bled in several places from the strength of the blow, and I was drenched in blood just from the several wounds on my arm. He hit my chest and back until I was black and blue. The same man hit me over the knees, the legs so that I could not defend myself had I wanted to. Hearing my cries my sisters who were on the property ran to me and a laborer but he had beaten me up well by then. I was taken to the monastery to be taken to the physician. While he, seeing that I had gone, lunged at the sisters, threatening to kill them. The sisters stood firm and told him, go ahead, hit us but the rock he held in his hand fell and he disappeared in the direction of Rezalo. I was taken by car to Srbica first to the National police. I was received bleeding and black and blue by the police commander, who heard me and ordered that the man be arrested. From the police commander I went to the physician. The physician examined me, washed the blood off, gave me an injection, wrapped my arm, placed a splint and referred me to Kosovska Mitrovica Hospital for an X-ray because he suspected that a bone might be broken. They determined it was fractured, re-bandaged it, and gave medication for further treatment. I spent 15 days laying in bed with pains in my chest, arm and entire body. I received injections because I was in terrible pain and was running a fever, as my lungs were injured, all the more so because I suffered previous lung trauma. I am still receiving injections for my lungs, which have since become inflamed. I have taken to the police the physician's certificate attesting I sustained "serious bodily injury." On my part I have taken no other measures. Whether the police have done so, I do not know; they said they would.

If I may be so free as to note that this is not the first incident. On May 28, 1968, I submitted a written request to the Municipal Committee and the police in Srbica against the sons of Osman Azem Deljević from Rezalo, who also attacked me—the elder of Devič Monastery, Abbess Paraskeva, beat her with a stick, then forced their way into the apartment of our workers and their young wives, demanding the bell removed from the cattle, which had been caught on our property making damage. If any man dared entered any of their houses, blood would have been spilled but they felt free to enter. The police understood measures but they say they are not afraid of the police, that they will report them to the committee for protecting Devič.

On June 13 I went out to the meadows, when I was near our water mill, I was approached by the same son of Osman Azem Deljević from Rezalo who fought with me on May 28, 1968, who grabbed me by the arm and twisted me, almost breaking me, when a young man ran up and shouted, 'No, for God's sake, what are you doing'. I immediately called our laborers who were mowing the meadows and the sisters in the garden; when he saw them he ran away. Two days later they warned me not to go out to the property because they intended to kill me. I filed a report, the police came from Srbica, then they came from Priština, called them, talked, begged, tried to convince them not to do such things, not to make damage, not to harass the sisters, to look after their cattle instead of allowing it to destroy the garden, the meadows, the wheat, the orchard and all the property. It was of no use.

After that, good people brought it to my attention that they were restless, that they would kill me. In March, when they also came from Priština, I told them that the same family was threatening to kill me. They tried to convince me not to be afraid because this was not true. However, what happened on April 4, 1969; they turned their intention into action.

I do not know what to do or to whom to appeal and whom to beg because despite all our appeals and complaints they have practically crippled me with something that will stay with me as long as I am alive. I am, first of all, of the weaker sex; second, I am an invalid without a right arm; I am 60 years old, a chronic lung patient; with the exception of my arm all my illness are from tireless work with my sisters on the restoration of this great 'cultural-historical monument' which is under the protection of the state, and which was formerly destroyed to the foundation. We came to ashes and bare rock, and today it is built and restored for those who wish to come. Yes, but unfortunately from the

first days of our arrival, we have had no peace. Throughout the whole year, beginning in the spring—the month of March until the beginning of winter, they harass us, the garden, the meadows, etc. and in the winter they mercilessly cut our forest which we labored to clean and work because when we came we did not have a single branch to use, the entire forest was ruined. Now that we have preserved it and gotten to the point that we have something to use instead of having to buy it to burn in the winter, now all the surrounding villages, such as Vojvodići, Lauša, Rezalo—are mercilessly cutting and destroying it. We have filed reports but it is useless; to this day, they cut down and take away. We do not know what to do; unless this anarchy is brought to an end and someone makes them stop, we cannot survive here. They are not afraid of anyone, not the police, not the foresters—for them they are nothing.

On the basis of everything described above, we most humbly beg that you take us under your protection and put an end to this anarchy so that we do not have to leave from this monument. We are afraid, they are coming and work has begun in the field and we do not dare, it is sad to say, freely go out in the field, especially me because I am constantly being threatened that they will kill me. I would not want to be anyone's innocent victim because I am doing no wrong, only guarding this 'cultural-historical monument' that we have built with difficulty. Therefore, I beg you to take us women under your protection and undertaken legal measures.

I hope that you will take our and my (appeal)—as the elder of this monument into consideration as being justified and protect us, if you would have us stay, wrote Abbess Paraskeva in her appeal."[76]

His Grace Bishop Pavle then sent the following petition to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija in Priština with act № 636 from October 7, 1969:

"We have received the following report from Visoki Dečani Monastery under № 17 from February 6, 1969:

Rako Vukanić from Goraždevac, ecclesiarch, related the following to me:

In Babići near Goraždevac there is a primary school with 70 Serb students and 30 Albanians. During the celebration of the New Year they tried to put an Albanian flag on the school. This was opposed by Milutin Milosavljević (age 55) from Pištane, Cvetko Babić (age 35) from Babići and Cvetko Radulović from Vragovac. They asked that a Serb flag also be hoisted because the majority of the students were Serbs. They removed the Albanian flag. After that they arrested them and took them to Peć. They spent seven days each in solitary confinement, they were beaten and doused with cold water by Albanian policemen. They were sentenced and spent a month each in the prison in Peć.

Six or seven months ago Milutin Vukotić (70) from Peć put a match in the monastery office lock. It is a Wehrheim lock and I had a hard time removing it. I scolded him for this joke and advised him not to do it any more. This was the third time on the feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, and he had done the same thing twice previously.

On the feast of the Dormition the police heard me scolding him, and they laughed and that's how the whole thing ended.

Since November 28 to today the Albanians have planted 6–7 bombs in Peć. Recently they planted a bomb in the apartment of Milutin Vukotić from Peć, wrapped in a rag and soaked with gasoline and then set on fire. One of the taxi drivers managed to tear away the cloth at the last minute and no explosion occurred.

Yesterday I received a visit from Adem Luka, the head of the Secretariat of Internal Affairs from Peć, and two of his subordinates. He told me that he had heard of the incident with the lock, that it was supposedly his job to protect me and he asked me to make an official statement about the matter. I asked him that I had to think for a bit and that I would tell him what I knew tomorrow. Today one of the subordinates returned and asked me to make a statement. I refused with the motivation that I could not do so because I know the head as a sly and serious chauvinist. Finally, we learned that they wanted to proclaim Milutin mad and that he was the one who had thrown all the bombs. Thus, everything was a major act of cunning and provocation because they want to ascribe the crimes of the Albanians to a Serb man who had nothing to do with. I am sending this statement for safekeeping in the monastery archive.

I am forwarding the above for your information and would like to note that we have done nothing regarding this report because it does not directly affect the church, although it is characteristic that state officials do not punish Albanians for such attacks but forgive them their mistakes as men who do not know what is punishable and what is not, whereas they consider Serbs to do everything consciously and with the intention to provoke."[77]

At its regular meeting in 1969 the Holy Assembly of Bishops made the following decision under AS № 20/zap. 54 tač. 3:

"Please ask His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren to regularly inform the Holy Synod of Bishops of every case involving attack on church personnel, the church and church property by citizens of Albanian nationality so that in every case we can immediately advise the Federal and Republic Commissions for Religions."

At the same session of the Holy Assembly of Bishops (May 19) it was decided to sent the following petition to Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia president, Josip Broz Tito:

[76] AHSB, Syn № 1539/1968.

[77] AHSB, Syn № 1710/zap. 365, May 23, 1969.

"Mr. President,

Through its officials our Church has been informed of many attacks occurring in the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo toward the Serbian Orthodox Church and its members, not only attacks but also formally illegal acts. Hence we are forced to address you in search of protection.

We believe that the principles of freedom, which the SFR Yugoslavia Constitution guarantees to all its citizens, regardless of nationality or religious affiliation, should also apply toward the Orthodox Church and her faithful in the Socialist Province of Kosovo; namely, ensuring the freedom to live and security of property and preventing violence by the Albanian nationality, which is the majority nationality in the province.

Our Holy Synod of Bishops has, with respect to concrete cases, on numerous occasions addressed competent officials of the Socialist Republic of Serbia as well as the Federal Executive Council; however, the situation has not improved. The violence subsides somewhat only to appear in another region in even more serious form. In the last year it has assumed all serious forms. This involves not only the destruction of crops in the field, the destruction of forests (monasteries of Devič, Dečani, Gorioč near Peć), the destruction of gravestones (Buzovik, Šipolje near Kosovska Mitrovica, Kosovska Vitina, etc.) but also physical attacks, even targeting women and nuns (last year in the monastery of Binča near Kosovska Vitina, in Mušutište near Prizren, and this spring in Devič Monastery, where the abbess sustained seriously bodily injury, a novice of Dečani Monastery was wounded with an ax, a hieromonk of Gorioč Monastery was hit in the head with a rock, priests near Kosovska Mitrovica were also assaulted with rocks, etc.) which has led to the permanent departure of our faithful from the region.

We do not want to cause problems with regard to these legal acts but we are forced to seek protection for the members of our Church who constantly appeal to us for help. Therefore, we ask that you dedicate your attention to these difficulties so that we may prevent any further illegal acts.

Thanking you, Mr. President, for your understanding and attention to our problems, we ask that your accept our expression of special respect from the members of the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church."

On May 23, 1969, the president of the Republic, Josip Broz Tito, replied to this as follows:

"I have received your letter of May 19 in which you inform me that there have been attacks in the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo targeting the Serbian Orthodox Church and her members. I express my regret due to the acts cited in your letter, and which represent a violation of the SFRY Constitution.

As the President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia I will do everything to prevent attacks and illegal acts, and to ensure a free life and integrity for every citizen, as well as security for their property.

I will forward your letter, together with my views on the need of undertaking decisive measures to protect the law, to the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia." The Holy Assembly of Bishops asked His Holiness Patriarch German to thank the President of the Republic for his reply. At the same time it decided to present a transcript of the answer to Their Graces the Bishops.[78]

His Holiness Serbian Patriarch German forwarded to the Holy Synod of Bishops a letter from Orthodox citizens in Bujanovac, signed by Žarko Filipović.

The letter stated the following:

"We are forced to appeal to you personally for help because so far our intervention through others has not helped. In the village of Veliki Trnovac, Municipal Assembly of Bujanovac, there is a church dedicated to the Emperor Constantine and Jelena or St. Helen, which was built on the older foundations of church in 1936/37, regarding which there is evidence in your possession.

Until 1964 there was a Serb population in the village and the church was maintained. It was fenced in with a wall, everything was nicely appointed, a gate was made for the exit from the yard.

However, when all the Serbs moved from this village in 1964, one year later and to this very day and so forth, the aforementioned church has been destroyed to the point that in the near future the Albanian population may destroy it altogether.

The fence wall has been destroyed by the Albanians in several places in order to make passages from the churchyard to their houses. They have broken both gates. They have smashed all the monuments of the deceased in the courtyard, the doors on the church were destroyed, all the icons and windows on the church smashed. People are defecating in the church itself, transforming the church into a toilet.

We wish to note that a team for the protection of monuments from Belgrade and Niš visited the church in Veliki Trnovac in order to protect it because it was built on the foundations of an older church. The sight they saw was something, a church turned into a toilet and they found a donkey in the middle of the church.

That is why we are personally addressing you, Mr. German, to help us so that we can protect the church that is located in Veliki Trnovac so that they do not use it as a toilet because it is a monument. We wish to note that there are three mosques and they are maintained by the Albanians, while our church is being destroyed and all sorts of things done with it, as well as that they are presently building a mosque in the town of Bujanovac for which they received funds from the municipality in the amount of four million, while our church which was built long ago is being ruined and destroyed.

78 AHSB, Syn № 1879/zap. 408, May 27, 1969.

A complaint about this was sent to the prosecutor's office and the police station in Bujanovac and nothing was done about it except that the police visited to determine who had done all this. However, because they could not establish who had driven the church to such a state, nothing more has been done since June 26, 1968.

That is why we are addressing you personally, Mr. German, so that something can be done about this matter because the goal is not to build new mosques and maintain them while destroying churches that were built in 1936–1937.

If you do not believe us, through your appointees you can verify everything written here or send someone who will verify it, or we can also send you photographs of everything if necessary."

The Holy Synod of Bishops decided that a transcript of this report be provided to the Federal and Republic Commissions for Religious Affairs in Belgrade."[79]

However, we have information that Serbs who visited Kosovo and Metohija also attacked Serbs as witnessed by the report of Protopresbyter Gvozden Milošević, the elder of the church of St. Sava in Belgrade, who, through His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle (AEM № 1059 from December 8, 1969), the local bishop, provided the Holy Synod of Bishops [with information] about unpleasantries which the members of the Religious Philanthropic Trusteeship of the Archbishopric of Belgrade-Karlovac experienced from the Albanians in Peć during a pilgrimage to Serbian monasteries.

After discussing this report, the Holy Synod of Bishops on December 12, 1969, adopted the recommendation of His Holiness Patriarch German, and submitted a transcript of the relevant report to the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs, as well as to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Serbia for its information."[80]

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren (act № 603 from September 8, 1969) forwarded the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo.

The petition says the following:

We have received a report with the following content from the administration of Gorioč Monastery:

"At the beginning of 1969 the forest administration of Istok municipality approved the sale of half of the monastery forest by the Administration of the Serbian Orthodox Monastery of Gorioč under the condition that the terrain be reforested. There is a written Agreement on this between the aforementioned Institution and our monastery. However, reforestation and rearing of young forest growth is impossible due to the fact that the residents of Donji Istok, Graba and the entire vicinity of the monastery are every day systematically grazing their cattle and other livestock (sheep, goats, etc.) on the aforementioned monastery land. All appeals and reprimands to date have not helped at all. On the contrary, the individuals whose livestock has been repeatedly caught there are threatening the sisters of Gorioč with physical violence. For example, on August 1, 1969, the livestock of Mujo Vujupaj from Donji Istok was caught; instead of apologizing to the elder of the monastery and asking to compensate the damage that was done, he shouted and threatened, saying that his livestock would always graze on monastery land in the future and that he, Mujo Vujupaj, forbids the sisters from the monastery from chasing the livestock out ever again. Otherwise, he physically threatened those of us in the monastery. In addition to all this, the spiritual father of Gorioč Monastery, who visits the surrounding villages in his capacity as parish priest, is experiencing unpleasantries, coarse language, insults and even physical attacks (with rocks) by the youth and older children of Albanian nationality.

Because of this constant violence, constant personal and property insecurity and danger, we ask Your Grace as our arch pastor and father to forward our appeal to the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade, the Provincial state authorities in Priština, and that you personally do whatever you are able to ensure our freedom to live and the safety of our property, which are basic civil and Constitutional rights of the Serbian citizen in a country that claims to have law and order.

We submit the above report and once again ask for a halt to the violence that individuals are carrying out unsanctioned against the property of this monastery as well as against the monastery staff which is trying unsuccessfully to protect the monastery property and their own lives."

In this regard the Holy Synod of Bishops wrote to the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs, as well as the Commission of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, and asked for intervention to protect the interests of Gorioč Monastery.[81]

The Year 1970

The response of the Commission of the Republic Executive Council of the Socialist Republic of Serbia from April 8, 1970, says the following:

"In regard to the petition of the Holy Synod of Bishops (№ 253/zap. 45 from February 6, 1970) requesting our intervention in order to protect the property of Gorioč Monastery, we received a report from the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo that representatives of that Commission held a meeting with the highest officials of Istok municipality. It was agreed at the meeting to undertake necessary measures so that the events described in the petition are not repeated in the future. It was also agreed that appropriate sanctions

[79] AHSB, Syn № 5212/zap. 866, Dec. 12, 1968.
[80] AHSB, Syn № 5212/zap. 866/69.
[81] AHSB, Syn № 253/zap. 45, Feb. 6, 1970.

be undertaken against the persons who inflicted damage to the property of the monastery.

The Commission for Religious Affairs of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo expressed in its report reassurance that it would continue to follow these and similar events in the future and that it would undertake appropriate measures when needed. We also join in the expression of these reassurances."[82]

The Holy Synod forwarded this reply to His Grace Bishop Pavle.

In regard to the same matter, Milo Jovićević, president of the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs (act № 48 from April 17, 1970) responded to the Holy Synod of Bishops as follows:

"In regard to your correspondence № 253/zap. 45 from February 6, 1970, relating to our intervention in the sense of protecting the property of Gorioč Monastery—Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo, we have been advised by the Commission for Religious Affairs of the Executive Council of the Socialist Republic of Serbia that they have responded to you with assurances that competent officials will undertake necessary measures to prevent occurrences such as those described in your petition."

In a meeting of the Holy Synod of Bishops on June 30, 1970, His Holiness Serbian Patriarch German received the report of Archimandrite Makarije, the administrator of the Imperial Lavra of Visoki Dečani, № 63 from June 29, 1970, as follows:

"Your Holiness,

In filial loyalty I am so free as to submit to Your Holiness my report and also to ask for help if such help can be gotten.

Visoki Dečani Monastery has fallen into serious crisis and insecurity, and as far as I know in the last 35 years we have not been in a worse position. We had various conflicts and difficulties that we were able to resolve ourselves. We even managed to successfully resolve the great difficulty upon the attempted confiscation the monastery forest but the present situation in which we have found ourselves foretells something even more difficult—lack of security for the monastery itself and its antiquities. From May 28, 1970 to June 19 our monastery cellar was broken into four times. They took a little money, about 550.00 new dinars and liquor. The first time we noticed the theft we reinforced the door and locks but the same thing occurred on May 30, June 13 and June 19, 1970. The first two times almost in the middle of the day at 3:00 p.m. when we were outside the monastery and the other brothers busy with their work, and the last two times after midnight. We have done everything possible to prevent this, from reinforcing locks and doors to building walls in various indirect entrances and reporting to the police, we are forced to stand watch every night with a rifle in hand.

[82] AHSB, Syn № 1538/zap. 230, Apr. 14, 1970.

Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija complaining to the Yugoslav authorities in Belgrade on discrimination and persecution by the Kosovo Albanians

The first time we caught a young man, Osman Djikokaj, and he gave us the names of accomplices. Nothing more was done. The second time they meandered around the courtyard and broke in again. The third time after midnight they stole about 10–15 liters of brandy and spilled an equal amount (probably in the darkness and in their haste). The police took fingerprints from the bottles, and the fourth time they brought a search dog all for nothing.

A representative from the Secretariat of Internal Affairs in Peć said that these attempts were just to see the reaction and that they would attack the church itself. Because of this I have come to Belgrade to buy special locks, and also to inform you of the difficulty we are in.

I have also informed His Grace Mr. Pavle in Prizren of this. I ask that you intercede so that the Secretariat of Internal Affairs from Peć provides us with a policeman who would reside in the monastery itself. This would be our assurance that worse things will not happen. We remain grateful in advance."

The Holy Synod of Bishops immediately decided to inform the Federal Commission for Religious Affairs as well as the religious commissions of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo of this.

On the basis of this decision the commissions were sent a petition of the following content:

"The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church has learned that Visoki Dečani Monastery has fallen into great difficulties and insecurity. After earlier attacks on its property, the monastery has in the past month suffered four robberies and other unpleasantries. More precisely, in the period from May 28 to June 19 this year, the monastery cellar has been broken into four times and money and liquor. As soon as it observed the first theft the Administration of the Monastery put special locks on the door. However, nothing helped. The thefts were repeated on May 30, June 13 and June 19. To what lengths the thieves will go can be seen from the fact that the first two thefts occurred at about 3:00 p.m., i.e. during the day, when the brotherhood was occupied with tasks outside of and near the monastery. The other two thefts occurred during the night.

As a result of this, the Administration of the Monastery has found itself in great difficulty and has been forced to wall in its indirect access routes within the Monastery complex and keep watch day and night always in great fear of what may occur.

During the first theft the brotherhood of the Monastery managed to catch one thief, who is called Osman Djikokaj. He admitted the names of his accomplices. This was reported to competent authorities; unfortunately, however, nothing more was done. Similarly, after every break in the police came, took fingerprints and brought a search dog, all without results.

That is not all. There are now rumors that these are merely sounding out attempts to see the reaction and that after that the church itself will be attacked.

The Holy Synod of Bishops is disturbed by all this, and considering the seriousness of the situation and the fear that the worst may occur—that one of our most monumental and valuable monasteries and cultural-historical monuments may be damaged or destroyed—asks the Commission to intercede with competent officials to ensure that permanent guards (policemen) are installed at Visoki Dečani Monastery who would always be on the scene and secure the Monastery. We believe that in the present situation this would be the only and most effective way of preventing the worst from happening—which considering everything else that is happening there, may happen."

There is no information whether a response to this appeal, like so many others, was ever received.

Bishop Pavle again informed the Holy Synod of Bishops regarding the permanent departure of Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija during the period from April 1969 to April 1, 1970:

"This whole annual report," said the Bishop, "is primarily a report about the difficulties we face more or less every day in the Diocese. The permanent displacement of our people is still going on. Those who still remain, in addition to other reasons, are also motivated to leave because of difficulties with education of their children. In many locations, due to permanent displacement there are also, of course, fewer children, and Serbian sections (in schools) are closing. They reject the possibility of sending their children far away, to another village. They have two alternatives: either to send them to Albanian sections or to move. There are also other reasons to do the latter and thus the permanent displacement continues."[83]

In this regard the Holy Synod of Bishops asked the Commission to undertake everything necessary to protect our faithful from constant unpleasantries and harassment inflicted upon them by the Albanians on the territory of Kosovo.[84]

The Year 1971

On March 12, 1971 His Grace Bishop Pavle forward the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the Commission for Religious Affairs of the SAP of Kosovo and Metohija.

The content of the petition was as follows:

"We received the following report from the parish priest of Budisavci:

'In the village of Petrč there is an Orthodox cemetery of 2.5 hectares used to bury the dead of the villages of Gornji Petrč, Donji Petrč, Gornja Jablanica, Donja Jablanica, Klinčina, a part of the village of Drenovac and a part of the village of Dugonjiva.

In this village there was an Orthodox church—not that long ago, in the time of the Turkish Empire—as some elderly Serbs remembered, e.g. Simo Ribać from Drenik, who said that he regularly took communion in that church. The foundations of the church can still be found in a meadow of two hectares, which during the time of the old Yugoslavia was cared for by the church council and rented out, and now is held by an Albanian Catholic from Petrč. In the Petrč cemetery before the war, there was a wonderful cerris forest, which was preserved during the war but after the liberation the people's government cut down the forest for its needs and a forest of black locusts planted which was nurtured and preserved for 25 years growing into a great forest that was a pleasure to see and to visit.

A few days ago I visited the cemetery in Petrč and saw that the forest was gone with the exception of a black locust here and there scattered throughout the cemetery. Some gravestones were broken and the picture had been smashed and removed on every one of them with a blunt object and a lathe in bestial fashion and thus the cemetery looks like a real wasteland. The same thing happened a few years ago in the village of Danče. After that the Serbs moved from there and today there is not a single Serb house.

The damage done in the Petrč cemetery from the cut down forest and damaged graves is great.'

The parish priest of Mušutište near Suva Reka informed us of the following:

83 AHSB, Syn № 1832/1970.

84 AHSB, Syn № 1028/1971.

'On my part it has been several years that I have been informing you that children of Albanian nationality are attacking our woman when they visit the ruins of the church of St. Nicholas in Gornja Mahala. The children continue to carry out attacks on our people when they visit these ruins on May 21–22 and December 18–19 [the Transfer of the Relics of St. Nicholas and St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, respectively].'

Forwarding the above, we ask the Commission for Religious Affairs to do what is necessary to finally bring an end to these inhumane actions, such as the desecration of cemeteries. We note that we have been told by elderly men and women with sadness that not even during the time of Turkish rule were such things done when they visited the aforementioned church."

A transcript of this was forwarded to the Federal religions commission and the Commission for Religious Affairs of SR Serbia with the request that everything necessary be undertaken to protect our faithful from constant unpleasantries and harassment inflicted upon them by Albanians on the territory of Kosovo.[85]

Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren, by act № 514 from November 7, 1971, informed the Holy Synod of Bishops that he received the following report from the Administration of the church parish in Uroševac under № 46 from July 21, 1971:

"On July 12, 1971, the church in the village of Babljak dedicated to the Holy Trinity was broken into and on that occasion the chalice for Holy Communion valued at 800 dinars and change in the amount of 13 dinars was stolen.

On July 13, 1971, the church in the village of Štimlje dedicated to the Holy Archangel Michael was broken into and on that occasion the padlock on the front door was cut with a razor saw.

The sexton was unable to determine if anything from the church had been stolen.

On July 14, 1971, the church of the Most Holy Theotokos in Gornje Nerodimlje was broken into, on that occasion the entrance doors were damaged, a small polilei was broken, a copper basin and about 20 dinars of money were stolen.

We are informing you of the above for your information and further action.

The Secretariat for Internal Affairs in Uroševac has been informed of this in timely fashion and officials of same have been on the scene."

Forwarding the above report, we ask the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church to intercede with competent authorities to finally put a halt to this and similar occurrences. We will also write about this to the Provincial religions commission in Priština."[86]

[85] AHSB, Syn № 1028/zap. 168, Mar. 23, 1971.

[86] AHSB, Syn № 2888/1971.

The Year 1972

His Grace Bishop Pavle also wrote to the Holy Synod of Bishops:

The Administration of Visoki Dečani Monastery has sent me the following:

"It is my honor to inform the council of the theft of the monastery forest: as you are aware thefts are constantly occurring in state and monastery forests. At the end of last year and the beginning of this year theft reached its culmination. Fr. Grigorije was personally visiting the monastery forest every day with a student. Albanian peasants from Dečani, Crnobreg and Beleg are stealing on all sides. They are unselective about whether the location is next to the monastery itself or further away. Whatever they like, they take. One day before Christmas I caught five young men from Dečani (house of Zun Zog) right above the monastery where they had cut down five logs valued at 1,500.00 new dinars. Luckily, I managed to lure them to the monastery and took the logs. In exchange they are coming to the monastery forest every day and taking what they like. We succeeded in confiscating nine more logs, while they and others are stealing so much that it is impossible to prevent. They do not come alone but in groups of as many as 20 wagons together. The foresters are as powerless as the police. The authorities, too. An Albanian friend is offering to guard the monastery forest for 1,000.00 dinars a month. All he can do is determine that the theft occurred, like before, and he will certainly not betray the thieves. It is pointless to pay him for this service because we ourselves see and know that thefts are occurring.

While visiting the forest Fr. Georgije and I determined that the damage is 25,000.00 new dinars and every day it is grater. We know this because we sell the remaining lumber. We are trying to cut down as much as possible without the permission of the authorities because they are very reluctant to issue a permit to cut down a tree but on the other hand cannot stop theft. The words of monastery host Zmber Cacaj to His Grace Bishop Pavle are slowly becoming reality: "Whether you give us the forest or not, we will cut it down anyway." I am reporting this to you for your information but have absolutely no intention of complaining to the authorities about such incidents. The only possible approach is to remain silent and do what we must.

Let us leave this complaint in your archives and the monastery's archives, along with the countless ones from the Turkish period and the occupation."

I am forwarding the above report for your information with the note that we have not informed the authorities of the Province of Kosovo with it, adopting the note of the elder of the monastery that previous complaints have not helped in preventing theft."

The Holy Synod of Bishops acknowledged the information with regret and decided to send the commissions for

religious affairs of SR Serbia and SAP Kosovo a petition stating the following:[87]

"His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren, by act no 25 from January 24, 1972, forwarded a transcript of a report by the Administration of Visoki Dečani Monastery relating to organized, illegal timbering and theft of the monastery by the Albanian residents of the surrounding villages: Dečani, Crnobreg and Beleg.

We see from the report that this evil has become so prevalent that the Administration of the monastery is powerless to continue to protect the monastery forest from destruction. We are listing only a few examples:

- At the beginning of the month of January of this year, the elder of the monastery and another brother caught five young men from the house of Zun Zug who had cut down five timber logs valued at about 1,500.00 dinars.

- Theft is not being carried out by individuals but by groups with up to 20 horse-drawn wagons, so that it is impossible to prevent.

- It is further said that officials of the National police, foresters and others relevant to this matter are powerless to stop this evil.

- For orientation purposes and this assessment damages done to the Monastery just this year amount to 25,000.00 dinars.

With respect to the decision of the Holy Synod of Bishops under the above number and date, the Commission is asked to undertake necessary measures through its provincial officials to prevent the organized, illegal cutting down of the forest of Dečani Monastery."

On December 9, 1972, the Holy Synod of Bishops received from His Grace Bishop Pavle a copy of the petition he sent to the Commission for Religious Affairs of SAP Kosovo, stating the following:

"On more than one occasion in the past we have addressed the Commission for Religious Affairs of the province asking for protection of the law and the Orthodox Church, her faithful and her property. We are forced to do so yet again.

1. Back in the month of February of this year, unknown persons made a hole in the roof of the Orthodox church in the village of Vinarac near Kosovska Mitrovica and then proceeded to throw assorted trash into the interior. The competent parish priest reported this act to the police but the police did not find the perpetrator. After the church was cleaned, the roof repaired and the door reinforced, in June of this year the church was again damaged. The criminals removed the door and stole it, broke and destroyed the icon lamps, candleholders and tables. In the village of Vinarac, where the chapel is located, the residents are of Muslim religion, while 3–4 kilometers away there is a village of the same name inhabited by the Orthodox.

A similar thing occurred with the church of St. Paraskeva in the village of Dobrčan near Gnjilane. Unknown persons forced the door on the church open several times, entered inside and damaged it. When an iron door was installed, the criminals bent one iron in the window, pulled it out of its foundation, entered, destroyed three icon lamps, smashed the icon with a rock, shredded and scattered the drapes, vestments and service books, poured oil all over the church and outside on the west side and wrote slogans insulting the Serb nationality on the wall of the parish home.

In the yard of the Mladen Ugarević primary school in Prizren is the church of St. Nicholas and next to it a small building with a bell tower and a small room for church inventory. The small building was completely destroyed, the roof broken into in several places, the ceiling floor, windows and door completely destroyed, and the bell tower also destroyed.

More than 10,000.00 dinars of damage was done. We informed the Secretariat for Internal Affairs in Prizren of this in writing half a year ago.

2. In the cemetery of the village of Šipolje near Kosovska Mitrovica during the course of the summer in 1972 young men of Albanian nationality singing insulting songs against the Serbs destroyed about fifteen gravestones. The same thing occurred recently in the village of Srbovac near Kosovska Mitrovica, where eight gravestones were destroyed.

The situation is the same in the cemetery in Orahovac, where not only were wooden grave crosses broken but also seven gravestones made of marble, two of cement and 14 stone crosses. In the village of Opteruša near Orahovac three stone crosses were broken on the graves and all wooden crosses except three. In the village of Retimlje near Orahovac the wooden crosses were all broken and the graves were defecated upon.

Submitting the Commission for Religious Issues of the Province this petition against the inhuman and unbrotherlike actions against the Serbian Orthodox Church, we ask the Commission to finally do something to put an end to this evil."

The Holy Synod of Bishops sent a transcript of this report to Džemal Bijedić, the president of the Federal Executive Council, as well as to the Commission for Religious Affairs of SR Serbia.[88]

The Year 1973

On January 10, 1973, His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren by act № 12 informed the Holy Synod of Bishops that he had received the following petition from the Municipal Assembly of Suva Reka:

"The administrator of the monastery of the Holy Trinity near Mušutište has submitted a report to this council of the following content:

[87] AHSB, Syn № 738/zap. 74/72.

[88] AHSB, Syn № 3675/zap. 775, Dec. 12, 1972.

'On December 5, 1972 several Albanians from the village of Djinovci entered the forest of the monastery of the Holy Trinity and cut down nine trees. On that day I was in Suva Reka on business. The sisters tried to prevent them from taking the logs but they swore at them and nevertheless took them. I addressed the president of the Socialist League of the village of Mušutište, Reša Bitići. He said I needed to tell him the names of the people involved. As I did not know the names, I let the matter pass, hoping that it would not be repeated.

But on Sunday, December 31, 1972, when I went with three sisters to the church to take communion, three Albanians from Djinovci came and by noon they had cut down 22 (twenty-two) trees in the monastery forest. Nuns Heruvima and Veronika with novice Milica went out and told them that the timber belonged to the monastery. In response they swore and insulted their Serbian mothers, saying that this belonged to them and not the church and began to pull the timber. The sisters sat on the logs to prevent them from taking them. One of the men, soldier on leave Ismet Rasimi Adžijaj, pushed nun Heruvima and she fell. Ćazim Rasimi pushed nun Veronika. At that point Galip, a worker in Progres from Selogražde came on his own business and said: Ćazim, the timber is the church's and don't argue with women. At that point I also arrived. They took the timber and came back to get what remained at night.'

Submitting the above to the Municipal Assembly in Suva Reka, we appeal to the same to undertake necessary measures to put an end to the violence against the property of the Serbian Church and protect the nuns of the aforementioned monastery from aggression from any perpetrator because they, like all other citizens of this country, have the right to expect this. The perpetrators of the violence should be punished and the monastery compensated for damages."

The Holy Synod of Bishops submitted a transcript of this, too, to the President of the Federal Executive Council, Džemal Bijedić, with a request for the protection of the holy shrines of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its nuns in this part of our homeland."[89]

In the same meeting the Holy Synod of Bishops discussed the petition of His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren № 11 from June 10, 1973, stating the following:

'The Serbian Orthodox church parish in Preševo by act № 1 from January 15, 1973, has forwarded the following:

"The Serbian Orthodox Church dedicated to St. Demetrius in Preševo has a complex of forests, orchards and some tillable land around the church. This forest has been maintained and protected for decades from timbering, it was even protected from the occupation government, because the importance of it for the town was understood, since it represents the lungs of the town.

The church on its part through its delegates is attempting to protect this forest but since the lumberjacks are armed and carry out their merciless cutting night and day, i.e. every day it is absolutely impossible to fend off this menace, and there is no support from state officials, administrators or forestry officials.

On numerous occasions I have appealed for protection to the addressee and other officials but no support or protection were given and consequently clashes occur daily because of cutting of the forest and inflicting of damage to this property, which is of particular importance to the town itself. Many of the lumberjacks are cutting trees in the forest every day to sell them and have found this as a source of their income.

We note that representatives of the Church were personally received the president of SO Preševo on December 13, 1972, and received promises of help and protection but all they received were promises and nothing was done.

The representatives of the church informed the Police Station in Preševo on December 20, 1972, December 24, 1972, and January 5, 1973 but the Police Station also did nothing toward protecting the forest from inflicted damages.

The damage done is enormous and exceeds the sum of 50,000.00 dinars, which can be established by forming a commission that would go out to the scene and see the wasteland that has resulted.

Of the numerous lumberjacks we list the following:

1. Ibraimović Jusena Sami from Preševo, who cut down trees more than 20 times,

2. Elezović Šukrija Zećir from Preševo,

3. Šabani Afza Veduš "Damuk" from Preševo, caught six times,

4. Šabani Afza Asip "Damuk" from Preševo, caught five times,

5. Šabani Ajdina Ramiz "Damuk" from Preševo, caught twice,

6. Šabani Zijadina Selajdin from Preševo, Karpuševa Street, who cuts down trees every year and was caught doing so again on January 9, 1973,

7. Bajram N., butcher from Preševo, who cut down trees repeatedly,

8. Bećiri Adem "Alimetski" from Preševo, who cut down trees repeatedly,

9. Bektaši Kurteš from Preševo, who cut down trees repeatedly,

10. Feta N., miller from Preševo, who cut down trees repeatedly,

11. Cvetković, Arsić Stanimir from Preševo,

12. Lilić Stojadin from Preševo,

13. Edeklerović Dragan from Preševo, who cut down trees together with Bajram N., the butcher,

14. Unknown person from the village of Mučibabe, whose name we have not learned, also cuts down trees repeatedly,

15. Agim N. from the village of Čukarke, who pulled a gun while cutting down trees on a church representative, when he was caught and his gun has been confiscated,

[89] AHSB, Syn № 164/zap. 48, Feb. 6, 1973.

16. Elmija N. from Kurbalija, who has 20 goats, two donkeys and two mares, , who cut down trees repeatedly and additionally removed the fence from a fenced field near the forest planted with corn and destroyed the crops on it with his livestock although the keeping of goats is prohibited.

On January 9, 1973 the priest from this church Stanimir Matić caught forester Stojadin Radenković with lumberjack Salajdin Šabani known as "Pamuk" from Preševo, who attacked the priest with an ax. This man cuts down trees every day and does this to sell the cut logs.

All the persons who carry out illegal lumbering and destroy the wealth of this city are armed with various weapons, so that it is impossible to resist them or overcome them barehanded. We consider it to be in the interests of our society and our own town that this forest be preserved, which has been guarded for centuries and not destroyed and which is now being destroyed before the eyes of the authorities and administration without anything being done although the importance of it for climatic conditions, protection from erosion, etc. is well-known.

Therefore, we are also addressing the addressee in writing and asking:

That urgent measures be undertaken to protect this forest from destruction and that those causing damage are prosecuted.

It is our honor to inform the Holy Synod of Bishops for its information that an act of this content has been sent to the Commission for Religious Affairs of SR Serbia in Belgrade, the Secretariat of the Municipal Committee of the League of Communists in Preševo and the Department for Internal Affairs of SO Preševo."

The Holy Synod of Bishops decided to send a transcript of this to the President of the SR Serbia Assembly, Mr. Dragoslav Marković, and to the Commission for Religious Affairs of SR Serbia with the request that the emphasized problem be given lengthy consideration and a stop be put to barbaric acts toward the property of the Serbian Orthodox Church.[90]

At the same meeting the Holy Synod of Bishops discussed the petition of His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren № 11 from June 10, 1973, which he sent to the SO Prizren:

"Three elderly Orthodox Serbs, residents of the village of Koriša, came on January 8, 1973, to the office of this council and gave the following statement:

'Every year, on the second day of Christmas, we have gone to the monastery of St. Mark in the village of Kabaša, and we did the same today. We took the key to unlock the church but when we arrived the key was not necessary because the door on the church was broken, the iconostasis, icons, choir stand, crosses, vestments and all the inventory set on fire and burned. The large iron candleholder was bent, the remnants of burned books scattered. We did not move anything, merely lit candles and returned.

We are submitting this report so that necessary measures can be undertaken for those guilty to be found and this monastery to be protected.'

Forwarding the above to the municipal assembly, we ask the Assembly to undertake appropriate measures to put an end to the violence against this monastery, where all the living quarters and the church were also destroyed by the residents of Kabaša during World War I. Now in a time of peace the act of its demolition and destruction is being continued, whether by the residents of the same village or someone else. Certainly an investigation needs to determine this. Thus, we ask that an investigation be conducted, the guilty found and punished, and the monastery compensated for the damage done."

The Year 1974

In a meeting on February 5, 1974, the Holy Synod of Bishops acknowledged the information in a copy of a petition sent by His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren under № 10 from January 4, 1974, to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo in Priština regarding two cases of robbery in the church of St. Nicholas in Prizren and the church of St. Elijah in Vučitrn.

At the same time, it asked His Grace Bishop Pavle to inform the Holy Synod of Bishops of the results of its intervention."[91]

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren then informed the Holy Synod of Bishops about attacks and permanent displacement of the Serbian people in the period from April 1, 1973, to April 1974.

"In addition to forcible entries and destruction of churches and church buildings, there are frequent attacks on the property and forests of monasteries and churches. When a sister from the monastery of Devič went to chase cattle out of the monastery meadow, Albanian shepherds showered her with rocks, injuring her on the head so that she was forced to seek the help of a physician. Here this is not a rare occurrence. On Christmas Eve Muslim Roma attacked the priest and the faithful in the church courtyard with rocks and mud, and then the children who were returning from church with Yule logs to their homes (in Vučitrn).

The permanent displacement of our population remains a current issue. In some places it is more and in some less discernable but it is present everywhere in the Diocese, both in places where it is mixed with Albanians and where it is mixed with the Muslim population. I will cite from the report of a parish priest from the area of Gnjilane to give an idea of the extent. A village of 176 Orthodox households today has a tenth of that or only 17; another of 48 households now had 18; a third of 61 households today has none as everyone has moved away… and so on. The maintenance of existing churches in such locations would be difficult

[90] AHSB, Syn № 877/zap. 140, Mar. 6, 1973.

[91] AHSB, Syn № 304/zap. 45/74.

even if no one was violently destroying them. As it is, it is completely impossible when not only locks and padlocks but iron bars in windows are cut and pulled out.

All other and similar difficulties are well known from earlier reports and there is no reason to repeat them. There are no changes for the better."[92]

The Year 1977

Bishop Pavle, by act № 8 from January 26, 1977, sent the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the President of the Municipal Assembly of Prizren, stating the following:

"Yesterday, January 25, 1977, at about 5:30 p.m. I went to the post office to send a letter. When I was next to the terrace of the Terande Hotel, a youth 15–16 years of age ran up to me, pulled me by the beard and shouted: "Priest!" In a moment I pushed him away and he ran into the hotel terrace. I continued on but when I entered the post office building, I felt someone hitting me on the back of the head. Turning around, I saw the same youth running out of the post office building and crossing the street toward Bankos. There were several youths at the entrance to the post office but no one would tell me who was the youth.

It has become a regular occurrence when I am walking in the street for individual children and youth to call me jinx, calamity and with more serious derogatory words that I cannot repeat, and to periodically throw rocks and mud. Other priests are also complaining about this both in Prizren and the vicinity, and we cannot pass in peace, especially down certain streets.

I wish to draw your attention, comrade President, and I ask that such actions, unbefitting for a citizen of this country be prevented, and that peace and freedom of movement be ensured for us, too, like for every other citizen.

Petitions of the same content were sent to the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo and the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia.

On February 8, 1977, the Holy Synod of Bishops acknowledged this information with regret and decided on its part to send a letter to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SR Serbia to express its shock and great surprise at these occurrences. How could it be that in a country of law and order and a competent security service whose successes are praised in writing and speeches, members of the church could experience such a thing?

"At the same time, the Holy Synod of Bishops joined the request of His Grace Bishop Pavle that such occurrences be prevented, and that a peaceful life and freedom of movement be ensured for Serbian Orthodox bishops and priests, as it is for the other citizens of our country."[93]

The Year 1978

On October 18, 1978, His Grace Bishop Pavle wrote (№ 699) the SO Prizren the following:

At the beginning of the month of January 1973, we informed the Secretariat that unknown persons had broken down the door on the church of the monastery of St. Mark in the village of Kabaša, burned the iconostasis, icons, choir stand, crosses, vestments and other inventory in the church, bent the large iron candleholder and scattered the remnants of the burned books. We asked the Secretariat to undertake necessary measures so that now, in a time of peace, a halt is put the violence against this monastery, where the residents of the village of Kabaša in World War I and World War II had destroyed all the living quarters and damaged the church, and after World War II only the church was restored.

A year later (on January 25, 1974), we asked the Secretariat for a report on the results of the investigation. We received act KU № 151/73 from January 29, 1974, where it is said that all necessary measures have been undertaken to find the perpetrator of this action, and that the matter is still in process because the perpetrator has still not been found.

During the course of 1974 in the aforementioned church we repaired the iconostasis and instead of wooden doors installed iron ones, doing thus what was in our power to protect the church from possible forcible entry.

However, on October 16, 1978, we were informed that the iron doors on the church had been forced open, and inside the church the iconostasis completely destroyed and broken. The president of this Council, accompanied by one priest from Prizren and an Orthodox resident of the village of Koriša, went to the monastery of St. Mark and saw that the lock on the iron door was broken, the doors open, the iron bars on the southeast window bent and the wooden shutters broken, and the iconostasis completely destroyed and broken. Obviously the perpetrator was not looking for money or anything to steal but did this solely out of a desire to desecrate, damage and destroy. Certainly encouraged by the fact that the guilty person was never discovered five years ago, he decided to complete the destruction to the end. We put another lock on the door and locked it, while everything inside has been left as we found it behind the perpetrator. The Secretariat can see this for itself on the scene.

It is our hope that the Secretariat will manage to find the perpetrators this time.

Enclosure: Photograph of the interior of the church after forcible entry, October 16, 1978."

[92] AHSB, Syn № 1249/1947.

[93] AHSB, Syn № 327/zap. 38/77.

The Holy Synod of Bishops forwarded this to the commissions for relations with religious communities of the Federal Executive Council and the Executive Councils of the Assembly of SR Serbia and of the SAP Kosovo and Metohija.[94]

All three commissions were requested to intervene to find the perpetrators and apply appropriate legal measures against them, and put a halt to this destruction with the note that an investigation of the same crime committed in the same holy shrine in 1973 had not been resolved to today (October 31, 1978).

To this the Holy Synod of Bishops received only one reply, for the first time from the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo and Metohija (08 № 08–35/78) as follows:

"In connection with your act № 2185 zap. 635 from October 31, 1978, regarding the petition of His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren № 699 from October 18, 1978, which this Commission has also received, we wish to inform you that by our act 08 № 08–31/78 from November 1, 1978, we have intervened with both the provincial and the Municipal Secretariat for Internal Affairs Prizren with the request that appropriate measures be undertaken in order to find the perpetrator of the forcible entry into the church of the monastery of St. Mark in the village of Kabaša near Prizren, as well as that legal measures be undertaken against same."

His Grace Bishop Pavle by act 772 from December 17, 1978, sent the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo and Metohija, as follows:

"At the beginning of the month of September of this year (1978) unknown persons came with a tractor and wagon to the water mill of Devič Monastery, began to stones from the walls and load them into the wagon. It was about 7:00 p.m. Abbess Paraskeva from the monastery immediately informed the Police station in Srbica and two policemen came to the scene but the thieves had already run away.

In Donji Drenovac near Gnjilane, on October 30, 1978, the church was forcibly entered and 300.00 dinars and some non-monetary donations taken from it. The same thing happened in the village of Straža on December 8, 1978, which was also robbed on the money they found and [non-monetary] donations. Both robberies were reported to the Secretariat for Internal Affairs in Gnjilane. To this day the perpetrators have not been found. The church in the village of Dobrotin near Lipljan was also forcibly entered in September 1978. The perpetrator broke the iron bars on the church window and thus entered inside. He took the money he found there and donations and left the same way. The competent priest immediately reported the break in to the police Station in Lipljan. However, from there they sent him to Janjevo because the village of Dobrotin belongs to that region. The policeman on duty in Janjevo said that he had no one to send and told the priest the police from Lipljan should do it. In Lipljan they repeated the same thing; it was not in their region.

We appeal to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of SAP Kosovo to take action through competent officials so that peace and security is also ensured for us, the Orthodox. We note that the Commission has been notified numerous times regarding the damage constantly being done to the property of the monastery of Devič, and the attacks on the sisters and visitors. I have forwarded the first paragraph which talks about Devič Monastery to the SO Srbica."

For your information, the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SR Serbia has been advised of this matter.[95]

Bishop Pavle also informed the Holy Synod of Bishops about Albanian attacks during the period from April 1977 to April 1978.

"In Vučitrn the Albanian neighbors, among them some teachers, occupied the part of the church meadow nearest to their respective houses, put up fences, planted fruit trees without any of them paying a single dinar. We tried to come to a peaceful agreement with them: they agreed to pay but postpone from year to year. We addressed the president of the Municipal Assembly. If that does not help, we will address the court.

In Binča Monastery, after the last war, in order to pull beams from the mountains for state buildings, a road was cut 2 meters distance from a medieval church with over 20 square meters of old frescos. Last year the village decided to solicit contributions to expand and repair the road. The monastery contributed 5,000 dinars in contributions. I also asked the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments and the religious commission to move the road further from the old church, which has cracked, and the north wall has had to be propped up with a support. Since the old road has been occupied by an Albanian neighbor, the monastery offered him its land in compensation so that the road could pass along the old route somewhat further from the worn church. All in vain, the road stayed 2 meters distance from the church. I asked that the fountain, built after World War I to replace an older one, remain on the same side of the road. They used a bulldozer to push it to the opposite side. The damage done to the church by the movement of bulldozers on the road next to it and the passing of heavy trucks, because there are plans to open a quartz mine nearby to meet the needs of a glass factory, can easily be discerned even by a non-expert (…).

94 AHSB, Syn № 2185/zap. 635, Oct. 31, 1978.

95 AHSB, Syn № 2643/78-zap 23, Feb. 2, 1979.

Pressure on the faithful is being applied in various ways, sometimes open, sometimes through anonymous letters and threats not to be engaged with the church, not to seek restoration and the repair of church facilities. Because of the permanent dislocation of our population in the parish of Podujevo, which 20 years ago had over 1,000 households, now there are barely 300, and it is over 30 km. from Priština; we have to subsidize the parish priest with 900 dinars per month. We achieved this by reaching an agreement among all the priests to give 20 dinars per month each and the rest comes from the diocese Executive Council. In the administrative district of Peć some parishes have been redrawn and joined with others. This permanent dislocation remains our greatest difficulty and there is no end to it in sight.

Use of derogatory language directed at priests is a regular occurrence in both cities and villages. But attacks with rocks and other objects are not rare, either. The priest in the village of Mušutište was attacked by older Albanian children throwing rocks when he went to visit his orchard, and he is still going all the way to Kruševac for specialist and rehabilitation medical treatment."[96]

The Year 1979

In a meeting on September 10, 1979, the Holy Synod of Bishops discussed the petition of His Grace Bishop Pavle (№ 302 from July 23, 1979), which states the following:

"At the beginning of the month of February of this year, we informed the Commission about an incident involving 11 youths of Albanian nationality who ran around Gorioč Monastery shouting 'Priest!' at the monastery elder along with other vulgar and swear words. Harassment and inflicting of damage to the monastery is still occurring: chickens are stolen, timber is cut down in the monastery forest in the middle of the day. At the end of July of this year at 8:00 p.m. one young man dared to enter the monastery barn and tied up the monastery donkey. When Abbot Sava went to the barn to check on the livestock, the youth pushed Fr. Sava so that he fell, and then ran away.

In Sokolica Monastery near Kosovska Mitrovica, two unknown persons attempted to remove the monastery bull from the church courtyard in the middle of the day. This was repeated a few days later. Then one day at the end of May at about 2:00 p.m. someone set fire to a stack of monastery hay and over 1,000 kg. burned completely.

The sisters of the monastery of Devič have complained, orally and in writing, to the Municipal Assembly and the police station in Srbica that from the beginning of the spring almost every day the shepherds from Vojvodići, especially Batalovi and the son of Sinan, are doing damage, breaking fruit trees, pulling up crops in the garden, frequently driving the monastery sheep far from the monastery and there milking them, stealing eggs and chickens, attacking the sisters with rocks, accosting them with vulgar and swear words, making chauvinistic statements chasing them from the monastery and the area 'because they say this is theirs.'

We again appeal to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of SAP Kosovo asking that a halt be put once and for all to such actions which undermine good relations among the members of our two religions and nationalities, as well as between the Orthodox Church and state authorities because they essentially undermine 'brotherhood and unity,' the foundation on which our country should rest and the guarantee of peace and freedom for all its members."

It was decided on this occasion that the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SR Serbia and the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo be asked to intervene to protect Serbian Orthodox monks and nuns from attacks and enable them to live and work in peace in their monasteries.

The Commission for Relations with Religious Communities was also informed of the matter for its information."[97]

In the same meeting the Holy Synod of Bishops also discussed the report of His Grace Bishop Pavle № 504 from August 7, 1979, stating the following:

"We have received this report from the Administration of the monastery of the Holy Trinity:

'On Saturday, August 4, 1979, in the courtyard of the church of the Holy Savior in Mušutište, Sister Efimija and I brought two wagons of coarse gravel with the monastery tractor to fence in the courtyard in accordance with the approval of the diocese Executive Council from Prizren № 334 from May 18, 1977. When we brought the third load neighbor Rahman Šalja came by and told us not to unload the gravel there because it did not belong to the church but was, he said, our meadow. There was never a church there, he said, you just brought rocks there and proclaimed there was a church. We will bring a bulldozer from Suva Reka to level all this. He attacked me with coarse and swear words, saying: You are from Serbia, you have nothing here, go to Serbia. He took a shovel I had in my hand and waved it threateningly. We returned the tractor to the monastery. Today, August 6 of the current year, when I passed next to the courtyard of the Holy Savior, there was no gravel anywhere, someone had taken everything in just one day.

We inform you of the above appealing for the protection of the law for us so that we can do our work in peace like other citizens.'

The Holy Synod of Bishops treated this case like the former (by writing to the Commissions of the Federal Executive Council and the Executive Councils of SR Serbia and SAP Kosovo)."[98]

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96 AHSB, Syn № 969 and 1299/1978.

97 AHSB, Syn № 1599/zap. 401/79.

98 AHSB, Syn № 1683/zap. 402/79.

The Year 1980

Bishop Pavle informed the Holy Synod of Bishops about the suffering and persecution of the Serbian people from April 1, 1980 to April 1, 1981:

"When I arrived in the Diocese of Raška and Prizren 23 years ago, I knew I would not be welcomed there with paths strewn with flowers but with difficulties of various kinds. In these 23 years there have been difficulties aplenty but it seems to me they have never been greater than those we have experienced last year and at the beginning of this year. While the Holy Assembly of Bishops was still meeting last year, we had an earthquake, which also damaged three churches in poor villages, which were difficult to maintain let alone to repair after an earthquake. One of them, over 100 years old, had just been renovated. Now the dome, which cracked in the earthquake, needs to be destroyed and rebuilt, and the church reinforced with iron bands. And everything has been completely exhausted.

Two seminarians, Milorad Sredojević and Ljubo Milošević, were attacked on the first day of Pentecost, May 25, 1980, near the seminary (in Prizren) by Albanian youths who cut them on their arms and backs with a knife and glass from bottles broken for that purpose. When these students were in the hospital an inspector from SUP visited them and took their statements. They were also called to give statements before the criminal justice and in the Municipal Court, and a trial date was scheduled in the Municipal Court.

Only three days after this occurred, on May 28, 1980, a young man attacked Protopresbyter Milutin Timotijević, a professor at the same seminary, and during his fall, he dislocated his wrist and broke his upper arm (...). A male and a female teacher (both Serbs) were fired from their jobs for their religious views. Moreover, an Albanian forcing his cattle to pass through monastery property was reprimanded by a sister from the monastery whom he then beat with a stick; moreover, the monastery forest is being constantly cut down illegally, thus in just one day 64 trees were cut down in one monastery, and ten days later 14 more. Among those cutting down the monastery forest there is a teacher, etc. Finally, these most recent events involving demonstrations in Priština, Uroševac, Podujevo, Kosovska Mitrovica, Glogovac, Vučitrn and the difficulties arising therefrom.

Presenting these and similar difficulties, for years I have begged the authorities to put an end to intimidation, chauvinist diatribes and terror against our faithful, clergy, monks and nuns, which are causing confusion, unrest and insecurity, and consequently our faithful are leaving. Usually the answer I got was that these departures are a result of increasingly rapid urbanization and economic issues—the search for a better working place and salary, employment and education of children, etc. I would say that these causes have their role in displacement but as something normal in our times, they are not what concerns us nor the reason why we are appealing to them for protection. What is bad and concerning is the inimical pressure that is being applied systematically. The response has usually been that break ins and robberies are also being carried out in mosques, and that provocations are the acts of individual hooligans and aggressors who exist in every environment and every nation. Sometimes the answer was reducible to the assertion that the organization of these actions could only be discerned through the eyes of Serbian chauvinism. It is of small benefit to us that now we have public admission and writing about 'organized enemy activities by certain groups with explicitly Albanian nationalist and irredentist intentions, directed against the freedom, independence and integrity of our country'. These activities did not begin now, nor have they been created for this occasion.

Because of these difficulties that we have experienced for years, last year the Holy Assembly of Bishops charged the Holy Synod of Bishops with sending a delegation to the President of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo to demonstrate the pressure that is being carried out in this province toward the faithful, the institutions and property of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and seek intervention so this can finally be stopped. The Holy Synod of Bishops appointed His Grace Bishop Stefan of Žiča, Bishop Irinej of Niš and myself to this delegation, and also asked us to prepare and give to the President a memorandum. As early as last year, through the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities in Priština, we have tried orally and in writing to be received. However, the meeting has not occurred because we were informed that the President does not have time to receive us (...).

From the reports of all the bishop's deputies, we see that the permanent displacement of our population is continuing. For example, about 100 households moved out of Kosovo Polje last year. Only a few houses remain in the village of Petrovce near Gnjilane, which was purely Serb until the last war. The church is still standing but how to maintain it and protect it from unintentional ruin. What to do to stop the permanent displacement? The latest events with regard to student demonstrations do not appear to be creating an atmosphere encouraging the displacement to stop."[99]

Acknowledging this information with regret, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided to send a photocopy of the report to the commission for relations with religious communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of Serbia and the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo."[100]

A letter from the Holy Synod of Bishops to Fahriu Oručio, № 2244/zap. 695 from October 21, 1980, said the following:

"We do not wish to give you more problems in addition to your numerous duties and tasks but circumstances force us to appeal to you and make you aware of the following:

[99] AHSB, Syn № 887 and 1115/1981.

[100] AHSB, Syn № 1480/zap. 496, July 1, 1980.

Many priests, monks and nuns, as well as Orthodox faithful on the territory of SAP Kosovo are constantly complaining about the violence being done to them by their co citizens of Albanian nationality, and the damage that is constantly being done to our churches, church buildings, crops and forests.

The Bishop of Raška and Prizren and the Holy Synod of Bishops have forwarded complaints to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo in Priština, as well as to the Commission of the Executive Councils of SR Serbia and the Federation, with the request that the members of the Serbian Orthodox Church be ensured peace and safety. The highest representation of our church, the Holy Assembly of Bishops, has also written a letter to SFRJ President Josip Broz Tito when he was alive. He received the petition and responded that he would "do everything possible to prevent disturbances and illegal actions, and to ensure the free life and integrity of every citizen, and the security of their property." In this response he also wrote: "I will forward your letter, together with my views on the necessity of undertaking decisive measures to protect legality, to the Executive Council of the Assembly of SR Serbia."

After such complaints the disturbances would ease up for a time only to appear again in another area in an even more serious form. We are convinced that these difficulties are largely the cause of the permanent departure of the Orthodox population from the territory of SAP Kosovo because it feels threatened there.

We will list only a few of the difficulties that have been reoccurring in the past ten or so years.

In Prizren next to the church of St. Nicholas near the Mladen Ugarević School there was a building with two chambers and a bell tower. The building and the bell tower was completely destroyed by children and adults despite the fact that we pointed this out to the authorities and complained both orally and in writing for several years. They broke in through the doors, the windows and the roof of that small church and we were forced to built a cement roof, and to put iron bars on the windows which were again broken into, even though there are no regular services in the church and it is impossible that they are breaking in to look for money. This motivation to damage and destroy is even more clearly expressed on the church of the monastery of St. Mark in Prizren where services are held only once a year. The monastery was destroyed in both World War I and World War II—its residences were completely destroyed, and the roof on the church. After the war only the church was repaired, and a cement roof was built. But unknown persons broke in through the door back in 1973, setting fire and partially destroying the icons, vestments, books and other church items in the church. Five years later, although the wooden doors were replaced with iron ones, the door was destroyed and everything that remained in the church was completely destroyed. The same thing occurred with the small church in the village of Vinarac near Kosovska Mitrovica where unknown persons broke through the roof and filled the church with rubbish. When the trash was removed, the roof repaired and the door reinforced, the little church was again damaged, the doors removed and stolen, the lamps, candleholders and tables broken and destroyed.

The same happened to the small church of St. Paraskeva in the village of Dobrčan near Gnjilane. On several occasions the doors were forced open, the lamps destroyed, the icons smashed with rocks, the drapes, vestments and liturgical books shredded, oil spilled, and graffiti written on the walls with messages insulting Serb nationality.

The churches in the village of Straža near Gnjilane, Štimlje near Uroševac and Dojnice near Prizren were also broken into several times.

Even the cemeteries are not being left in peace. In the village of Šipolje near Kosovska Mitrovica young men of Albanian nationality singing derogatory songs against the Serbs destroyed about 15 gravestones. The same thing occurred in the village of Sibovac near Kosovska Mitrovica, in Buzovik near Kosovska Vitina, Štimlje near Uroševac, Opteruša and Retimlje near Orahovica, in Prizren itself and in the courtyard of the monastery in Peć. The cover on the tomb of philanthropist Simo Igumanov was also smashed near the monastery of St. Mark near Prizren.

Damage is being done every day to the garden and crops of Devič Monastery, its orchard and vineyard; oxen are driven into the crops and when the livestock is captured and tied up the owners release them by force swearing and using coarse language. The sisters of this monastery have been attacked with rocks and beaten several times; they are constantly attacked with words and chauvinist statements to get lost from here because this is not Serb, etc.

In Sokolica Monastery two unknown men tried to steal the monastery bull. A few days after that a haystack of over 1,000 kg. belonging to the monastery was set on fire and everything destroyed. Priests were attacked with rocks near Kosovska Mitrovica, Vučitrn, and a monk from Gorioč Monastery was chased by 11 young men of Albanian nationality around the monastery as they shouted, "Priest!" and used impolite and curse words. Visitors to Devič Monastery and the small church in the village of Mušutište near Suva Reka were attacked with rocks. A few years ago, a young Albanian man hit Bishop Pavle in the street in Prizren.

The forests of the monasteries of Devič, Gorioč, Dečani, the Holy Trinity, Binča, in the cemetery of the village of Petrč near Peć are being cut down every day. Just recently five Albanians in the forest of the monastery of the Holy Trinity cut down 64 trees and two others cut down 14 trees with a machine saw.

Unrest is constantly being injected through writing of graffiti against Serbs, threatening statements, singing of chauvinist songs. In the monastery of the Holy Trinity near

Prizren an Albanian man well on in years was driving his sheep through the door of the monastery. The sisters told him not to do this because how would he like it if someone drove sheep through his yard. When he arrived the next day to do the same thing and a sister told him not to do it, he hit her repeatedly with a stick so she was forced to go see a physician. Afterwards he reconciled with the sisters and promised to never do this again.

We will also point out the two most recent incident: an attack on students of the seminary in Prizren during which two of them were cut on the hands and back with a knife and broken bottles, as the Municipal Court in Prizren has been notified, and an attack on a professor of the same seminary, priest Milutin Timotijević, which resulted in a broken right arm and other injuries. Also an attack and violence against visitors to the monastery of the Holy Trinity (...).

We are therefore forced, respected Mr. President, to appeal to you and to ask for most energetic measures to prevent illegal actions by individuals and provide our faithful, monks, nuns and priests on the territory of SAP Kosovo with peace and security, as well as the protection of their property. We believe that by doing so we are not asking or expecting anything exceptional in a country based on constitutional principles which suffered such heavy casualties during the two world wars for peace, freedom and brotherhood of all peoples."

He was then asked to receive members of a delegation from the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church comprised of Bishops Pavle of Raška and Prizren, Stefan of Žiča and Irinej of Niš.[101]

An answer to this arrived from the Commission for Religions of the Executive Council of SAP Kosovo, № 08.1403/80 from February 23, 1981, signed by the president of the Commission Rustem Bejta, saying the following:

"In regard to your correspondence number 2244/zap. 365 from October 21, 1980, forwarded to this Commission in order to arrange a meeting between the president of the Executive Council of SAP Kosovo and a delegation of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, we wish to inform you that the president of the Executive Council of SAP Kosovo, despite his best wishes and readiness to do so, is unable to receive your delegation due to other business that cannot be postponed. It has therefore been agreed that the delegation is to be received by a member of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo and president of the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities Rustem Bejta, together with the secretary of the same Commission, Golub Gojković.

We hope that the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church will accept the aforementioned justification.

If the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church accepts this recommendation, we can subsequently agree on a place and time where the delegation can be received."[102]

At its regular meeting the Holy Assembly of Bishops discussed the report of the Holy Synod of Bishops that the president of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo was "not able to receive" the delegation of the Holy Synod of Bishops and discuss certain problems relating to church institutions and the faithful of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo, and in this regard reached the following decision:

"Since the President of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo 'did not have the time' to receive a delegation from the Holy Synod of Bishops and discuss certain problems relating to the present conditions of institutions and the faithful of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo, a prepared memorandum covering this material is to be sent by mail.

A copy of the memorandum is to be sent to the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Federal and Executive Council of the Assembly of SR Serbia, and to all Bishops in our country."[103]

The Year 1981

On March 17, 1981, the Holy Synod of Bishops acknowledged with deep regret the official notification that on March 16 of the same year at about 3:00 a.m. a fire broke out in the living quarters of the Stauropigial monastery of the Peć Patriarchate, and that the building had burned down with the entire inventory except the treasury which the nuns, with the help of other people, managed to save."[104]

Priest Slavko Božić wrote:

"On March 16, 1981, in the morning, i.e. the Monday following the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the old monastery living quarters in the holy Lavra of the monastery of the Peć Patriarchate was destroyed by fire. The residence was 63 meters long and two stories high. The entire surface area was approximately 2,000 square meters. The winter chapel with all church trappings and liturgical books (a set of Menaia, two Srbljaks, an Octoechos, etc.) perished in it, as did all the rooms and all the furniture, the workshops for knitting, sowing, preparation of icons on wood, completely equipped and with material for crafting, as well as the warehouse with monographs of this monastery (in four languages), postcards, candles, religious books and valuable souvenirs. Luckily, the monastery treasury was saved.

In the fire that appeared the night of March 16 at 3:30 a.m., the old residence in the Peć Patriarchate burned down. In the 'official statement' published the following day, it

[101] AHSB, Syn № 2244/1980.

[102] AHSB, Syn № 430/1981.

[103] AHSB, Syn № 1092/1981.

[104] ASHB, Syn № 569/zap. 141/81.

was said that 'the fire apparently broke out due to improper electrical installations, chimneys not built according to regulations and attachments to a hard-fuel stove'. (Later, the electrical installations were eliminated as a possible cause for the fire, and expert analyses and other evidence also eliminated the chimneys.)

That morning the monastery slept a deep sleep, only the sisters on duty on the estate were awake to milk the cows and complete other tasks before the beginning of daily services. The first to notice the fire was brother Djordje from Devič Monastery. He informed Abbess Paraskeva from Devič, who also happened to be there that night.

In the meanwhile a horrible drama was being played out in the residence between the awakened and frightened nuns and the wall of fire. Sister Haritina first noticed the fire and in panicked fear awoke the nuns and syngelos Damaskin Davidović, a professor at the Seminary in Prizren, who happened to be sleeping there that night. While they saved items from the patriarch's room and salon, Sister Haritina called the firefighting service from Peć. And the firefighters arrived but there was no water in the tank of the first fire engine, while the second fire engine broke down on the way to the monastery. The fire was now raging and there was a danger that the electrical wiring would make matters worse so they used the fuse box to turn off the power. In the dark and panic, no one knew what to do anymore and on top that the narrow hallways packed with things created even greater chaos. Seeing that the first fire engine had no water, Sister Haritina called the police in Peć. When she stepped out of the residence into the yard, she saw that the fire was also burning in the middle of the building. "The fire also appeared above the knitting workshop, some 40 m from the first observed flames, and there was no fire between the two points. The central fire was much stronger and it spread through the center of the building."

At 4:30 a.m. the firefighters began to take more effective action. "The third fire engine," said Sister Haritina, "arrived only when the fire in the center of the residence had grown very strong, at about 5:00 a.m.—very late. The fire engine that throws water in a broad stream arrived at about 7:30 a.m. By then the new residence was also on fire."

No one was thinking about saving things anymore, because nothing could be saved; they worked on saving the treasury and elderly and immobile persons.

The room of the elderly Dionisije was cloaked in smoke and the flames lapped at the dry attic beams while the old man powerlessly awaited death. His 95 years made it too difficult for him to flee from it. At that moment sisters Irina and Stefanija appeared in his room and lifted him from the bed; they were still at the door when the ceiling collapsed onto the abbot's bed. Wrapped in blankets, Father Dionisije greeted the dawn under a clear sky on the monastery estate. On the same day he was lodged in Budisavci Monastery.

ОД ОБИЛИЋА ОСТАО САМО КАМЕН

Newspaper cuttings from the Serbian press, 1980s

As precious but not priceless items vanished in the flames, the battle to save the monastery treasury and its priceless artifacts raged on. The heroes of this battle, which they won, were Abbess Fevronija, syngelos Damaskin Davidović, presbyter Stanko Trajković, the parish priest of Peć, presbyter Radovan Mijajlović, the parish priest of Goraždevac, Bajruš Laići and his brother Salija Laići, [Albanian] workers in the new monastery residence, and Andreja Kostić, construction worker, and his team of workers.

The door of the treasury was in flames and they could not enter through the window because of the thick bars. The power was out. It was night. No tools were to be had. Difficult moments for the powerless and panic-stricken saviors. Suddenly someone brought a pick ax and Fr. Damaskin used all his strength to remove the stone parts of the window. The bars gave way, the brave group jumped into the flames—and began pulling out old manuscripts and icons.

Under the window the nuns, hospital staff in their white coats and the citizens of Peć removed books and items as they were thrown out, while a fire raged inside. Ashes and hot water was falling from the attic on the necks of the saviors as they worked. Nevertheless, in half an hour everything was saved; at any rate, it was impossible to remain

inside any longer. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief. The sacrifice was worth it.

The firefighting team constantly protected the other buildings from catching on fire, too.

Nevertheless, the fire was not put out until the evening. A team from the Provincial institute for the protection of cultural monuments arrived on the scene the same day to determine the number of saved items and the condition of the dampened books.

His Holiness Patriarch German was informed of the fire that morning at 5:30 a.m. He immediately formed a commission that arrived that day in the Peć Patriarchate. The members of the commission were protodeacon Tomislav Milanović, Dobrosav Nešković, engineer, Slobodan Mikić, architect, and the writer of these lines.

At about 4:00 p.m. we arrived in the Peć Patriarchate. In the courtyard was a sad sight. Parts of the roof fallen against the walls, the chimneys standing tall above the ash heaps, damaged and wet things scattered all over the grass. The firefighters were determinedly pouring water onto the ash heaps of the residence where until this morning a lively life was lived. Seeing us, the sisters we found in the courtyard headed to greet us. We could see the entire tragedy of the fleeting flames on their faces, and their dresses and apostolniks, burned and wet, were their only personal property.

They wept and cried, extending their courageous women's arms to us. Father Tomislav addressed the sisters, bracing his heart to stop from weeping himself, with the words: "Mother abbess and dear sisters, I bring you the blessing and greeting of His Holiness Patriarch German. In these difficult moments do not be afraid; you are not alone for we are all with you."

Abbess Fevronija informed us briefly of all that that had transpired, as well as of the aid SO Peć had sent to the sisterhood that day.

The sun slowly slipped behind the crags of the gorge and a difficult day came to a close. The police sealed off access to the monastery. A crowd of curious and crying people pressed together at the entrance portal. I saw tears, real tears, on the faces of the Orthodox and the Albanians, and no one hid them. That evening that wall reminded me of the Wailing Wall and the destruction of Jerusalem. Women, those zealous Marthas, squeezed their way through the crowd bringing full baskets of food and drink for the sisters.

According to an already existing arrangement, the nuns set out with heavy hearts to spend the night in private houses in the city because for the first time in the history of this Holy Shrine on this night they had no home of their own.

After the investigative commission headed by investigative judge Ibiš Hoti completed its part of the work, the people were allowed to come in freely. Citizens of Peć and the region, from Kosovska Mitrovica, Skoplje, Prizren, Niš came to their old Patriarchate; Jovo and Milorad Božić even arrived from Bosnia as a result of this great tragedy.

They all carried full arms of gifts and necessities, offering a donation in money and asking for forgiveness for not having more to give but promising to send more as soon as they received their salaries.

Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren visited the monastery accompanied by syngelos Justin Tasić, the abbot of Dečani Monastery, and on that occasion he offered true paternal advice to the sisters and inspired them to the courageous Christian conduct required of them by the Lord and by our Serbian people.

The rector of the Seminary in Prizren, protosyngelos Nikodim, and his teaching staff and numerous priests and monks all rushed to the monastery to help in some way and console the tragedy stricken sisterhood.

We found "duke" Ramo Nikći here, whose ancestors guarded the Peć Patriarchate as he did himself. Through eyes filled with tears he expressed his regret for this tragedy and offered his help. Upon hearing news of the fire, his old mother began to cry and told him, 'Go, Ramo, and help them, because your father and grandfathers gave their lives for the protection of our Patriarchate.' The whole tribe of Nikći was with Ramo that day, ready in peace like formerly in war, to help where their help was needed.

On Thursday, March 19, at 1:00 p.m. His Holiness Patriarch German arrived with the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops.

All of us, and especially the sisterhood of the monastery, were much relieved to welcome our head in the location of the tragedy.

Patriarch German and his entourage visited the burned residences, then the facilities for temporary housing of the sisterhood and immediately began the official part of the talks with government officials.

At about 3:00 p.m. Patriarch German and the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops said goodbye to the politicians and went to the monastery church, where a large group of faithful and the nuns were already waiting for them. On that occasion the Patriarch gave a speech that both consoled and encouraged the nuns and the people, saying that all would end well, i.e. that the residence would be returned to its original condition.

Everything that others and these nuns had built into this building, the old residence, was suddenly sacrificed on a great altar of flame. But their hearts remain living altars continuing to offer holy prayers to God for the whole world and the Serbian people who, we are convinced, will do all they can to help this holy shrine regain its beauty and glow, as the Serbian Patriarch has said," wrote priest Slavko Božić in the conclusion of his report.[105]

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren by act № 208 from June 18, 1981, sent the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church a petition sent to the Com-

[105] AHSB for the year 1981 and *Pravoslavlje*, April 1, 1981.

mission for Relations with Religious Communities in Priština, as follows:

"A few days ago I received a threatening letter. The letter was sent to Belgrade, and was sent to me in Prizren from the Patriarchate. I am providing a copy of the letter.

A similar letter was sent to Crna Reka to hieromonk Dr. Artemije Radosavljević, the administrator of that monastery. I am providing a copy of that letter as well. On the envelope of his letter there is no postal seal and consequently we do not know from where the letter was sent.

I am also informing you that after the demonstrations in Priština and other locations in Kosovo from March 26 and April 1, 1981, the following damage was done in the Diocese of Raška and Prizren by chauvinists of Albanian nationality:

1. April 28 of this year—10 windows broken on the church of the Holy Emperor Uroš in Uroševac;

2. May 1 of this year—38 gravestones damaged in the cemetery of the village of Bresje near Kosovo Polje;

3. June 5 of this year—six gravestones damaged in the cemetery of the village of Štimlje.

I have also sent a copy of the threatening letters addressed to Fr. Artemije and myself to the Secretariat for Internal Affairs in Prizren.

The threatening letters to Bishop Pavle and Fr. Artemije read as follows:

"Serbian priest,

I know you will ask yourself who is writing to you and that you know that you have reached your end. Go quickly, Serbian filth, to your Serbia. You will not be here for long because the grave will soon receive you. Did you come here to spread chauvinism? That is our place. July 12 is near, you are collecting people but you will not. Know that it is the end. Know it well. And I will pull out the beard of that bearded bishop. For we have had enough of Serbian nationalism. You should move, you should move to Serbia, you Serbian son of a bitch..."

In this regard the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church issued a decision, № 1295/zap. 474 from June 23, 1981, saying the following:

"Adopt the proposal of His Holiness Serbian Patriarch German and send photocopies of the threatening letters, together with the report of His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren № 208/81, to the commission for relations with religious communities of the Federal Executive Council and the Executive Council of the Assembly of SR Serbia with a note that no further comment is necessary here and a request to protect our people."

The accompanying text of the letter sent to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Federal Executive Council is very brief and says:

"It is with great regret that the Holy Synod of Bishops forwards the Commission photocopies of two threatening letters received by His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren and hieromonk Dr. Artemije Radosavljević, the administrator of Crna Reka Monastery in the Diocese of Raška and Prizren to which no further comment is necessary.

At the same time, we are also providing a photocopy of the report of His Grace Bishop Pavle, № 208/81, sent on the same matter to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of SAP Kosovo in Priština.

The only thing we can add to this is the request to protect our people in Kosovo. We hope this will be done."[106]

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren by act № 494 from September 26, 1981, sent the President of the Municipal Assembly of Prizren a petition as follows:

"A few days ago, as I was returning from the bus station in Prizren at about 3:00 p.m. when I was at the intersection leading to the city center and SUP, a youth 15–16 years old ran up from behind me, caught me by the beard and pulled. While I came to my senses, he ran down Prizrenska Street and disappeared. However, when I arrived at the farmer's market, he caught up with again and hit me lightly on the head, on my priest's hat to be precise, and again ran away.

I thought that would be the end of it and did not tell anyone what had happened. But yesterday, September 25, 1981, at about 4:00 p.m. as Protopresbyter father Milutin Timotijević, a professor of the Seminary, was walking on the sidewalk of Moše Pijade Street toward the Seminary, more or less near the Varteks shop, three young men walked toward him. When they reached him, one of them hit him on his priest's hat, which fell into the river, and the youth ran away. A man who happened to be passing by approached Fr. Milutin and said, 'I regret what just happened to you and I will get your hat from the river.' With the help of another youth, he retrieved the hat from the river and handed it to Fr. Milutin, who thanked him and continued on his way.

I do not know if this was done by the same young man but actions such as these hardly deserve praise. For neither I nor professor Fr. Milutin provoked him or his friends in any way, and hence the motives for such aggressive actions lie elsewhere."

Upon discussion at the meeting of October 23, 1981, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided to send a photocopy of this petition to the commissions for relations with religious communities of the Federal Executive Council and the Executive Council of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo, noting that this was being forwarded lest they delude themselves that Kosovo was the land of milk and honey.

At the same time, it asked them to inform the Commission for Investigation of Causes for the Permanent Displacement of Serbs from Kosovo of the matter."[107]

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106 AHSB, Syn № 1295/zap. 474, June 23, 1981.

107 AHSB, Syn № 1885/zap. 678/81.

The Year 1982

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren informed the Holy Synod of Bishops by act № 243 from April 1, 1982, of his visit on February 24 of that year to the President of the Presidency of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo, and the conversation on that occasion regarding pressures applied in this Province by the Albanians on the property, priests, monks and nuns of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Joining to this all the other reports of His Grace Bishop Pavle about Albanian disturbances toward the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Holy Synod of Bishops forwarded the entire dossier to the Holy Assembly of Bishops for discussion and its decision."[108]

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren by act № 177 from March 9, 1982, sent the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo in Priština, as follows:

"We recently sent you a complaint regarding the damages inflicted by individual citizens of Albanian nationality to church and monastery property. We have also pointed this out to comrade president Ali Šukrija during a recent conversation with him and in a written petition handed to him on that occasion. However, such actions are still occurring.

The elder of the church in Kosovska Kamenica reported that during the night of February 9, 1982, the gravestone of priest Sava Ilić, located right next to the church in that village, was destroyed and that the police station has been informed.

The administration of Devič Monastery reports that on March 3 of this year in the monastery forest 60–70 trees were cut down. During this process the tractor of Ćazim Muarem Deljaj from Rezalo slid into a ditch and turned over in the monastery forest. Police were informed and came on the scene.

The same day some struck the monastery pig, which weighed about 70 kg, with an ax, cutting its spine above the neck.

On the same day on the road leading to the monastery, about 250 m. from the monastery itself, rocks were thrown so that cars could not pass at all and the sisters were forced to remove the rocks that are still standing next to the road.

The priest servicing the village of Koriša reported that on March 8, 1982, he visited the monastery of St. Mark in the village of Kabaša near Prizren and saw that the iron doors from the church were removed and stolen. The wooden blinds and iron bars formerly on the windows are no longer there. Inside the church what remained of the iconostasis, which was burned for the most part back in 1973, is gone. Everything left in the church after its repair: boards, trim, etc. has been completely burned and the interior of the church looks like an ash heap. In the northwest corner of the church interior, the cement floor has been torn up and a hole about one meter in width and depth made.

We again ask the Commission to protect church property from reckless destruction."

The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church provided the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of SR Serbia with an attached photocopy of the request of His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren, № 177 from March 9, 1982, sent to the Commission of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo regarding the most recent attacks by Albanians on the property of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Diocese of Raška and Prizren.

At the same time, he asked that within the framework of undertaking measures for the creation of order and peace in Kosovo, something also be done for the Serbian Orthodox Church, her holy shrines, her property, monks and nuns, priests and faithful in this part of our society."[109]

Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren, by act № 243 from April 1, 1982, informed the Holy Synod of Bishops.

"In regard to act № 723/zap. 168 from March 19, 1982, I am submitting the following report to the Holy Synod of Bishops:

I had learned earlier that the President of the Presidency of SAP Kosovo, comrade Ali Šukrija, received representatives of the Islamic religious community in the Province and that he was willing to receive us, too. Through the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities in Priština, I asked to be received and the President received me on February 24, 1982. I was accompanied by Protopresbyter Ratomir Božić, the bishop's deputy of Priština, from Uroševac, and presbyter Nikola Božanić, the secretary of the diocese Executive Council from Prizren.

In his remarks President Ali Šukrija said that the Constitution guaranteed equal civil rights for all citizens regardless of religious affiliation, and that they are equally responsible for working toward good, brotherly relations with all citizens regardless of their religion or nationality for the general good of our society.

At the beginning of my remarks, I congratulated the President on his new office, expressing the hope that his work would be for the general good and that he would lead the ship of multinational peoples of the Province through the restless waves of the present situation wisely and lead us to the order and peace we all need. I thanked him for finding the time to receive the representatives of the Orthodox religion, and speak about the life and work of the Orthodox population, and other circumstances following unfortunate developments in the Province.

[108] AHSB, Syn № 1147/zap. 320/82.

[109] AHSB, Syn № 723/zap. 168, Mar. 19, 1982.

To make myself brief, I said that I would speak only about those difficulties that we were experiencing not out of material reasons and interests but those calculated to inflict damage, destroy and ruin us. By way of example, I pointed to the systemic destruction of the monastery of St. Mark near Prizren, where the residences and roof of the church were destroyed in World War I and World War II and a concrete roof was built after the last war. Services are held there once a year. However, back in 1973 the church was broken into and the icons, vestments and books torched. We have replaced the wood doors with iron ones. A few years later they were also forced open and what remained in the church was completely destroyed. The same happened with the church of St. Nicholas in Prizren near the Mladen Ugarević School, with the church of St. Paraskeva in Dobrčan near Gnjilane, with the church in the village of Vinarac near Kosovska Mitrovica and elsewhere.

Not even our cemeteries are left in peace. In the cemetery of the village of Šipolje, young men of Albanian nationality singing derogatory songs against the Serbs destroyed 15 gravestones. The same occurred after the demonstrations last year in the cemetery of the village of Bresje, where 38 gravestones were destroyed, in Štimlje, Veliki Djurdjevik and elsewhere.

I also informed the President of the unfortunate events that are happening almost every day to the sisterhood of the monastery of Devič and their property, as well to the monastery of the Holy Trinity in Prizren and elsewhere.

The President responded that he immediately ordered an investigation into the communication regarding the monastery of the Holy Trinity. But in order to more easily resolve these and similar misdeeds, the President said, you must contact competent state officials more frequently regarding these matters.

Even if I did not want to contact them, comrade President, I responded, difficulties force me to do so. I can tell you that recently I visited the presidents of the Municipal Assemblies of Peć, Prizren, Istok and we are also here to see you, as the top leader of our Province to describe our difficulties and ask that something be done to prevent them.

I also added that the systematic pressure being applied by some citizens of Albanian nationality is the main reason for their permanent displacement. I have never claimed that some of them did not leave for economic reasons, better jobs, etc. That is normal and that is not what we are complaining about. What concerns us and the reason we are asking for protection is what is being done illegally and unconstitutionally.

Protopresbyter Radomir Božić described the damage inflicted on the church in Uroševac, where 10 windows were broken, the church was forcibly entered and damaged in two rounds, the church office and the hall for the faithful; also the church in Nerodimlje, where inimical graffiti was written inside and out.

Presbyter Nikola Božanić spoke about the unpleasantries endured by priests in both towns and villages by youth of Albanian nationality. For example, when we pass next to schools during funeral processions, students of Albanian nationality shout vulgar and swear words at us, not only individually but in choir, and occasionally also shower us with rocks. The Bishop did not tell you but I will that he was himself recently attacked by a young man, and also a professor of the seminary in Prizren, Protopresbyter Milutin Timotijević.

President Ali Šukrija promised to do everything possible to prevent illegal actions toward us and everyone else from occurring.

In the end I said that we had the understanding of the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities, as well as of other higher officials. But among lower officials, where the legality guaranteed by the Constitution should be realized, matters stand worse. Certainly we cannot expect that all levels of government will have the same level of the sense of justice but we do expect a minimum of understanding, ensured fundamental legal rights and protection in a country based on constitutional principles.

Thanking comrade President once again for receiving us, I gave him a written petition about the cited difficulties we have faced for many years. I am forwarding this petition to the Holy Synod of Bishops as an attachment."[110]

He then wrote the Holy Synod of Bishops in act № 435 from August 21, 1982 that he sent the Executive Council of SAP Kosovo in Priština—Commission for Relations with Religious Communities an act of the following content:

"In the series of provocations which certain chauvinistically oriented citizens of Albanian nationality are committing against Orthodox churches and other religious buildings, we have been informed that near Uroševac in the cemetery of the village of Doganjevo two gravestones have been toppled and destroyed. Also toppled and destroyed was the old gravestone monument in the cemetery of the village of Čabići near Klina in Metohija.

A few days ago someone defecated on the threshold of the cathedral in Prizren and used the feces to defile the north door of that church. The church is fenced in and the gate on the fence is closed and locked in the evenings. (We are sending a relevant photograph to the Holy Synod.)

Like in many other cases, these two obviously show that they are motivated by the desire to inflict damage and out of malice, not any material gain.

In connection with the above petition we ask the Commission to do everything possible on its part to stop the perpetrators of these and similar misdeeds toward the Orthodox church."[111]

Despite the appeals of Bishop Pavle describing attacks by Albanians on Serbs and their property, a serious crime

110 AHSB, Syn № 1147/1982.

111 AHSB, Syn № 2030/1982.

Gravestones destroyed in Serbian cemetery in Kosovo in 1980s

was committed in Samodreža where Ferat Mujo with his son, nephew and cousin murdered Danilo Milinčić. The young man was first tied up and tortured and then Ferat Mujo knelt on his stomach and, in front of his mother who attempted to protect him with her own body, cold-bloodedly shot him in the heart. As a reminder, Danilo's father Slavoljub was also killed in 1960 and this criminal or criminals were never found or brought to justice.[112]

The Year 1983

Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren in act № 128 from March 19, 1983, again informed the Holy Synod of Bishops that he sent a petition to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of SAP Kosovo in Priština of the following content:

"We received a report from Gorioč Monastery near Istok that on March 3, 1983, just after 10:00 a.m. an unknown young man attacked nun Ana Milošević, aged 73 years, in the monastery kitchen. While she was turned away from the door, the attacker entered and pulled her kerchief over her eyes. He then took an old housecoat that was on the bed and wrapped it around her head, pushed her onto the bed and tried to rape her. She fought him, begging that he stop attacking and molesting her, because she could be his mother or grandmother. At one point the young man rewrapped the housecoat even more tightly around her head, then released her and ran away. Soon afterward Nedjeljko Zuvić from Sinaj arrived in the monastery and found nun Ana distraught and in torn clothing. She told him through tears what had happened to her.

It is probable that the attacker was informed by someone keeping watch outside that this man was arriving and so he released the elderly woman and ran away. Zuvić saw two young men entering the forest near the monastery when he approached with his oxen.

Because it was a market day in Istok, Abbot Sava Krivokuća had left for Istok one half hour before and the old nun remained alone in the monastery.

I went to Gorioč Monastery and spoke with nun Ana and Abbot Sava, and they also told me all this orally.

Reporting to you this inhumane attack on a 73 year-old nun, we ask the Commission to intervene on its part so that the perpetrators are found and punished in accordance with the law."[113]

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren then sent the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of SAP Kosovo regarding the destruction of two gravestones in the village of Dragaljevac near Uroševac. As well, the old gravestone monument in the cemetery of the village of Čabići near Klina was toppled and destroyed. At approximately the same time in August 1982 someone defecated on the threshold of the cathedral in Prizren and used the feces to defile the north door of the same church.

The Holy Synod forwarded a photocopy of this report to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of Serbia asking them to intervene so that the perpetrators of these and similar misdeeds are finally forced to stop."[114]

His Grace Bishop Pavle also forwarded to the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of SAP Kosovo with regard to the church property in the village of Novo Čikatovo.

The Holy Synod of Bishops forwarded a photocopy of this petition to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SR Serbia."[115]

Bishop Pavle also sent the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of SAP Kosovo stating the following:

"Recently there has been a increase in the violence and damage being inflicted on the property of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Diocese of Raška and Prizren:

In the village of Retimlje near Orahovica, the church building has been destroyed [and] neighbor Rifat has usurped the churchyard, making a road from the east and west sides of the church.

The doors on the church of the Holy Savior in the village of Opteruša near Orahovac were smashed, icons, candles and other items scattered on the floor and damaged. In both these villages grave in the cemeteries are being defiled with human feces, breaking of crosses, pillars and fencing around the cemetery.

[112] A. Jevtić, "O Kosovu i sa Kosova" [On Kosovo and from Kosovo], *Pravoslavlje*, № 522, Dec. 15, 1988.

[113] AHSB, Syn № 796/1983.

[114] AHSB, Syn № 2030/zap. 642, 1982.

[115] AHSB, Syn № 2132/zap. 667, 1982.

In Mala Kruša and Orahovac graves are being defiled in the same manner, wooden crosses scattered around, the fence broken and scattered around. Moreover in Mala Kruša three gravestone monuments have been broken.

Recently three marble gravestone monuments were broken in the village of Ljutoglava near Prizren (we are forwarding a photograph of one of them).

On the property of Devič Monastery in the night between November 10 and 11, 1982, seven stacks of hay and autumn grass were set on fire and burned and one stack of straw. As a result, how to feed the livestock has become a problem.

In the monastery of the Holy Trinity near Mušutište Alija Bitići from this village allowed 50 goats onto the monastery meadow and clover, and on a stack of hay. When the sisters reminded him to drive the livestock away he not only refused to do so but grabbed a rock and threatened the sisters if they attempt to drive the livestock away themselves.

It is with regret that we inform you of everything that is happening to us through no fault of our own and to everyone's shame."[116]

In regard to this report by Bishop Pavle, the Holy Synod of Bishops wrote the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Federal Executive Council, the Executive Council of SR Serbia and the Executive Council of SAP Kosovo, asking for intervention that would stop the actions of Albanian irredentists toward the Serbian Orthodox Church, her property and faithful on the territory of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren."[117]

Not long after this report His Grace Bishop Pavle in act № 375 from September 19, 1983 wrote to the Holy Synod that he sent an act of the following content to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities in Priština:

"We have received the following report from the Administration of the monastery of the Holy Trinity near Mušutište:

A nun from the monastery, Heruvima Branković, went to the village of Mušutište on monastery business. It was hot and she grew tired as she walked, all the more since she is a chronic heart patient. As she drew near the school in Mušutište she was followed by children of Albanian nationality on their way to school who began to laugh. She continued on without paying attention to them. Then they began to spit at her. When she finally turned around near the school entrance in front of the store, the children threw themselves at her and pulled on her robes to knock her down. There were some people in the store. Whether they saw this happening or not, they did nothing to help the sister. She barely managed to escape. She believes that the children were first-or second-graders, and there were about 10–12 of them.

We have received information from Devič Monastery that a month ago someone set fire to their fence around the vineyard and forest. It was day and they managed to put out the fire.

Informing the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of this matter, we ask that something be done so that the monasteries and their sisters be spared from the violence being carried out even by small schoolchildren."[118]

The Year 1984

Bishop Pavle in act № 398 from September 10, 1984 wrote to the Holy Synod of Bishops:

"As published in the daily newspapers and broadcast on television, nine stacks of hay were set on fire on the property of Devič Monastery at about 11:00 p.m. on August 7, 1984, just like two years ago. The fire was observed by a passerby, who informed police. The police arrived in the monastery at about 2:30 a.m. and alerted the sisters after first informing firefighters in Titova Mitrovica. When the sisters ran to the property and began to put out the fire, the firefighters also arrived. Not all the hay burned but what is left is unsuitable for feeding the livestock.

The next morning all of the following came to the scene: the investigative judge from Titova Mitrovica, members of SUP, presidents of the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of SR Serbia and SAP Kosovo and others. Competent officials declared that the monastery would be compensated for damages. This promise has been partially kept. According to the Administration of Devič Monastery, two stacks of hay and six stacks of clover were delivered. But the clover cannot be used to feed sheep, lambs and calves because it was rained on after it was mowed, turned black and the leaves fell off. The Commission still has not come to evaluate the value of this hay and clover. I will inform the Holy Synod of Bishops of the outcome.

In addition to this damage done to Devič Monastery, Albanian nationalists at the same time committed other misdeeds in this region. One night earlier, August 6, 1984, the corncrib and granary of Radoje Šmigić, an Orthodox Serb from the village of Drenik near Klina (Metohija) was set on fire. Approximately 6,000 kg. of dry corn on the cob was lost, as well as many other agricultural items and tools. Damage is estimated at 1,000,000 new dinars.

At the same time, an Orthodox Serb woman in Belo Polje near Peć was raped. The woman is 54 years old. Five days earlier, August 2, 1984, a 12 year-old girl was raped when she came from Titova Mitrovica to visit her uncle in the village of Ljubenić. The perpetrators of both acts of violence were Albanians, one 18 and the other 50 years of age.

[116] AHSB, Syn № 2494/zap. 789/82.

[117] AHSB, Syn № 1396/1983.

[118] AHSB, Syn № 2165/1983.

All this has introduced great unrest and bitterness among our faithful in this region. Despite expressions of regret and promises, we do not see the authorities undertaking something effective to put an end to such misdeeds. I cannot believe that nothing can be done."[119]

He then informs the Holy Synod of Bishops in act № 508, December 15, 1984, that he has sent an act of the following content to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities in Priština, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments in Priština and the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments in Belgrade:

"Above the village of Kosovska Gračanica there is a refuse dump from the mining floatation in the village of Badovac, which processes ore from the mines of Ajvalija, Kižnica Badovac, Novo Brdo and the surface mine Kižnica, about 1,000,000 tons per year.

This refuse, which contains several toxic substances: sulfuric acid, phenol, cyanide, etc. is pumped into the dump using water pressure. All the wells in the village have been contaminated by the toxic water, as well as all the land with which it has come in contact, whether on the surface or underground, as well as the basin of the Gračanka River.

Moreover, the dump has reached the maximum of its technically foreseen and permitted height of about 612.5 m. The mining inspection office of SAP Kosovo in its decision № 310–858/84 from June 29, 1974, has prohibited further dumping but despite that the dumping continues above the technically foreseen height established by experts.

In presenting this problem of Orthodox residents as well as of Gračanica Monastery, we ask that you take action on your part with competent authorities to prevent tragedy and irreparable damage to the property and lives of the residents of this village and Gračanica Monastery."[120]

The Year 1985

His Grace Bishop Pavle informed the Holy Synod of Bishops about the suffering and persecution of the Serb people from April 1, 1984, to April 1, 1985:

"This year also there have been plenty of difficulties from the Albanian irredentists. The night between August 6 and 7, 1984, the hay of the monastery of Devič was again set on fire and nine stacks of it were destroyed by fire. I immediately went to the monastery and found the sisters and two Serbs with their families putting out the fire and saving what could be saved at least for bedding for the livestock. The authorities promised to help with food for the animals because the monastery was in a hopeless position since there was no one to whom it could sell the animals nor could a sufficient quantity of food be purchased for them at any price. The authorities partly kept their promise and two tractor wagons of hay and six of clover were delivered to the monastery but the clover had been rained on and was of poor quality. As one could read in the newspapers, the perpetrators of this act were found and as of today are serving a prison sentence. They are the same ones who set a fire and burned the hay two years ago. (...)

On the eve of the consecration of the small church in the village of Rabovac, November 16, 1984, a pile of hay belonging to Vladimir Spasić, the head of the household where I was spending the night because of the consecration, was set on fire. The authorities promised to compensate him for the damage but they have not done so because, supposedly, the Agricultural Cooperative in Lipljan has no hay.

In the cemetery in the village of Dvorane near Prizren the night of June 10, 1984, 29 gravestone monuments were destroyed, and in Orahovac on November 16, 1984, six marble monuments. In the cemetery in V. Reka near Vučitrn Albanian nationalists smeared the gravestones with feces on September 17, 1984. Our priests are complaining that the permanent displacement of our population is still ongoing."[121]

The Year 1986

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren submitted a report on attacks on the Serbian Orthodox Church from April 1985 to April 1, 1986:

"We have permanent difficulties from pressures by Albanian irredentists: the Martinovič case (Djordje Martinović, a 56 year-old man, was tied up on his field by unknown persons on May 1, 1985; he was then tortured by them, which included ramming a one-liter bottle into his body through his anus with a stick, which then broke in his abdomen), Nedeljković in Mušutište, who had both arms broken, and the recent wounding of a young man in Lipljan.

Near Kosovska Kamenica 52 gravestone monuments were broken in the village of Koretin; in Mučivorac 11; and in Pogačica every single one. In Topolica the monuments were broken and the cemetery plowed over; consequently, the politically active were forced, on their own initiative, to fence it in. Several monuments were also broken in the village of Petrovce near Gnjilane.

The church of Sokolica Monastery was broken into the night between March 21–22, 1986. At the same time an attempt was made to break into the church in Titova Mitrovica. The chapel in the village of Perkovac was broken into.

In many locations in the Diocese the departure of our population continues. The most drastic example is the Municipality of Podujevo; when I can to this Diocese 29 years ago, I found two priests and two parishes in Podujevo with over 1,000 households. Today one fifth of that remains or 200 households. One Orthodox household remains in each of four villages in the parish of Podujevo; two Orthodox

[119] AHSB, Syn № 1762/1984.

[120] AHSB, Syn № 2449/1984.

[121] AHSB, Syn № 917 and 1091/1985.

households in each of three villages; three Orthodox households in one village; four Orthodox households in each of two villages, etc. In Podujevo itself there are 21 households. We will see whether things will improve as a result of the recent campaign of the people. But it is difficult to expect good from bad."[122]

The official communiqué on the work of the regular session of the Holy Assembly of Bishops in 1986 included the following:

"The Serbian Orthodox Church during the course of the year 1985/86 has carefully followed all the tragic events against the Serbian population in Kosovo, experiencing all the suffering and persecution of its children in this region as its own suffering and persecution, and feeling the violence and terror against those who suffer in innocence, especially children and Serbian Orthodox holy shrines, as violence and terror against itself.

Therefore, the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church appeals to all competent political officials to seriously and responsibly protect all innocent Serbs in Kosovo who are persecuted: their lives, property, honor and holy shrines.

At the same time, the Holy Assembly of Bishops has asked Their Graces the Bishops to assist the Šarić Family in the village of Meće near Djakovica according to their best ability through His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren, the competent Bishop."[123]

In its meeting on June 16, 1986, the Holy Synod of Bishops informed the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo that it fully supports the position of His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren expressed in a petition sent to the Commission of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo under № 272 from May 30, 1986, as follows:

The church of the Holy Trinity existed in the village of Novo Čikatovo near Glogovac until World War II with a churchyard of 1 hectares, 4 ares and 63 square meters. The church was destroyed during the war. The land parcel belongs to the church parish of Goleš in Batuša, which was confirmed, among other things, by a court decision of the Municipal Court in Priština R.V. 539/76 from September 14, 1977.

Despite this, the sons of Duš Demaku arbitrarily built two houses on one end of the land parcel after 1982, and this land parcel, in spite of all court decisions, has not been turned over to the church parish of Goleš to this day.

Since there have been misunderstandings in the village of Batuša between local residents and two families of newly settled Albanians, this Council is of the opinion that it

Lepa nije devojka, ona je dete, devojčica: Stojan Perić sa unesrećenom kćerkom, čiju sliku objavljujemo mimo običaja, na želju roditelja koji smatraju da ćemo tako pomoći istrazi.

gucno da se nesreća tako brzo ponovi? Pred očima joj se zavrteo film još svežih, tragičnih događaja: tri nedelje ranije sahra-

– Da te nije, sine, tukao?
– Jeste, tri... četiri šamara...
– Da ti nije, dušo, nešto drugo uradio?

Raped young Serbian girl (age 9) from Žitinje near Vitina, in the arms of her father, Stojan Perić, 1983

would be beneficial to offer these two families the possibility of relocating to the church land parcel in Novo Čikatovo, while turning over their property in Batuša, in corresponding value, to the ownership of the church parish of Goleš. This would help resolve both problems."[124]

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren also sent the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo in Priština and the Socialist Republic of Serbia report № 295 from June 18, 1986, as follows:

"In the village of Mušutište near Suva Reka on May 31, 1986, an unfortunate event took place: Priest Radivoje Živković was doing something in the churchyard in everyday clothing, when an unknown man entered the courtyard and asked, 'Where is the priest?' 'What do you want with the priest?' asked the priest. 'I have a score to settle with him,' said the unknown man and the priest then noticed he had a big knife in his hand. 'Show me where the priest is.' The priest led the man all the way to the police, and when he arrived at the police station, he ran inside and told a

122 AHSB, Syn № 1416/1986.

123 AHSB, Syn № 1535/zap. 546/86.

124 AHSB, Syn № 1619/zap. 570/86.

The Peć Patriarchate dormitory burned in 1981

Serbian gravestones destroyed in a Serbian cemetery in Srbica in 1985

Serbian Orthodox Abbess Hilaria carries a rifle to defend the sisters and the holy place from the molestation by ethnic Albanians. Harassment of sisters, arson, blinding the monastery cattle, and other misdemeanor have been going since 1968.

policeman what had happened to him. The policeman went out and upon seeing the man said, 'That's Ganija's brother-in-law from the village of Delovac. He is psychologically disturbed (Ganija is an Albanian and a policeman in Mušutište). While the policeman went to get his equipment, the man disappeared and the policeman went to look for him.

On June 23, 1986, the undersigned was in the monastery of the Holy Trinity in Mušutište and heard from the sister nuns that a man from Delovac with a knife had also visited them and asked to see the priest to settle a score. They managed to somehow convince him that the priest was not there and he left but he returned the next day with the knife asking that they release his wife who had come there. Again, they managed to convince him that his wife was not there, and he left.

We can appreciate that the man has psychological problems but one does not have to be an expert in psychology to conclude that even a normal person needs a reason to come all the way from another village to harass a priest and sisters in a monastery.

The night of June 3, 1986 at about 9:45 p.m. a man came during the time of Ramadan under the window of the priest in Mušutište and suddenly began to bang on a drum with all his strength, until the children who had fallen asleep inside awoke and began to cry out of fear. By the time the priest had put on his shoes and stepped outside, the man with the drum had vanished into the night.

In the monastery of St. Mark near Prizren during the last war, Albanians from Kabaša destroyed the residences and damaged the church. After the war, the church was repaired to some extent but in 1973 its doors were broken, the iconostasis, books and vestments set on fire there in the church. We replaced the wooden doors with iron ones which our enemies destroyed and threw into the river in 1982. The Orthodox faithful from Koriša gathered a little money, brought the broken iron doors from the river, paid to have them repaired and again put them on the church. But on June 23, 1986, when the Orthodox faithful visited the monastery of St. Mark, they found the door again broken and the village cattle resting inside the church. Obviously, no money was sought there then nor before nor any other benefit; the sole purpose was to do damage and destroy the monastery.

We are appealing to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of SAP Kosovo as we have so many times in the past, asking that a stop be put to the violence against our faithful, clergy, monks and nuns, and our property be protected, which are fundamental rights of every citizen in a constitutional country.

In this regard, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided in a meeting on July 1, 1986, to ask the aforementioned commissions for a report on whether anything was done with regard to this petition."[125]

[125] AHSB, Syn № 1818/zap. 631/86.

At the same time, the President of the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Federal Executive Council was informed of the content of the petition and asked for appropriate intervention, while the Holy Synod of Bishops asked His Grace Bishop Pavle for his opinion on whether it would be useful to publish the text of the petition in *Pravoslavlje*, the newspaper of the Serbian Patriarchate.

In a meeting on September 2, 1986, the Holy Synod of Bishops was informed of the opinion of His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren in № 337 from July 10, 1986 that "the text should not be published … because it involves a mentally unbalanced man who did what is described under the influence of others. I have heard that he has been sent to a mental hospital. I think that the publication of this case would give rise to responses from others who would try to cover up or conceal those far more serious and clearly irredentist and hostile."[126]

NIN magazine wrote on July 26, 1986, how eight Albanians—Ahmet Plava, Naser and Sami Rahova, Nedžedin and Sabedini Potoku, Bedri Jelići, Gani Hajrizi and Džafer Rahova—raped a Serb woman by the initials N.K. from Srbica. Unfortunately, it is not known whether and how they were sentenced but everyone understood the message behind this crime which even the illiterate could read and which said: Serbs, get out of Kosovo and Metohija.

КЊИЖЕВНА РЕЧ

Лист књижевне омладине Србије

Најбоља фотографија 1986.

Photo of the year 1986. Kosovo Serbs prevented from going to Belgrade to complain to Federal government on Albanian discrimination, Newspaper cuttings from the Serbian press.

The Year 1987

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren in act № 595 from August 17, 1987, sent the Holy Synod of Bishops a copy of a petition sent to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, which cites a report by the church parish in Priština, as follows:

"We have already grown accustomed to constant provocations by Albanian youth when we go into town but recently other incidents have begun to happen as well.

On the eve of the feast of St. John (July 6, 1987), the priest stayed somewhat longer in the parish and when he returned in the evening his wife told him that someone had thrown rocks at the metal entrance gate, and a small rock had hit a window on the apartment, which frightened the children. After that, third or fourth evening a rock would strike the gate. But on July 19, 1987, just after 10:00 p.m. a real volley of rocks began on the roof of the church. The police was informed and arrived immediately, catching some 15 young men who were doing this and taking them to the police station. Since then the attacks have stopped.

On top of this, we have other problems. Across the road from the church there is a land parcel owned by the church where there are some huts of the former post office, which are now inhabited by several families. The church parish is involved in a lawsuit with the Municipal Assembly in Priština. One inhabitant of a hut has begun to prepare a frame in order to build a cement wall and make a land parcel for himself. The elder of the church and the president of the church parish reported the matter to the inspector's office. The inspector came out to the scene and "ordered that the boards be removed." But the same afternoon the cement had been poured and metal bars placed in it. We received notification that the wall would be destroyed but more than a month later the wall is still standing."

In a meeting on September 1, 1987, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided to forward a copy of this petition to the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Federal Executive Council and the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia with

[126] AHSB, Syn № 2071/zap. 702/86.

нин на лицу места: КОСОВО ПОЉЕ — БЕОГРАД

дијалог о искушењима

Шта је покренуло протестну акцију у Косову Пољу и како се она одвијала. Непосредно обраћање народу, увиђавање његовог незадовољства — та помало заборављена обавеза руководилаца спречила је да овај скуп заплива у опасне воде

12

Kosovo Serbs and Montenegrins arriving in Belgrade to protest against discrimination in Albanian-dominated Kosovo, April, 1986

a request for urgent intervention so that the Serbian Orthodox clergy, monks and nuns in Kosovo, together with the inalienable property of the Serbian Orthodox Church, are finally properly protected.

A letter in the same regard was also sent to the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, and separately published in *Pravoslavlje*."[127]

In the very next meeting, September 19, 1987, the Holy Synod of Bishops discussed a copy of a report by the church parish in Prizren sent to the Municipal Assembly in Prizren, as follows:

By the Law on nationalization of 1959 many residential and business facilities were taken from the church parish in Prizren. Among these, a building at Riste Naumovića Street № 10 in Prizren was nationalized with the explanation that the priests who were parish priests in Prizren have their own houses. The church parish asked that the aforementioned building be left because the old Prizren priests would be followed by younger ones not born in Prizren, who would need an apartment. Nevertheless, the Municipal Assembly in Prizren nationalized the building.

Now that the old priests have died and new ones have come who are not born in Prizren and do not have houses there, the church parish is responsible for providing them with apartments.

Since the building in Riste Naumovića Street № 10 in Prizren is not being used by anyone nor can it be used because half of the building has collapsed, we ask the Municipal Assembly of Prizren to understand us correctly and return the aforementioned building to us.

Forwarding this, His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren in act № 613 from August 26, 1987, proposed that everything possible be done through the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities in order to positively resolve this in favor of the church parish in Prizren.

The Holy Synod of Bishops forwarded a copy of this petition to the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija and asked for intervention in order to grant the request of His Grace Bishop Pavle."[128]

The Year 1988

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren in his annual report to the Holy Assembly of Bishops under number 98 from April 27, 1988, says the following:

"I have visited the president of the Municipal Assembly of Novi Pazar in regard to difficulties affecting church property there that have not been resolved for years. We discussed everything, some of the easier ones have been fixed but the most important ones still remain unresolved.

The land parcel in Novo Čikatovo over one hectare in size which is the former location of the church of Sts. Peter and Paul, destroyed to the foundations during World War II, where the brothers Demaku after the demonstrations in 1981 built two houses is still in trial at the Court. Last year we offered this land parcel in exchange for the land of Albanians with whom there were difficulties in the village of Batuša but that solution was not accepted. The diocese Executive Council is asking that the Demaku brothers pay rent to be determined by the Municipal Assembly in Glogovac for land of the same class but also for the area on which the houses stand because we neither sold nor gave them this land. If they refuse we will ask to have the houses, which were illegally built, destroyed. We will see how the Court will decide.

[127] AHSB, Syn № 2053/zap. 606/87.

[128] AHSB, Syn № 2072/zap. 619/87.

Further in the report with respect to the permanent displacement of Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija he said:

"For years, I have been beginning this section with the same words: that the permanent dislocation of our population is still continuing. Unfortunately, it is with these same words that I can begin it this year, as well, because the permanent dislocation is still continuing, and now this can be seen is the daily newspapers. Not a day goes by that we do not read about violence targeting adults and children, whether they are going to school or returning home, about rapes, about arson, theft of livestock, cutting down of forests, desecration of graves, etc.

I will cite only a few examples. In the village of Leočina near Peć, where only about 10 households remain out of 30, there are several church sites and two small churches, one dedicated to St. John the Baptist and another to the Holy Prophet Jeremiah. The church of St. John was renovated a few years ago by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, which covered it with zinc-covered tin and installed a new door. The door is forced open regularly, and the rocks from gravestone monuments around the church are being removed and taken away. When the priest came to serve there last year, on the feast of St. Jeremiah, he could not enter the church. In several places in the church itself, someone had defecated. He went to the closest house to ask them to clean the church. 'I went early this morning, father, and cleaned it,' said the woman of the house, 'and as soon as I left they did the same thing again.'

Like in other places, in one village near Djurakovac, almost grown Albanian young men catch schoolchildren by the throat, when they are returning from school, take out their knives and tell them that next time they will slit their throats. They frequently swear and insult their families, saying, 'What are you doing here? This is Enver Hoxha's country! Move while you still can!' Parents make the difficult decision of not sending their children to school for a week. Finally, it was decided that Serb children are to go to school just in the morning.

In some locations thefts of livestock from Serb households is a regular occurrence and the perpetrators are usually not found."[129]

In addition to Bishop Pavle's, we have the testimony of hieromonk Atanasije Jevtić, who wrote in *Pravoslavlje* that on May 24 two minors of Albanian nationality, A.A. and H.A., in the village of Muževina near Istok attacked their neighbor Dragana Vojinović (20), a housewife in her own garden. Although she did nothing to provoke them they hurled insults and foul language at her. Her husband Vitomir said that these minors were the sons of Muharem Ahtemi that they have been harassing Serb children for some time and doing damage to the Serbs with their livestock. All this was reported to police several times but without success because the Albanian authorities in Kosovo and Metohija ignore the damage done to Serbs.[130]

Zašto neki građani srpske i crnogorske nacionalnosti nisu poverovali brojnim saopštenjima i zaključcima

POŠLI PA, IPAK, STALI

● Uprkos tome što se zadnjih dana, najzad pristupilo ispunjavanju opravdanih zahteva stanovnika Batusa, prošlog petka i iz drugih sela, manje ili veće kolone građana, krenule iz Kosova Polja za Beograd

Police prevents Kosovo Serbs to emigrating from Kosovo, 1986

In the same paper he went on to write that in the Serb hamlet of Dragiće in Mušutište around Easter the Albanians broke three water pipes used by Serbs. One Albanian threatened a Serb man who complained about this, saying that this was their last Easter in Kosovo; in other words, Move from here while you still have time.[131]

The Year 1989

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren forwarded act № 707 from November 15, 1989 to the Holy Synod of Bishops where he said the following:

[129] AHSB, Syn № 1268/88.

[130] A. Jevtić, "On Kosovo and from Kosovo."

[131] A. Jevtić, "On Kosovo and from Kosovo."

Safe return home: Kosovo Serbs after mass protest, 1986

"During demonstrations by Albanian separatists in Priština on October 31, 1989, a group of them passing next to the Orthodox church on Valjevska Street used rocks to beat on the iron gate of the church courtyard, threw rocks on the roof of the church and broke two windows on the new parish home.

The police was informed of this and two officials came and carried out an on the scene investigation.

We are forwarding the above to you for your information.

An act with the same content has been forwarded to the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Province in Priština and of the Republic of Serbia in Belgrade."

In this regard the Holy Synod of Bishops in a meeting made the following decision under № 3027/zap. 1407 from November 23, 1989:

"We have received this information and expect results of the intervention of His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren with the Commissions for Relations with Religious Communities of the Executive Council of the Assembly of SR Serbia and the Executive Council of the Assembly of SAP Kosovo and Metohija with respect to the most recent attacks on the Serbian Orthodox church in Priština."[132]

The Year 1990

His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren in act № 323 from June 19, 1990 forwarded a report that the night of June 18 that year an unknown person broke into the churchyard of St. Nicholas Church in Novi Pazar and began to ring the church bells. When called by the priest, the police detained the unknown disturber of the peace.

Upon discussion the Holy Synod of Bishops decided the following:

"It is with regret that we have been informed by the report of His Grace Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren that on the night of June 18, 1990, an unknown person broke into the churchyard of St. Nicholas in Novi Pazar and disturbed the priests by a long ringing of the bells. The priests call the police, which detained the unknown perpetrator."[133]

The Year 1991

After the election of Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren as Serbian Patriarch, Bishop Artemije came to the Diocese and unfortunately encountered the same problems. Of course, they were not new to him because even before his election he had lived in Kosovo and Metohija and experienced for himself everything that was endured by other priests, monks, nuns and the faithful in the Province. Thus immediately upon his enthronement in act № 305 from October 23, 1991, he submitted a report from the Administration of the parish of Priština, № 148/91, to the Holy Synod of Bishops regarding the break in into the church of St. Nicholas in Priština the night of October 13–14, 1991.

The Holy Synod of Bishops acknowledged the information "with regret."[134]

The Year 1997

Bishop Artemije then informed the Holy Synod of Bishops in act № 24 from March 7, 1997, regarding the unfortunate events that occurred in Prizren and Priština on March 5, 1997:

"After morning services in the church of St. George in Prizren, when the seminarians had just returned to the building of the Seminary at about 7:20 a.m. an explosive device (6 kg of the explosive Trotil) was found by chance which had been planted by an unknown criminal hand on the pedestal of the monument to Emperor Dušan on the side toward the church altar, which is barely ten meters from the monument. On both sides of the street at intervals of about ten meters were numerous shops and bars owned by Albanians. Wednesday was a market day in Prizren and there are always a lot of people near the fountain.

The explosive was discovered by a nine year-old little girl, Ana, the daughter of sexton Dragomir Ostojić, who was going with her mother to the health center. The child noticed something wrapped on the monument so, thinking that someone had forgotten a shoebox, she ran to get it. When she unwrapped the paper, she saw something like a calculator on top and some thin wires (red and blue). Wanting to "take the calculator," she pulled on the two thin wires, tearing them out of the explosive and thus, without any idea of what she was doing, practically dismantled the hellish device (and the even more hellish intent of whoever

132 AHSB, Syn № 3027/zap. 1407, Nov. 23, 1989.

133 AHSB, Zapisnik iz 1990. Syn № 1615/zap 1108/90.

134 AHSB, Syn № 2713/zap 1743, Oct. 29, 1991.

planted it). Unable to separate the "calculator" from the mass, she tried to take the whole package but realized that it was heavy and so she called her mother, Marina. She came, took the mass in her hands and headed to the office where her husband, sexton Dragomir, was. Little Ana ran in and told her father that they had found something. He went out and immediately understood what it was but he also saw that the device was disarmed since the wires had been pulled out. He immediately showed it to the priest, the elder of the church, Fr. Ilija Šmigić, and then also to the secretary of the Diocese, Protopresbyter Zoran Grujić. Fr. Zoran immediately called the police and they called experts from Priština, who came and took away the found explosive.

The person who planted it is unknown, as is the target, i.e. for whom it was intended. Was it just "Emperor Dušan" or someone among the living? It is up to competent officials to determine that. On our part, we thank God who through the intercession of St. George kept us all safe from harm.

Nevertheless, there were consequences. Fear crept into the people because if it happened once without consequences, the second time or the time after that, who knew where and how things might end.

A little later that same day, at 10:45 a.m., a horrible explosion occurred in front of the Faculty of Philosophy. The explosive was planted in a garbage container. Four people were hurt by the explosion and all the windows on the front of the Faculty building shattered. Two other explosives were found the same day in Priština, one of them, planted in front of a monument to Vuk Karadžić in front of the faculty was removed, fortunately, before activation. Like in all of Kosovo and Metohija, the people there are also disturbed. Hundreds and thousands of apartments and houses in Priština and other locations have been posted for sale, and permanent displacements have increased strongly. If things continue in this direction, the epilog is not difficult to foresee.

We ask the Holy Synod of Bishops to accept the above report for its information and to undertake appropriate steps with competent state officials to repair this unstable situation in Kosovo and Metohija. Before it is too late."

In a meeting on March 18, 1997, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided that "a photocopy of the relevant report is to be forwarded to the Ministry for Religions of the Republic of Serbia with the request that competent state officials undertake energetic measures to finally stop the terror against all residents of Kosovo and Metohija."[135]

In another act, № 37 from March 17, Bishop Artemije wrote:

"It is with pain that I am again contacting you to inform the Holy Synod of the new suffering of the Church in Kosovo 'from those hands that do evil'. We still have not recovered nor regained our composure after the terrorist act in Prizren (regarding which I informed you recently, on March 7 of this year) and a new one has already occurred.

Namely, three days ago, on March 14, 1997, we were informed by the Administration of Dečani Monastery that unknown attackers broke a window on the Serbian Orthodox church of the Holy Trinity in the village of Donji Ratiš near Dečani and threw a flaming device into it, which caused damage to the church interior. This church was already destroyed in 1941 by the Balists; it was restored five years ago through the efforts of local residents and the monks of Dečani Monastery, who have been conducting regular services there.

The damage to the church has not yet been assessed but it is obvious that it will take some time to repair the damage and reequip the church for religious services. Although police have carried out an on scene investigation, it is still not clear who could be the perpetrator of this barbaric act. We hope that the security services will find the perpetrators of this act, yet another in a series of terrorist attacks that have shaken Kosovo and Metohija and instilled fear and unrest in the Serb people, in timely fashion.

The above is provided for your information and further appropriate action."

On April 3, 1997, the Holy Synod of Bishops decided that a photocopy of the report of the Bishop of Raška and Prizren be forwarded to the Ministry for Religions of the Republic of Serbia with the request that competent state officials undertake energetic measures to finally stop the terror against the Serbian Orthodox Church on the territory of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren."[136]

The Year 1999

The Holy Synod of Bishops by decision no 1101/zap. 601 from July 5, 1999, was informed of the letter of the Bishop of Raška and Prizren sent on July 4, 1999, to His Excellency Mr. Sérgio de Mello, UNMIK, Priština, and General Michael Jackson, KFOR, Priština:

"Respected sirs,

It is with great unrest and extreme concern that we are forced to address you again in writing after the violence that has been perpetrated against the Serb people in Kosovo and Metohija during the past several days.

Only two hours after the signing of our joint Statement with the leaders of the Kosovo Albanians, where both sides sincerely understood the responsibility to work on peace and reconciliation, we have experienced violence and provocations without precedent which has been organized by these same exact Albanian leaders.

The 'celebration' organized by the Kosovo Albanians, which was accompanied by a great deal of shooting, unrest, violence and provocative behavior, despite the presence of KFOR forces and UN authorities in the city of Pri-

135 AHSB, Syn № 417/zap. 252, Mar. 18, 1997.

136 AHSB, 447/zap. 322, Apr. 3, 1997.

ština, has clearly shown that the real goal of Albanian political leaders is apparently not a democratic and multiethnic Kosovo but rather an ethnically cleansed region where everything that belongs to the Serb people is despised and exposed to destruction and humiliation.

The night of July 2–3, in the very center of the city of Priština, monuments to Vuk Karadžić and Njegoš (well known Serbian writers) were destroyed. The toppled statues were pulled with tractors through the city while the frenzied Albanian masses shouted and spat at them. At the same time throughout the city and its vicinity, one could hear a great deal of shooting from firearms of various calibers as if a real war had broken out. Such a provocative use of firearms, which is in direct violation of the recent agreement between KFOR and the KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army], clearly shows that the international community worked only toward forcing Serbian troops to withdraw while, on the other hands hundreds of gangs were allowed to return to Kosovo with new weapons ready to sow death and destruction against all non-Albanians.

It is unnecessary to talk about the symbolic and psychological meaning of the destruction of these two monuments for our people. Their destruction is a clear message to Serbs that there is no room for them or their culture in Kosovo. Unfortunately, Priština is not the only example. A few days ago monuments to the Serbian medieval ruler Emperor Uroš in the city of Uroševac was destroyed, while monuments to Emperor Dušan and consul Jastrebov were also desecrated and destroyed. Throughout Kosovo everything that belongs to the Serb people has been exposed to merciless destruction. In fact, with the number of horrible murders, robberies, expulsions, rapes, torchings of homes, we are also experiencing the culturecide of our people.

We have confidential information that the head of the celebration and disturbances in Priština was none other than Mr. Hasim Thaci, the KLA leader, who only hours before had signed a joint Statement where he agreed to appeal to his people to refrain from violence and live in peace with their neighbors. However, only a few hours later the Albanian masses, inflamed by nationalism and ethnic hatred, 'celebrated' their freedom by torching several more Serb homes in Priština and the destruction of Serbian cultural heritage.

But that's not all. The Albanian leaders not only failed to openly address their people in accordance with the joint agreement but crimes against Serbs have continued with even greater intensity. All Serbs from the village of Orlovac near Priština were forced to leave their homes (41 families). Several Serbs have been abducted. Yesterday the Djordjević family in Gnjilanska Street in Priština was attacked by a group of armed Albanians. Miroslav Djordjević as seriously wounded and underwent 3 1/2 hours of surgery in the hospital. Ratko Djordjević, his brother, was beaten up and wounded in the leg. The family was ultimately forced to leave its home.

We have just received a report from the Gnjilane reason where not far from Vitina the monastery of Binča has been desecrated and burned to the ground. Monks from the monastery were forced to leave and barely managed to save their own lives. Serb Milan Ljušić was kidnapped yesterday afternoon from the courtyard of Gorioč Monastery by three armed Albanians with KLA insignia and the sisters were threatened to leave or told they would be slaughtered. According to reports from the field five burned Serb bodies have been found in Istok whose identity has yet to be established.

Gentlemen, our delegation has made an important step forward in the direction of peaceful existence by all national communities and restoration of peace and stability in Kosovo. We have clearly condemned crimes committed by the Milošević regime and even made such a compromise that crimes against Serbs were not separately mentioned in our Statement with the Kosovo Albanians, in order to protect human lives and prevent new crimes. We believe that we have thus shown a more than the sincere readiness and desire to continue cooperating. However, we will not continue to do so under any kind of conditions. Therefore, we most strongly demand from UNMIK and KFOR:

- to publicly condemn the violence that occurred during the course of the Albanian 'celebration' two days ago;

- to energetically demand from Kosovo Albanian leaders, especially Mr. Thaci, public distancing from the most recent violence and that they openly address their people and call on them to live in peace and tolerance. Words without action have no meaning. The authority Mr. Thaci has among the Albanian people makes him very accountable for both their present and future behavior;

- that the monuments destroyed in Priština be returned to their places as soon as possible and that you insist that the same be done in Uroševac and Prizren. KFOR must not give carte blanche to the unobstructed destruction of the Serbian cultural heritage. The Albanians can build their own monuments but they cannot destroy what belongs to other communities and cultures;

- that they call on representatives of the KLA to urgently provide detailed information about all Serbs who have been arrested or kidnapped by the members of this organization. We have clear evidence that camps for Serbs still exist in Kosovo. Who is running them and how long they will continue to exist are questions that need to be answered by KFOR representatives. Crimes that have been committed by various Albanian armed formations against Kosovo Serbs must be investigated in detail by the International Criminal Tribunal for ex-Yugoslavia (ICTY), not by local Kosovo courts. We must have in mind that during the course of the last two years many Serb civilians have been killed by the KLA, many have been kidnapped, all Serbs who lived on territory under Albanian control have been completely expelled from their homes and their property

has been looted or destroyed. Crimes against Serbs did not begin two weeks ago. *A public statement regarding investigation of crimes against Serbs and other non-Albanians will prevent to a large degree further crimes and violence for which some extremist Albanians believe they will not be held accountable.*

Fulfillment of these requests will sincerely encourage us in continuing with our further cooperation. If, however, Albanian leaders, especially those from the KLA, continue to ignore or minimize crimes against the non-Albanian population, especially the Serbs, and transfer all responsibility in general to the Serbs, we must say that we cannot participate and cooperate in any of the joint commissions foreseen in the last Statement.

Our desire to work together, despite sharp criticisms of the Milošević media and individual protests by some killed Kosovo Serbs, MUST NOT be understood as a green light for the continuation of crimes against our people and Church. If the Albanian leadership not only fails to condemn the most recent crimes but does not undertake *obvious* steps to stop acts of terror and free the imprisoned and kidnapped Serbs, we will no longer be able to meet with them or work together.

We sincerely believe that you completely understand our views. We also wish to take this opportunity to express our deepest surprise by the fact that KFOR could tolerate such violence in the streets of Priština and the destruction of our two monuments. Hence, we expect this shortcoming to be corrected in the near future and that *the monuments will be returned to their places.*

Despite these most recent incidents, we must admit that we respect the efforts KFOR has invested during the last week. Operations in which KFOR soldiers have confiscated significant quantities of weapons, arrested various criminals and in several cases prevented serious crimes demonstrate the sincere readiness of KFOR and UNMIK to continue working of the establishment of better security conditions for all communities in Kosovo and Metohija, and the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1244, for which we are truly grateful."[137]

The Year 2000

The Bishop of Raška and Prizren in his report to the Holy Assembly of Bishops said the following:

"In the spirit of article 108 of the SPC Constitution, I am submitting to the Holy Synod of Bishops the annual report for the Assembly on my work, situation and conditions in the Diocese of Raška and Prizren for the period from May 15, 1999, to May 16, 2000. This year's report will not and cannot resemble our previous reports regularly submitted to the Holy Assembly of Bishops every year because of the completely different circumstances created for the Diocese of Raška and Prizren in the past year.

In the past year since the arrival of KFOR as international peacekeeping forces and UNMIK as the civil administration of UC, the Serb people in Kosovo and Metohija have suffered much persecution. The Yugoslav army and police has withdrawn from Kosovo, almost all official representatives have left from Kosovo, all intellectuals, physicians, professors… and a large number of our people (over two-thirds). Only the Serbian Orthodox Church with its clergy, monks and nuns has stayed with the remaining people (about 100,000). Mr. Momčilo Trajković also stayed with a few of his associates.

In the first days and months we invested a maximum of effort to stop the river of Serb refugees leaving from Kosovo and Metohija, to keep the people despite all suffering and persecution, sacrifice and pressure.

It is impossible to include all events on the territory of Kosovo and Metohija in the past year in a report as succinct as this. Therefore, we will try to accurately depict the very beginning of the unprecedented Golgotha of the Serb people immediately after the signing of the Kumanovo agreement on June 9, 1999.

On June 9 at 9:45 p.m. the Kumanovo betrayal of Kosovo was signed. Pain and sorrow in the soul, sleeplessness in the eyes. In Belgrade—celebration! In Prizren—celebration, shooting! A prayer springs forth: Lord, save our senses! The next day, at 3:00 p.m., orders were given to stop the NATO aerial attacks. The Yugoslav Army began its withdrawal at noon. Hundreds of military vehicles from Podujevo heading for Merdare. SR Yugoslavia president Slobodan Milošević addressed the Nation for the first time since the commencement of the bombing with a declaration of victory. On June 11 we visited Velika Hoča and Father Milenko. The people gathered. Bewildered, frightened. They ask what they should do but they are not prepared to listen. Everyone is ready to leave. We go to Djakovica. The president of the Municipality is packed and ready to leave. And all the Serb people. It is the same in Peć, Dečani, Prizren, Mušutište. Probably elsewhere, too, but I have no direct knowledge. Columns of military vehicles on the road. On every side. And civilian ones, too: trucks, tractors, passenger vehicles. Everywhere hopelessness, despair, the feeling that we have been betrayed and abandoned by our country.

The army and police are without hope. Without a clear decision and directions on what to do. General chaos. Anarchy. Peć all in flames. It is impossible to breathe. Night is falling, with it uncertainty and fear enter under every roof and creep into every soul. The monks, nuns and clergy are still in their places. They place their hopes in God. The Church has remained clean, outside and above all the dirtiness of this war.

The next day, June 12, we visited the monastery of the Holy Trinity near Mušutište. I served and gave communion to the sisters. During Liturgy the priest from Mušutište, Fr. Aleksandar Našpalić, arrived with three locals. They reported:

[137] AHSB, Syn № 1101/zap. 601, July 5, 1999.

Yesterday about 130 households from the village of Mušutište (about 300 from the whole parish) left. There are only about 50 houses in the vicinity of the church left for today. They ask: What should they do? I give the same advice everywhere and always: stay. I see: They do not accept it. They say: They were incited to leave permanently by officials and commanders over their radio stations—Motorolas:

"The last convoy today is leaving at 3:00 p.m. Get ready. Whoever stays will have no guarantee of being able to leave later. The Germans are coming (who for months have been depicted as the enemies of the Serbs. And—the scenario succeeded. Like in Kninska Krajina: the people set out after the army. Again a part of the Serb people (this time from Kosovo) is on bicycles, in trailers. A reprise of the columns from two and a half months ago (Albanian ones) except now in the opposite direction—to the North. To ruin. To horror...

On our way to Prizren, we stopped in Mušutište. Everything was packed to go. Tractors, trucks, automobiles. Pain and despair. Some thirty of them gathered in the church. They ask, yet they do not want to listen. We leave for Prizren, and they... We arrived in Prizren at 2:00 p.m. New information: Last night in Prizren some 40 Turkish homes were damaged, several Serb shops and bars, some women were raped... This morning, leaving from Prizren—convoys of military vehicles—ready. A convoy of some 30 buses enters Prizren—for the army. Disintegration, decay, chaos. Everything pre-planned, drawn up and realized. Everything as I foresaw it and spoke about it many years ago. This is truly the end, not just of Kosovo but also of Serbia—and also of the Serbs. In other places, too (near Prizren, Djakovica, Dečani, Peć) General flight. In many places the army continues to burn, destroy , shoot (Dečani, Peć).

Upon arriving in Prizren at 2:00 p.m. I immediately returned father Hariton to the monastery of the Holy Trinity with my blessing to drive all the sisters to the monastery of Gračanica, so they are not alone up in that mountain, when the entire village has left. They could become needless victims of the KLA, which was in the hills above the monastery. I believed then that this would be for one or two days until the international forces arrived (naively believing, I admit, that they would immediately establish peace and offer protection to those in danger). Father Hariton carried out the blessing and also was the first to bring news that the Germans had arrived in Prizren. Last night the Russians arrived in Priština (Slatina Airport) and today—the British. And so on and so forth.

The next day, on Sunday, June 13, I served in Prizren. Few people came. Fr. Zoran Grujić served in Ljubižda. There the KLA is blocking the village and the church. In Prizren the Albanians are in a frenzy—because of the arrival of KFOR. Fr. Zoran barely managed to get to Prizren. They smashed his car under the eyes of KFOR soldiers. The first sign they would not protect us, that they would not stop the KLA from taking its vengeance and revenge... The Serbs in Prizren in a panic. Many come, ask, seek a solution, answers. Contacts with Priština, Peć, Dečani. Radio connections and telephones are in constant use. New news is constantly arriving... Djakovica, Dečani, Peć—empty, without a single Serb (with the exception of the monasteries of Dečani and the Peć Patriarchate). Djurakovac, all gone. Orahovac and Velika Hoča, ready to head after the army. KFOR (the Germans here) does not guarantee safety (they say there are too few of them for now). In Prizren three Serb victims have already fallen. Many have already moved away. The rest are ready to go. Tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. the last convoy of army and police is leaving Prizren. We, too, and the rest of the people are forced to head after them. But just to Gračanica, under no circumstances from Kosovo. At least for now. Betrayal is obvious. We were not discussed at the negotiations. It appears that the Regime in Belgrade again needs massive victims and the tragedy of the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija. Occasionally, we follow news from the side (VVS, O\U, RTV Montenegro). No light from anywhere.

On Monday, June 14, the KFOR Commander in Prizren, called me for talks. We went to the KFOR command. We spoke for more than an hour and I, upon presenting our situation, asked for protection for the Serb population here, in Orahovac and Hoča. Upon returning to the church, I conveyed a message to the gathered people to stay here, and that KFOR had promised to reestablish law and order. The message was not convincing. During the day many had left. Perhaps ten percent of the Serbs in the town remained. About 200 people were housed in the Seminary for the night. The others were still in their houses. The euphoria of the Albanians in the streets. Especially the young. And the appearance of the KLA in the streets, in the hospital, everywhere. In Ljubižda last night they were searching houses, confiscating weapons, beating people up...

The next day, June 15, we learned that the remaining Serbs from yesterday left this morning at about 6:00 a.m. with the last convoy of the army. The ones from the Seminary, too. The army ordered buses for them. The few families that remained asked what they should do. They asked the Church to order buses for them so they can leave. We cannot do that because the Church will not and cannot take part in the permanent dislocation of Serbs from Kosovo. I said to them: Let everyone make his own decision and take care for himself... Just like during two and a half months of bombing and during the entire time of the negotiations (and before the war) the Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija were not mentioned anywhere and just like they were nowhere mentioned in the signed agreement, the official state media of Belgrade today did not mention one word or talk about the departure of Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija (Prizren, Orahovac, Djakovica, Peć, Dečani). The last task of the army was not to leave any Serbs behind. And the army made the effort both in its earlier work and now dur-

ing withdrawal. So that one day someone could point to the failure of the peacekeeping forces and accuse them of failing to offer the Serbs necessary protection, and to the defeat of Western policy. The official media talk only about victory, about the peace that now reigns, about the preserved integrity and sovereignty of the country and—about the restoration of the destroyed country (yesterday—the bridge near Beška).

But the German General also failed to keep yesterday's promise. Last night the KLA and the people (Albanians) celebrated their victory deep into the night with shooting, drums, song. The German patrols were nowhere to be seen in the city. They broke into many Serb houses "looking for weapons, threatening and forcing to leave."

At about 11:00 o'clock a monk, father Hariton (Lukić) was kidnapped in the center of Prizren when he went with an automobile to take care of something. Five other Serbs were kidnapped in various locations in the city. Shooting and rushing through the city all day. The radio station and telephone lines were red hot from constant use. The remaining Serbs gathered for the most part in the Seminary. We tried through Priština to obtain buses for evacuation the next day because we saw that there was nothing else we could. Bishop Atanasije joined Father Miroslav. He also got involved. Amfilohije also arrived in Sopoćani.

At 18:30 sisters Katarina, Magdalina and Justina arrived with father Radivoje Panić with a British escort. They went to Holy Trinity. The monastery was COMPLETELY BURNED… The brothers from Holy Archangels and from Zočište Monastery went with them to Gračanica. At about 8:00 a.m. a KFOR officer arrived with two soldiers. We spoke for about two hours. In detail. About us, about Holy Archangels Monastery, about the Seminary, about the people. He was very understanding, quiet, reasonable. He gave protection (for tonight) of the Bishop's residence and the church of St. George, the Seminary. He heard from KLA leaders that their people would torch the church of St. George tonight. That is why he was giving us the protection. I asked them to find Fr. Hariton through them. They did not succeed for tonight. I asked to meet tomorrow with the General. We agreed to meet at 8:00 a.m. in the Bishop's residence. They said they had secured five buses for tomorrow for the people, as well as their own escort.

June 16 dawned. The German General arrived on schedule. I described the situation on the ground to him and the need to evacuate the people and ourselves from Prizren with the wish and hope that we would soon be able to return. "That depends on you," I said. He understood, expressed his regret because of this and ordered the major to ensure a safe exit. We spent all day preparing. Telephone calls to Priština regarding the buses, to the people in Prizren, everyone gathered in the Seminary. The KFOR soldiers covered the area from the Bishop's residence to the Seminary. It was agreed that three of our people would stay in the Bishop's residence. The major prepared a contract on protection of the facilities: the Bishop's residence with the church, the Seminary and Holy Archangels Monastery with its staff.

The buses were quite late. They arrived at 4:45 p.m. With them Bishop Atanasije, Hierodeacon Maksim, Fr. Stefan, Fr. Antonije and Sister Katarina. The people got into the five buses and about 30 automobiles. The column headed in front of Sinan Pasha's Mosque at exactly 6:00 p.m. Through ranks of Albanians, KLA, children and adults gathered on either side shouting deafeningly: Thieves, thieves… NATO, NATO… KLA, KLA… which had a very depressing and extremely humiliating effect. Individual members of some 30 or so families stayed in Prizren. Security was strong and professional.

We arrived in front of the monastery in Gračanica at 8:45 p.m. The people in the buses and automobiles continued on to Vranje. The monks, nuns and clergy stayed in Gračanica Monastery. We were welcomed by the clergy from Priština and vicinity and a few people. We learned new information from them about the suffering of the Serbs in various locations: Slovinje, Stojkovići near Uroševac, Nerodimlje… All this has resulted in uneasiness and unrest among Serbs in the bigger Serb Enclaves. Many are packing in Lipljan, Kosovo Polje, Obilić. Alarmists (either sent or convinced) are going among the people and inciting them to move and sowing fear. The KFOR command is appealing that they staying, promising it will provide safety for all. I repeated by view and blessing: Serbs in bigger Enclaves are to protect themselves until peacekeeping forces reestablish peace and order. They can and they must do this. Inciting such units to move, frequently without reason or any direct danger, is pure treason…

And so on and so forth. Day after day, month after month, almost a year has passed. KFOR's promises have not been kept. Serbs continue to suffer, they are murdered and kidnapped, churches and monasteries destroyed… But Serbs in the larger Enclaves are subsisting, thanks only to the security provided them by KFOR. We have stayed with our people. We have shared every evil with them because there has not been anything good. We have tried and continue to try to convince or force the international community to fulfill the responsibilities it has undertaken in UN Security Council Resolution 1244. The results are slim but we cannot do without them.

When the situation had somewhat stabilized, a need was felt for the Serb community in Kosovo and Metohija to act in unison in resolving all its problems and achieving better protection and safety for the people who remained in Kosovo, and in creating essential conditions for the return of all those expelled from Kosovo and Metohija, both Serbs and other non-Albanians. With this goal the thought and idea of creating the Serb National Council of Kosovo was born, which would act in unison throughout the entire territory of Kosovo and Metohija. Since the day of its founding the SNC has tried and is trying to carry out its role

honorable. Everything it does, all its contacts with institutions and individuals of the international community, all meetings and conversations, all travels around the world, have only two goals: greater safety and security for the Serbs who remain in Kosovo and Metohija, and the creation of adequate conditions for the return of all expelled Serbs and those who fled to their ancestral homes, their villages and towns..."[138]

The Year 2002

The Bishop of Raška and Prizren in his report to the Holy Assembly of Bishops again wrote:

"Since last year's Assembly and during the course of the past year, the life and work of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren has continued to unfold in exceptionally difficult and abnormal conditions like in previous years. The tragedy of the Serb people in Kosovo and Metohija, as well as of those who have been expelled from their homes, is continuing in every possible form. It is still visible at every step. With respect to security, freedom of movement, conditions for living and working, everything remains as it was, i.e. Serbs and other non-Albanians are still exposed to various forms of pressure and violence and the departure of Serbs from Kosovo is ongoing, although now lower in intensity.

In the course of the previous year there have been several murders, attempted kidnappings, tossing of bombs at houses and other buildings, Serbian Orthodox churches are being destroyed and blown up, and above all, Serb livestock is being stolen. Serbs regularly report all these attacks, murders and robberies to KFOR, UNMIK or the police and nothing changes: investigations are initiated, promised but never lead to their goal, to discovering the perpetrator and compensation for the damage done. Hence, even after three years, pain, sorrow and uncertainty still oppress every Serb soul in Kosovo and Metohija. This is one of the basic reasons why Serb houses and property are still being sold throughout Kosovo and Metohija, especially in strategic areas, next to roads, in purely Serb environments, which represents an additional form of pressure on the remaining Serbs in those areas.

Nevertheless, there have been certain changes and progress on repairing the general situation in Kosovo and Metohija. The first step has been taken with respect to the return of expelled Serbs and about 100 displaced persons were returned to Osojane in August 2001, fifty damaged houses were reconstructed, and that is where matters stopped. Registration of voters (unfortunately, not of all residents) was carried out in the Serb community, both among those in Kosovo and Metohija as well as among those expelled; November elections were held for provisional government institutions, an Assembly was constituted, a Government elected... One might be tempted to say that the situation was normalizing. This is just on first sight. Because all these changes are occurring on the political plan and in the highest levels of society. In the life of the ordinary, common man, the one in the base, there have been no changes or improvements, which is also confirmed by the facts presented above.

And the international community is in a hurry. It cares about demonstrating its successes in Kosovo and Metohija to the world at any price. Thus, it is reducing the number of its soldiers, withdrawing security from certain religious facilities, discontinuing checkpoints near certain Serb villages because supposedly "the security situation is good and they are no longer necessary" (e.g. Gračanica, Parteš, Djakovica). "Serbs have freedom to live and freedom of movement; Kosovo society is advancing on the path of democratization; interethnic relations are good," etc. All these are just new, modern and contemporary Potemkin villages because it is all an illusion. This is also clearly attested to by the Ombudsman, Mr. M. Nowicki, in his statements."[139]

The Year 2004

From its extraordinary meeting called by His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle in regard to the latest tragic events in Kosovo and Metohija on March 17, 2004, the extended membership of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church issue the following communiqué and appeal:

"Yesterday's and last night's disturbances which occurred throughout the south Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija are a continuation of organized Albanian terrorism against the Serbian Orthodox people, which has lasted for several decades, against its and the world's cultural heritage, and against other non-Albanian residents of this region. The terrorism and violence that appeared in a special form with the burning of the residence of the Peć Patriarchate in 1981 continued uninterrupted until 1999 and since that year of NATO bombing and expulsion of several hundred thousand Serbs and other non-Albanians have grown progressively in strength and intensity. The result of this unprecedented violence is several thousand men, women and children who were kidnapped and murdered, burned villages and settlements of Serbs, usurped and endangered property of the people and the Church, the destruction and damage of more than 115 monasteries and churches. And all this at a time when the entire region was under the direct protectorate of the international community. The culmination of this is the latest, obviously preplanned, unprecedented pogrom currently in process against the remaining Serbs and their centuries-old holy shrines. More than 15 of the most significant churches and cultural monuments from the 14th to the 19th century, be-

138 AHSB, 2000.

139 AHSB, 2002.

ginning with Holy Archangels and Bogorodica Ljeviška in Prizren to the church of St. Nicholas (19th century) in Belo Polje have been torched and destroyed in one day. Tens of people have been killed, the remaining Serb settlements throughout Kosovo and Metohija are being torched and destroyed; Dečani Monastery has been targeted with artillery fire, the Peć Patriarchate and the monastery of Gračanica are in danger. It is clear to any thinking person that what is happening is a pre-planned, comprehensive ethnic cleansing and destruction of all cultural and spiritual traces of the presence of the Christian Serb people in the region of Kosovo and Metohija. Moreover, the representatives of the international community, KFOR and UNMIK, by their actions or lack thereof from 1999 to today, are contributing, willingly or not, to the final extermination of the Serbian Orthodox people from their ancestral homes and the destruction of their culture and the pan-Christian holy shrines of Kosovo. Our state, contrary to Security Council Resolution 1244, is being prevented from defending its people and a part of its territory, while those who in the name of protecting human rights and freedoms, have assumed the protectorate and responsibility are contributing to the escalation of unprecedented terror in the heart of Europe with their passivity.

For this reason the Holy Synod of Bishops appeals to the authorities of the state union of Serbia and Montenegro and the government of Serbia to do everything within their power to protect the people from extermination and the final expulsion of the Serb people from Kosovo and Metohija.

We cry out to the European Community, the USA, Russia, the United Nations to urgently stop this pogrom and terror, in God's name and for the sake of human dignity.

We also appeal to the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija and their leaders to stop this senselessness for their own sakes and the sake of their future. We remind them and ourselves of the general human experience that violence, injustice and hatred have never brought any good to anyone. Finally, we call on all our people in these most difficult times to double their fasting and prayers for salvation and liberation, for peace among us and throughout the world. Let us not allow ourselves, for any interest in this world, to do anything unworthy of God's People, anything inhumane. We must take care in these confusing times to avoid any senseless and irrational vengeance, like the unreasonable began to perpetuate against mosques in Belgrade and Niš. We must protect ourselves from evil and criminals but not in inhumane fashion or, God forbid, through evil deeds or inhumanity as criminals do. Lord, help us all, both us and our enemies, for we all need peace, freedom and justice, for ourselves, and for all people and nations."[140]

On March 20, 2004, His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle informed all the heads of the Local Orthodox Churches about this, saying the following:

"We feel it is our duty to write you this letter in order to thus fulfill our duty before God and before history.

As a long-time bishop in Kosovo (we served as the Bishop of Raška and Prizren for 34 years), we know we speak the truth before God, that what is happening these days in the south Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija is only a continuation of organized Albanian terrorism and ethnic cleansing of the Serb population, and the systematic destruction of its cultural heritage, which has lasted for several decades, better said since the beginning of World War II (1941). Unfortunately, the international public is little aware that this terrorism and violence appeared in a special form with the burning of the residence of the Peć Patriarchate in 1981. They continued uninterrupted until 1999 and since that year of NATO bombing and expulsion of several hundred thousand Serbs and other non-Albanians have grown progressively in strength and intensity. The result of this unprecedented violence is several thousand men, women and children who were kidnapped and murdered, burned villages and settlements of Serbs, usurped and endangered property of the people and the Church (and thus the legalization of previous Communist violence), the destruction and damage of more than 115 monasteries and churches. And all this at a time when the entire region was under the direct protectorate of the international community.

The culmination of this is the latest, obviously preplanned, unprecedented pogrom currently in process against the last remaining Serbs and their spiritual and cultural identity. In just one day more than 18 of the most significant churches and cultural monuments dating from the 14th to the 19th centuries, some of them under the direct protection of UNESCO, were destroyed. We will list them by location, name and date of construction.

1. Peć: Church of St. John the Forerunner, 1982, burned with the parish home;

2. Djakovica: Church of the Ascension of Our Lord, 19th century, burned with the parish home (four Serb old ladies living there have been evacuated to the monastery of Dečani);

3. Prizren: Bogorodica Ljeviška Cathedral, burned (church foundation is from the 12th century, and it was restored by King Milutin in 1306-07);

4. Prizren: Church of the Holy Savior, built and decorated with frescos in the mid-14th century, burned;

5. Prizren: St. George the Great-Martyr Cathedral from 1997 with an icon of the Theotokos from the 14th century and an iconostasis from the 18th century, burned;

6. Prizren: Monastery of Holy Archangels near Prizren, built by the Emperor Dušan from 1343–1352, burned (brotherhood of seven monks evacuated);

[140] AHSB, 2004.

7. Prizren: Church of St. George [Sveti Georgije] from the 15th century with royal doors from the 16th century, burned. Located in the courtyard of the church of St. George [Sv. Djordja] in front of the Bishop's residence;

8. Prizren: Bishop's residence building from the 1960s, burned;

9. Uroševac: Church of the Holy Emperor Uroš (1933), burned;

10. Kosovo Polje: Church of St. Nicholas, 19th century, burned;

11. Bresje: Church of St. Catherine, 19th century, burned;

12. Priština: Church of St. Nicholas, 19th century, burned;

13. Gnjilane: Church of St. Nicholas (1861), burned together with all remaining Serb houses in town;

14. Belo Polje: Church of St. Nicholas (19th century), damaged in 1999, partially restored, now burned;

15. Donja Slapašnica: church burned;

16. Brnjica: church burned;

17. Devič: monastery of Devič, church of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos (15th century), burned, sisterhood evacuated;

18. Vitina: church from 1925, burned.

It is sad and incomprehensible that monuments of spirituality and culture which survived the 500 year-long occupation of the Ottoman Muslim Empire are irreparably disappearing during the reign of Europe and America in this region, which still consider themselves to be bearers of Christian civilization and modern democracy.

Even more tragic is that in this day the murder of innocent people, the frenzied burning and destruction of remaining Serb settlements throughout this Autonomous Province is continuing. The renowned monastery of Visoki Dečani has been targeted with artillery fire, the Peć Patriarchate, the centuries-old spiritual center of the Serbian Orthodox Church and people, is in danger.

It is clear to any thinking person that what is happening is a pre-planned, comprehensive ethnic cleansing and destruction of all cultural and spiritual traces of the presence of the Christian Serb people in the region of Kosovo and Metohija. Moreover, the representatives of the international community, KFOR and UNMIK, by their actions or lack thereof from 1999 to today, are contributing, willingly or not, to the final extermination of the Serbian Orthodox people from their ancestral homes and the destruction of their culture and the pan-Christian holy shrines of Kosovo. Our state, contrary to Security Council Resolution 1244, is being prevented from defending its people and a part of its territory, while those who in the name of protecting human rights and freedoms, have assumed the protectorate and responsibility are contributing to the escalation of unprecedented terror in the heart of Europe with their passivity.

For this reason the Holy Synod of Bishops appeals to the authorities of the state union of Serbia and Montenegro and the government of Serbia to do everything within their power to protect the people from extermination and the final expulsion of the Serb people from Kosovo and Metohija.

We cry out to the European Community, the USA, Russia, the United Nations to urgently stop this pogrom and terror, in God's name and for the sake of human dignity.

We have also appealed to the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija and their leaders to stop this senselessness for their own sakes and the sake of their future. We remind them and ourselves of the general human experience that violence, injustice and hatred have never brought any good to anyone.

Finally, we call on all our people in these most difficult times to double their fasting and prayers for salvation and liberation, for peace among us and throughout the world. Let us not allow ourselves, for any interest in this world, to do anything unworthy of God's People, anything inhumane. We must take care in these confusing times to avoid any senseless and irrational vengeance, like the unreasonable began to perpetuate against mosques in Belgrade and Niš. We must protect ourselves from evil and criminals but not in inhumane fashion or, God forbid, through evil deeds or inhumanity as criminals do.

We are convinced that it is clear to you also that this terrorism and violence is the same as the terrorism of September 11 in New York and that which occurred recently in Madrid. Taking into account that it is more long lasting and comprehensive it is even more dangerous in many respects, not only for us but for all of the Balkans and Europe.

We write this to you in accordance with our conscience and Christian duty with equal concern and responsibility for every endangered human being in the world as well as our own people, about whom we have written here and who have been entrusted to us for spiritual caretakership.

We expect that you will responsibly and in accordance with conscience do everything within your power to stop this crime and ensure equal rights for all in Kosovo and Metohija, and for Orthodox Serbs at least the right to a home, a church and their lives."[141]

During its regular meeting from September 6–8, 2004, in Belgrade, the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church sent an Appeal to the state authorities of Serbia, the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, and the international community for the protection of human rights in Kosovo and Metohija, the return of expelled persons and the restoration of destroyed homes, holy shrines and historical and cultural monuments, as follows:

"It is well-known to everyone that the agony of the Serb people in Kosovo and Metohija has already lasted five full years. Namely, from June 1999 to March 17, 2004, the greatest ethnic cleansing ever carried out "in peacetime" was carried out under the rule of UNMIK and in the presence of KFOR international peacekeeping forces. In that period

141 AHSB, 2004.

all cities in Kosovo and Metohija except Kosovska Mitrovica were ethnically cleansed, as well as entire regions (Metohija) because two-thirds of the Serb people—over 200,000 Serbs—and 50,000 other non-Albanians were expelled; over 1,300 Serbs were killed and the same number kidnapped and nothing is known about their fate to this day. Over 40,000 Serb houses and homes of other non-Albanians were looted, burned and destroyed; hundreds of Serb villages were wiped off the face of the planet; thousands of acts of violence and crime (robberies, rapes, beatings) were carried out against Serbs; 115 churches and monasteries were damaged and destroyed.

At the same time the one-third of Serbs who remained to live in Kosovo and Metohija has been experiencing its bitter fate in bigger and smaller enclaves, ghettoes, prison camps, deprived of all human rights (the right to life, to freedom of movement, the possibility of employment, to adequate education of children, to health protection, to security of property, etc.)

Living under these abnormal and inhumane conditions, exposed to constant pressure and violence, discrimination and harassment by the Albanian majority and terrorists, Serbs are forced to continue leaving Kosovo and Metohija, and there are fewer and fewer of them remaining.

Despite all difficulties and unbearable living conditions, the Serbs have tried to be cooperative with the international community and with provisional institutions of the Kosovo government by taking part in elections, participating in institutions of government (the parliament, etc.) However, by participating in these provisional institutions of government, the Serbs have not managed to solve a single one of their problems nor improve their position. These institutions, created and supported by UNMIK, exclusively resolve the problems of local Albanians, including the tens of thousands of Albanians who have, in the meanwhile, crossed from Albania to Kosovo, occupying the property and homes of the expelled non-Albanian population. The passing of a series of laws and others activities of this kind are creating conditions for the secession of Kosovo from the constitutional-legal framework of the state of Serbia and Montenegro, of which it is an integral and inalienable part according to, among other things, Security Council Resolution № 1244. The presence of Serbs in these institutions only served to give them legitimacy and created a false picture of the multiethnicity of those institutions.

As the whole world knows, instead of the resolution of their problems, first of all, security, the right to life and freedom of movement, as well as the return of expelled persons to their homes, the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija experienced on March 17, 2004, a horrible pogrom at the hands of Albanian extremists, unprecedented in modern world history. In just two days, March 17–18 (on the anniversary of the burning of the Peć Patriarchate by Albanian extremists in 1981), 4,000 more Serbs were expelled from their homes, 19 people lost their lives, and hundreds were wounded and beaten up. Nine hundred sixty Serb homes were burned and robbed, seven villages were destroyed, and 35 more churches and monasteries were burned. In their rioting the Albanian terrorists were not spared by either UNMIK or KFOR.

More than five months have passed since then. The situation has not changed at all. Despite verbal condemnations of this rioting and assessments that it was well organized, synchronized and orchestrated pogrom against Serbs, Roma and other non-Albanians, and despite promises that everything burned and destroyed would be rebuilt during the course of the same year, and the expelled returned to their homes—nothing has changed at all.

The violence, attacks and murders, as well as the pressures, has continued after March 17, too. The rebuilding of what was destroyed in March, with respect to homes, is symbolic and serves more for manipulation and marketing by the Kosovo authorities. As far as the rebuilding of the burned churches and monasteries is concerned, not a stone has been moved toward that end. The only thing being done is the removal of the last remnants of both churches and monasteries destroyed after 1999, many of which are from the 14th and 15th centuries, and of those burned and destroyed on March 17, 2004.

Keeping in mind this tragic situation and existential threat to the non-Albanian population in Kosovo and Metohija, the impossibility of return for the expelled, the continuation of ethnic cleansing and destruction of the cultural and comprehensive historical presence of the Serb people in this region, the Holy Assembly of Bishops feels it is its duty and responsibility to inform domestic authorities and international actors of the following:

1) Support for independence as the final status of Kosovo and Metohija would mean not only approval of all cited and uncited persecution, destruction and crimes in Kosovo and Metohija but also the legitimization of misdeeds by the occupying (fascist) forces and post-war Communists, expulsions, decisions and their consequences in this region, listed in our Memorandum which we are submitting with this Appeal.

2) The Serbian Orthodox Church most decisively demands from the United Nations and UNESCO, as well as from the European Union, in addition to enabling the return of all the expelled and the rebuilding of their homes and conditions for normal life, the immediate rebuilding of all holy shrines—religious and cultural monuments in Kosovo Metohija destroyed during the period of rule by officials of the international community, UNMIK and KFOR, in Kosovo and Metohija. Kosovo and Metohija is the only region in Europe and the world were so many monuments of Christian culture and civilization have been destroyed in this day and age, and in the presence of the international community! It is good that the bridge over the Neretva in Mostar has been rebuilt through joint efforts. However, the Church expects and hopes that the United Nations and

the European Union will live up to their historical duty and the responsibilities they have assumed to rebuilt and protect Kosovo and Metohija's spiritual and cultural heritage which, without a doubt, is of global significance. Failure to fulfill this request by the Church would mean rewarding war-time (fascist), post-war (Communist) and the most recent (terrorist) the perpetrators of crime and terror against the Serbian Church and people.

3) The Holy Assembly of Bishops expresses satisfaction that all political parties in Serbia and in the Serbian Assembly have accepted the Serbian Government's plan on decentralization and self-administration of minority communities in Kosovo as the only realistic prerequisite for the preservation of Kosovo's multiethnicity and the protection of human rights. The Assembly wholeheartedly supports this plan. We expect the international community, after its tragic experience in Kosovo in the past few years, to soberly and justly consider this problem and in the spirit of this proposal to contribute with an appropriate solution on the organization of political relations in Kosovo and Metohija.

4) The Church in principle welcomes—everywhere, including in Kosovo and Metohija the democratic right to participate in elections. However, it is regret that we must ask everyone insisting on the participation of Serbs and minority communities in scheduled October elections in Kosovo and Metohija: in what country in the world can one ask participation in elections under conditions where people lack not only fundamental safety and basic human rights, including the right to freedom of movement, but the right to life itself? A slave must first be freed of the captivity imposed upon him and liberated from his dungeon that he may act freely and freely elect or be elected.

5) In connection with the resolution of this problem, the Church expects the governments of Serbia and Montenegro individually, as well as the highest joint officials of the state union, to have a unified position with respect to the question of Kosovo and Metohija as a question of vital importance not only for us but also for the establishment of peace and order throughout the Balkans and beyond in Europe. We consider the recent meeting and views of the leaders of the European Union in Maastricht with respect to the state union of Serbia and Montenegro to be an important incentive and roadmap to all those who truly desire entry into European integrations, to create all prerequisites for entry into the European Union through joint efforts, strengthening unity and community in European fashion. At the same time, such cooperation and reciprocity between the members of the state union of Serbia and Montenegro will undoubtedly be precious in both the resolution of the problem of Kosovo and Metohija and in the enhancement of general social, economic and political life of both Serbia and Montenegro and the Balkan Peninsula as a whole."[142]

142 AHSB, 2004.

The Year 2005

In his annual report to the Holy Assembly of Bishops, E № 260 from May 14, 2005, the Bishop of Raška and Prizren, wrote the following:

"It remains our holy duty, like in earlier years, to continue with our clergy, monks and nuns and faithful to carry the cross that has been placed on our shoulders by our Father in Heaven according to His providence and all-knowing wisdom. In this we see the purpose of our existence on earth, that the wounds of the Lord Jesus Christ might be finished upon us, so that by them He will recognize and acknowledge us as his faithful servants and followers "when He returns in His Kingdom."

The brutal terror that is still be carried out by Albanian terrorists and criminals against the Serb population: harassment, murders and kidnappings of Serbs, looting and usurpation of Serb property, displacement of the Serb population, destruction of Serbian Orthodox holy shrines—continues to this day. Despite all this, thanks to the firm position and persistence of the clergy and monks and nuns of the Diocese of Raška-Prizren and Kosovo-Metohija, the tragic consequence of this terror are somewhat ameliorated. The entire Orthodox population, looking upon its Church which has never betrayed or abandoned it, receives new strength and initiative to stay and endure in its ancestral home because the Church is here, like a ship of salvation, to help, console, elevate and strengthen the faithful, tossed by the storm and temptation in the moment when it needs help the most.

Without losing our hope in God's help, we also expect from the representatives of the government of our country, and first of all from the Holy Assembly of Bishops, their undivided support and unity as far as Kosovo and Metohija are concerned. Only together, united in one thought, inspired by justice and tolerance, can we also expect the International Community to accurately understand and assess the situation in Kosovo and Metohija, and to find a just solution for the benefit and peaceful co-existence of all citizens in the south Serbian Province.

(...) The mission of the Church and our pastoral work under these circumstances in Kosovo and Metohija and in the District of Raška as well, is made more difficult and hindered by external factors. But this does not meet that on our path, which is what it is because God so wills, we should lose hope or give ourselves the right to leave it and neglect our duties but, on the contrary, to become even more engaged in the hope that, with the help of God, we will overcome all obstacles and problems we find on the path as our final designation. The Kingdom of Heaven. We find the source of hope and strength to continue on this cross-bearing path in the Lord Jesus Christ who was Crucified for us and Resurrected, the first and eternal Pastoral Leader of His Holy Orthodox Church.[143]

143 AHSB, Syn № 743, May 16, 2005.

The Holy Assembly of Bishops dedicated lengthy consideration to this report and its Public Communiqué from May 26, 2005, expressed support for the efforts of Bishop Artemije, then condemned attempts to appropriate Serbian Orthodox holy shrines in Kosovo and Metohija by Albanian extremists and called on all responsible persons in Serbia and in the world to protect the faithful and property of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo and Metohija. The Assembly also called on all displaced Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija to return to their homes, and responsible international factors to make this return possible, emphasizing that without the return of the displaced all stories about achieved standards are lies, cynical deceptions and extreme hypocrisy.[144]

Conclusion

This humble work is an attempt to demonstrate that the suffering and persecution of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija is not neither new nor something that began five, ten or fifteen years ago but something that has lasted much longer. This book discusses only a short period from the end of World War II to 2005 when the terror by the Albanians, which unfortunately had the support of the Communist authorities, was fiercest and when the exodus of the Serbian people was most massive.

We have used for the most part documents that are stored in the Archives of the Holy Synod of Bishops: reports by the Bishops of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren—Vladimir of blessed repose, Bishop Pavle (later the Serbian Patriarch), and the following Bishop, Artemije, as well as the decisions of the Holy Synod of Bishops and the Holy Assembly of Bishops.

Very few other sources are cited because the book's primary purpose was to shed at least partial light on the golgothic path of the Serbian people from 1945 to 2005—during a period that was deaf and dumb to its pain and cries—with the help of the reports of the bishops on the scene who, like true spiritual pastors, kept a wake and constantly watched over the flock entrusted to them.

Today, however, many from that period would like to justify themselves with the words "those were difficult times," as if the times were to blame for the fact that many people demonstrated their inhumanity in them! St. Basil the Great says: "What distinguishes a good man from a bad one is that the good man uses what God has given him to do good, while a bad man turns that same good into evil."[145]

Therefore, the responsibility of those who then ruled cannot be circumvented because had they used the offices entrusted to them to do go, i.e. carried them out conscientiously and responsibility, today we would not have hundreds of thousands of refugees, the status of Kosovo and Metohija would not be a subject of debate in every world capital, this book and others like it would not exist—while there would certainly also be fewer graves and more living Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija.

[144] AHSB, Syn № 904, May 31, 2005.

[145] Cited by Serbian Patriarch Pavle, *Život po Jevandjelju* [Life According to the Gospels] (Belgrade, 1996), p. 197.

The most radical change in the ethnic composition of the population in Kosovo and Metohija occurred within a relatively short time, that is, over a few decades, during the communist regime in Yugoslavia. At that time, Kosovo and Metohija obtained their present-day borders. At first, those borders were administrative ones, then they become political-administrative ones and Kosovo and Metohija obtained full autonomy. Finally, the region became an international protectorate that was proclaimed an independent state, which has already been recognized by many countries. Today, the remainder of the remaining Serbian population, as an ethnic minority of some 10 percent, lives in the enclaves under the more or less efficient protection of the international forces, KFOR and UNMIK. Nuns and priests in the monasteries live like in camps—protected with high walls and dense barbed wire fences. It is less known that these armed forces often care more about their own security than about the security of the civilian Serbian population. The daily routine of Kosovo and Metohija includes ethnic apartheid and violence, the facts for which NATO and its members have assumed full political, legal and historical responsibility.

Cultural Genocide of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija

Radosav Stojanović

Space for an ethnically pure Albanian Kosovo was prepared not only by means of various kinds of pressured on working people and citizens of Serbian and Montenegrin nationalities in villages and cities, in work places, in halls, farms and fields, but also by very perfidious methods of cultural, scientific and educational isolation and denationalization. A part of this genocidal program was carried out by Albanian nationalists and secessionists abusing the amnesty of the judicial system (the authorities, the law), when it concerned Serbian people in Kosovo, and through the corresponding provincial institutions. As a consequence of the fact that Kosovo was regarded by the wider Yugoslav community, due to the prerogatives of the Constitution of 1974, as a completely autonomous Province, connected more with PR of Albania than to its own Republic—that of Serbia, its scientific—cultural institutions were regarded exclusively as Albanian, also. That Albanization was especially intensified in the cadre sense. In such away the Albanians until recently (till 1985) occupied all he leading positions of the cultural, educational and scientific institutions in the Province: in The Academy of Arts and Sciences, at Priština University, in the Committee for Education, Science and Culture; at the Teaching Council of Kosovo, at The Institute for Education, at The Federal Institute for Culture, in The Kosovo Provincial Archives, at The Institute of History, in The Society of Authors, and many others—in all these institutions the positions were occupied exclusively by Albanians. Such a cadre policy had not for its aim equality of all the peoples and nationalities in Kosovo, as was proclaimed by the Province of Kosovo's Constitution, but at a deeper level had an aspiration for the elimination of, above all, the cultural and scientific-educational potential of the Serbian people. By eliminating cadres, pressure was put indirectly on Serbs and Montenegrins to emigrate. Numerous experts were banished simply because they were respected in their profession and among the Serbian people in Kosovo. Secessionism well knew that if one nation is "beheaded," by means of the banishment of its experts, the people themselves begin to lose ground, so, willing or not, they are forced to migrate. That is how, besides the mass exile of the engineers and economists from Trepča and Electropower of Kosovo, the University professors, the teaching staffs, the medical staffs, and scientific workers were exiled, too. Their positions, in large numbers, were also taken over by the young Albanian intelligentsia and semi-intelligentsia—the batch production of the University of Priština. That is how it has happened that in an atmosphere of fear and hopelessness for their future and even their very lives, more than 250.000 Serbs and Montenegrins have been forced to leave Kosovo and Metohija during the past 25 years. The Albanian national bureaucracy, closely connected with secessionists, carried out their genocidal program toward the Serbs and the Montenegrins in Kosovo and Metohija pursuing the policy of total isolation of the Province from its mother Republic of Serbia. The ties with Serbia were completely broken in the fields of education, science and culture. On the other hand, cooperation with Albania was fostered, and this became the source of indoctrination of Albanian nationalism and secessionism legally imported through textbooks and other literature, as well as through the employment of lecturers and teaching staffs from Tirana, among whom mostly were Sigurimi officers of the Albanian intelligence service. They allotted themselves courses university posts, teachers and students at The Priština University until the year 1981. They were the authorities for the passing of examinations for M.A and D.A Diplomas. Out of that very cooperation sprang the secessionist counterrevolution in 1981, which has grown into the armed rebellion in 1989.

What are the facts of the cultural genocide of the Serbs and the Montenegrins in Kosovo and Metohija during the past twenty years?

Firstly, although The Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo is only a Province within the framework of The Socialist Republic of Serbia, and though the Albanians are a nationality in SFR of Yugoslavia, i.e. a national minority, the Serbo-Croatian language is almost banished from these areas, it has become the language of secondly status in administration, legislation and schools. If it is a well-known fact about 700 settlements in the Province have become Albanian—ethnically pure—in the past 20 years, then it is clear enough that in these places the Serbian State of SR of Serbia. Beside all this, in mixed communities the Serbian language is in second place. In many cases, the administration issues and forwards documents exclusively in the Albanian language to people of Serbian nationality. In all of-

ficial administration documents, the Albanian language has priority. The Cyrillic alphabet is in even a worse position; it is completely banished from Kosovo, although it was Kosovo and Metohija itself which was the cradle of the Serbian alphabet and literacy. Documents and inscriptions in public places, official documents of the Assembly and various other documents, minutes of institutions, textbooks printed in Kosovo and Metohija—which was the cradle of the Serbian alphabet and literacy—for educational purposes in the Serbo-Croatian language, all of these (and in instances where the Serbo-Croatian language is actually needed,) are written in Latin alphabet.

As for the situation in the field of education and culture literary and history textbooks can serve as an example. By the beginning of the seventies, the most significant Serbian authors such as Dobrica Ćosić and Jovan Dučić were left out of the curricula, and then Milan Rakić, once serbian counselor in Priština, was reduced in such a way that his lyrics from the cycle *Peonies of Kosovo (Kosovski božuri)* were forbidden for teaching purposes. There were cases when books were burnt, after having been deliberately removed from libraries and schools. The same fate almost befell the only Yugoslav Nobel-Prize winner, Ivo Andrić, because of his alleged pre-war anti-Albanian diplomatic service. National literature, especially Serbian folk epics, which had been enlightening generation after generation of Yugoslav youths, were wiped clean out of the curricula of Kosovo schools, as were all poems describing The Battle of Kosovo and the Serbian heroes, with a view to the annihilation of national consciousness of history in young people. In general, all subjects in history and literature concerning Serbian history, its background, tradition and culture connected with the area of South Serbia, Kosovo and Metohija, were strictly censored in the teaching of history and literature. It was the conscious intent to eliminate all themes and ideas, historical facts, traditions and culture, which undoubtedly bear witness to past Serbian presence in these territories. So, from history textbooks in the Serbo-Croatian language and the (curriculum mainly drawn up by Albanian such as Ali Hadri and his followers), the pupils could have scarcely learned anything about the medieval Serbian State, the First Uprising and Karadjordje, the Balkan wars and the First World War. The Serbian past, personalities, and events which had left their marks on history, were undesirable subjects in Kosovo until 1981. the "science" from Tirana was fostered, in which everything that was Serbian was treated as a negative "omen," until 1945, implanting in pupils and students the feeling of a collective national guilt for the achievements which the Albanian nation in its history had not attained. On the other hand, the teaching in Albanian of such a "science" could produce, in Albanian youth only hatred toward everything that was Serbian, which, in the final instance, caused migration from Kosovo.

A ·special case is the preservation of Serbian medieval historical monuments for which above all Kosovo is known throughout the world. Before 1981, very little attention was paid to this segment of Serbian cultural heritage. By the end of the sixties and during the seventies the attention of experts, archeologists, art-preservers, renovators and others, was mainly concerned with discovery of traces of Illyrian culture on the soil of Kosovo; work was carried out, digging and excavating everywhere where remnants of Illyrian culture were suspected. That was mostly encouraged by a euphoria from Tirana spread by Albanologists that the Albanians were direct descendants of the Illyrians. "The science" in Kosovo accepted it immediately and made efforts to find material evidence as soon as possible. But—there was no evidence of that. Then it happened that during the construction of the dam on the Fierza River in Albania (later on waters of that lake flooded parts of Metohija in Yugoslavia); in the archeological remnants were discovered remains of flooded Vrbnica, and Kosovo's "experts" were ready to believe it a godsend that they had found an Illyrian settlement. All of a sudden, financial means, which till then were in short supply for the purpose of preserving the Serbian cultural heritage, among which were Serbian medieval monasteries, available, so the work with the help of Tirana's "experts" advanced very quickly. Meanwhile, soon enough it turned out to be the remnants of Slav culture. All of the "experts" were disappointed. The money disappeared in the same way it had appeared, the research dried up and suddenly everybody became uninterested. The site was then buried and sunk in the lake. In the same general manner, until 1981, cultural monuments in Kosovo were dealt with. The public is well-acquainted with the fact that numerous Serbian monasteries are in a poor state, damaged by human hand and utter neglect. It is enough only to mention a few facts: in Banjska, in the churchyard, three weekend cottages were constructed; the Monastery of Gračanica is menaced by moisture; many churches in ethnically pure Albanian places in Suva Reka are damaged

by the hands of secessionists; in the courtyard of the Holy Archangel Monastery nearby Prizren the sheep graze, etc. Of the attitude toward the cultural heritage of Serbs in Kosovo the facts speak for themselves: the secessionists set fire to The Shelter of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1981, and by pure chance the treasury of the Monastery full of reliquaries, icons and manuscripts of priceless value, was saved. Even today, Kosovo sets aside minimal sums for the preservation of Serbian cultural monuments, mainly counting on the revenues of SR of Serbia.

SAP Kosovo's neglect for the Serbian cultural heritage—about 2.000 monuments belonging to it in this Province—is best illustrated by the fact that 15 years had to pass from the first initiative until the formation of The Institute for Serbo-Croatian Researches in 1987. The initiative was taken three times; the procedure was prolonged, and hindered everywhere. Meanwhile, the Serbs and the Montenegrins were exiled from 700 places in the Province, and so the need for research into the culture of the absentees faded as well. If it were prolonged more, there might not have been need for its formation; yet, even today the Institute, lacking the financial means and cadres, is in no condition to carry out research into ethnographic, musicological and archeological matters. On the other hand, the Albanian Institute in the year of the formation of the Institute for Serbo-Croatian Researches celebrated its 20th anniversary. Therefore, we come to the fact that two guidelines toward the cultures of "equal rights of nations and nationalities" have been used in Kosovo for years—one is complete and abundant financial means for the Albanian, and the other restriction for the Serbian culture.

What the policy toward Serbian culture in Kosovo looks like today-Jet the facts speak for themselves: the TV of Priština releases a half-an-hour programming Serbo-Croatian on the subject of its culture; the radio is somewhat more generous, but altogether it is far too insufficient to cater for the needs of citizens the creative potential in Kosovo. Film production is a completely Albanian business: for 15 years it has not produced any film in Serbo-Croatian, not even in coproduction; The archives of Kosovo, and The Institute of History are almost Albanian—ethnically pure; the staff of the Institute for the Publication of Educational text has not a single Serbian member, yet it does public books in the Serbo-Croatian language; form the Music Conservatory, Serbs are also shutoff with the explanation that they are unmusical, and so forth.

For the sake of truth, it should be mentioned that equality is in some degree practiced in the publishing. "Jedinstvo," the house publishing Serbo-Croatian language books, publishes about 20 titles annually, two magazines, and a daily printed in Cyrillic.

Kosovo Maiden, by Dušan Ristić in: *Heroes of Serbia*, ed. Nada Ćurčija-Prodanović, Oxford University Press 1963, p. 48

A Chronicle of the Contemporary Suffering of Kosovo-Metohian Serbs

After the end of the war, Tito's Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY) banned the return of expelled Kosovo and Metohija Serbs at a parliamentary session held on March 6, 1945 in order to placate the Albanians and win their loyalty. This unjust decision has not been repealed to this day, and resulted in a seriously compromised ethnic profile of the population to the detriment of the Serbs.

Serbs were gradually but systematically persecuted in Kosovo and Metohija, especially after 1965, and during the period from 1966 to 1971 about 35,000 Serbs were forced to leave their homes. From the end of the war to 1961 a total of 338 Kosovo and Metohija settlements were ethnically cleansed of Serbs. From 1961 to 1989 220,000 Serbs left the Province under pressure, while during the period from 1961 to 1981 a total of 606 Kosovo and Metohija villages were left without Serbs. At the same time the Albanian population was rapidly increasing thanks to the highest birth rate in Europe.

The large Albanian demonstrations in 1968 and 1981 resulted in increasingly greater and more frequent repression of the Serb population and increasingly more brutal attacks against Serbian churches, monasteries, and cemeteries. Everything of Serb character or markings was systematically destroyed, as reported by the Western press (The Serbian Orthodox Church published a book with a large collection of documents called *Kosovo Endowments*). The goal of the Albanian secessionists was the separation of the Province from Serbia and Yugoslavia, and ultimately its unification with Enver Hoxha's Albania. Immediately after a large demonstration in Priština in the evening of March 16, 1981, on Orthodox Sunday, the residence hall of the Peć Patriarchate was set on fire.

Petition of the Holy ASSEMBLY of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the President of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, in May 1969

"Mr. President

Our Church has been informed through its chapters about numerous outrages committed in SAP Kosovo against the Serbian Orthodox Church and its members, in fact not only outrages but also actual crimes. For this reason we are forced to address you and request your protection."

Having pointed out that the principles of freedom, which the Constitution of the SFRY [Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia] guarantees to all citizens irrespective of their ethnic origin and confession should be extended to the Orthodox Church and its believers in SAP Kosovo, the petition continued:

"Our Holy Synod has on several occasions, in connection with actual instances, addressed the competent authorities of S[ocialist] R[epublic] of Serbia, as well as the Federal [Yugoslav] Executive Council, but the situation has not improved. On occasion this violence has abated, but then it breaks out again elsewhere in an even graver form. It has been getting worse over the last year. Acts of violence involved not only damage to crops, destruction of forests (at the monasteries of Devič, Dečani, and Gorioč near Peć), demolition of tombstones (at Kosovska Vitina and elsewhere), but also bodily assaults, even against women and nuns (last year at the monastery of Binač near Kosovska Vitina, at Mušutište near Prizren, and this spring in the monastery of Devič, where the mother superior of the monastery was gravely injured, a novice at the monastery of Dečani was wounded with an axe, monk at the monastery of Gorioč was struck in the head with a stone, priests in the vicinity of Kosovska Mitrovica were attacked with stones, etc.) which brought about an exodus of our believers from these areas.

We do not wish to create problems concerning these unlawful acts, but are forced to intercede on behalf of the members of our Church, who are constantly complaining to us. We therefore beg you to address your attention to our distress so that similar unlawful acts might be prevented from happening again."

In a letter, dated May 23, 1969, the President of the Republic, Josip Broz Tito, replied:

"I express my regrets at the acts complained of in your letter, which are in violation of the Constitution of the SFRY.

As President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, I shall do everything in my power to prevent any misdeeds and unlawful acts and to ensure a free life and integrity for all citizens, as well as the safety of their property.

Your letter, together with my view on the need for the taking of resolute measures for the protection of lawfulness, will be passed on to the Executive Council of the Assembly of Socialist Serbia."

Appeal by the Clergy of the Serbian Orthodox Church (1982)

We the undersigned priests and monks of the Serbian Orthodox Church, aware of our responsibility before God and History, are compelled by our conscience to raise our voice in defense of the body spiritual and corporeal of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija.

Reproaches have been made to the Serbian Church that its voice concerning this matter has not been heard in public. Many others believe that it is not even competent to deal with matters of this kind. Some are bound to declare that the senders of this appeal are not "competent" or "called upon" to do so.

The truth is that the Church, wisened by its thousand-year old experience, knows that there is a time for patient silence and a time to speak out. Sometimes its silence is more eloquent than any speech (present events show that its today's silence is precisely of that nature, and the fact that it has not been heard until now bears perhaps eloquent witness as to its status). As for its "non-competence," that, too, is one of the strange incongruities of our times! The Church, which has been an organic part of the historical and spiritual being of this nation, before Kosovo, during Kosovo and after Kosovo until this day, whose living flesh is first to suffer any blow directed at the Serbian people (the Patriarchate of Peć is the most recent proof)—can its own fate and that of its flock be settled without it? We are aware of this fact and of the gravity of this historical moment when, it seems to us silence would be tantamount to acquiescence, or even worse, the crime of the betrayal of our people, and for this reason we have decided to address this modest word to the competent authorities and to all justice-loving people. Because it seems to us that what is being undertaken to resolve the problem of Kosovo is not commensurate with what is actually happening there, not is it proportionate to the gravity of the problem, nor is it historically far-reaching, and is thus susceptible of unforeseen and tragic consequences for all of us: Serbs, Albanians and Yugoslavs in general.

We wish to point out first all that we cannot escape the impression that in the matter of Kosovo there has been, intentionally or unintentionally, a substitution of the real problem with inconsequential or invented problems. We are convinced that until such time as the true essence of the Kosovo problem has been brought to light, there can be no real and just settlement for the two peoples, the Serbian and the Albanian, historically foreordained to rely on one another, in the past, as in the present, as in the future. Things should be called by their proper names, out of respect for one's own dignity and out of concern for one's own destiny in God's universe, but also out of respect for another, any other nation and out of anxiety about its future and about the life in common with them in the same land.

One might say that under this perception Kosovo is a myth, or even a "negative myth" for Serbs, but it is so only to those who are unable to envision the soul of the Serbian people and their historical being. One thing should be clear to all, yesterday, today and tomorrow: for the Serbian people there is no more precious word than the word KOSOVO; no more precious reality, nor greater sanctity, past, present and future, than the reality and the sanctity of Kosovo. For Serbs, the question of Kosovo is not simply a biological question, not just a geographic area, a "region," "province" or "republic." It is something incomparably greater and loftier than that. "Being Serbian," to quote the words of the wisest of all Serbian women, [writer] Isidora Sekulić, "it is not bread and school and the state, it is Kosovo; and Kosovo is a grave, a grave in which everything has been entombed; but resurrection happens through the tomb. There can be no resurrection without death." The question of Kosovo is the question of the spiritual, cultural and historical identity of the Serbian people. With Saint Sava, Kosovo is the truth and reality where the whole nation is expressed, where it consummated its collective in dividedness. These is no Serb who has not thought, spoken, written, lamented over Kosovo and resurrected himself. It is, for us it is not a statistic. With seven hundred years of its real presence in our living, with the Patriarchate of Peć, with [monasteries of] Dečani, Gračanica, the Kosovo martyrs and the Kosovo Pledge of the Serbs, Kosovo is our national symbol, our hearth, the focus of our being. To deprive a nation of its national symbol means to kill it and spiritually destroy it.

This should be borne in mind by everyone, including our age-old neighbors, the ethnic Albanians. The Jewish people, submitting to the dire necessity of survival among the living, and by the miracle of their uninterrupted sense of identity, which defeats even historical logic, have returned long-suffering to Jerusalem after two thousand years.

In the same way the Serbian people have been fighting their Battle of Kosovo to this day, fighting for this symbol of their identity, for their justifiable occupancy of and survival in these latitudes, from 1389 to this day. When it seemed that the battle was finally won, all of a sudden Kosovo ceased to be ours, and we have ceased to be what we are! Without a war what is more, in peacetime and in freedom! At a time when many other peoples, after centuries of absence, are returning to their hearths, the Serbian people are extinguishing their centuries-old hearth and are fleeing it! Why?

Astounded by what we see happening before our very eyes, we are asking the painful and harrowing question: what are those infernal and irrational forces which have succeeded, in a few decades of a peace paid by rivers of blood, in achieving what the five hundred years of Ottoman occupation failed to do?

The fact that the Battle of Kosovo has lasted since 1389 shows that the Serbian people in Kosovo have not surrendered, arid that is why Kosovo bas been ours to this day. And today? And what of tomorrow?

We can readily understand the suffering and frequent mi-grations of Serbs from Kosovo and other places, from the Battle of Kosovo to modern times. It is the eternal destiny of the conquered, always and everywhere. We also fully understand the reasons for the weeping of Patriarch Arsenije III as he "flees day and night with his impoverished people from place to place, like a ship on the high seas... weeps and laments, with no help from anyone." We can also comprehend the tragic slough of despond of the leaderless and impoverished people in Kosovo and Metohija after the migrations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly after the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć when numerous Serbian and Albanian population were converted to Islam under the duress of ottoman terror. We are not even much surprised by the terror perpetrated by privileged Albanian and other converts who settled in Kosovo and Metohija after the Serbian exodus and who struck the fear of God into those who remained faithful to their hearths and to their spiritual and national identity. It was, of course in the spirit of the policy pursued by the "sick man of Europe" on the Bosphorus: to instigate blood feuds among brothers and through renegades and forcibly Islamized Serbs to destroy the last vestiges of the Cross and the last resistance of the Serbian people in Kosovo.

Out of numberless testimonials from that time, we shall only mention two appalling and characteristic depositions about the status of Serbs in Kosovo and about the catastrophic results of the treacherous Ottoman policy toward Serbs, usually enforced through Islamized Albanians. Seeking to rebuild the destroyed church at Nerodimlje, Father Petar with a group of Serbs from Nerodimlje wrote on March 4, 1872: "Here an Albanian owned calf is worth more that all the Christians and all the Christian churches. Our wretched situation cannot be described... Twice in two years we suffered arson, just so that our property might be stolen and carried away. Old churches are falling into decay and cannot be rebuilt... We weep but no one listens to us, they say instead; 'I am your law'... We complain but no one heeds our complaints. They say: 'You have forfeited your rights at Kosovo when Lazar died.' We are hoping for the better, but it is getting worse all the time." The abbot of Dečani, Serafim Ristić, provided another moving testimony from the middle of the last century. The abbot complained to the Ottoman Sultan on behalf of the oppressed and persecuted people of the Peć district: "The terror and abuses by vicious Albanians have become intolerable and if they are not halted, they will force us to abandon our own lands which are soaked with the blood of our ancestors, and leave the ruins of our homes behind... Nothing is ever held sacred by these murderers. There is no Christian home that has not been plundered, there is no village, no town, no church or monastery that has not wailed from their outrages... Their perpetrators are well known but it is no use reporting them, because we have done so before and nothing well ever came of it."

All these outrages were revolting but they can be explained by our thralldom to the Ottomans. What is inexplicable and what astounds not only us but any man of sound mind is the fact that virtually the same things and in the same way are today being done to the Serbs in Kosovo. There is no example from our past suffering that has not been done over again in the last twenty years to the Serbs in Kosovo, from threats to life and property to the burning down of the Patriarchate of Peć, desecration of tombs, outrages done to novices and monks, to the blinding of cattle, just because it belongs to Serbs. We have all been aware of it, but for a long time it was a taboo subject which often cost some of the more daring people very dear. It is not the Serbs in Kosovo who mutinied and are now getting their just deserts; outrages are being done by those who are the most privileged. It is not the entire Albanian people in Kosovo who are doing all this, but the question is how a handful of enemies could expel and resettle 100,000 people within only ten years?

It is no exaggeration to say that planned genocide is being perpetrated against the Serbian people in Kosovo! What otherwise would be the meaning of "ethnically pure Kosovo" which is being relentlessly put into effect through ceaseless and never-ending migrations? Or what is the meaning of the frequent taunts heard in villages and hamlets, in monasteries and churches, and even in the towns: "What are you waiting for? You had better get out, this land belongs to us!" It is quite understandable for such things to have been said and done in Ottoman times, but how to explain the fact that not only during the last occupation, but even after the liberation, especially since 1968, the exodus of Serbs has gone on unabated to this day, and since last year it has intensified! It has intensified owing to the atmosphere that has been created, fiendishly conceived and organized, both secretly and publicly, for the whole world to see. It is no secret- to you or to us or to our public, that forced migration of our population from Kosovo was sometimes aided and abetted by the authorities in Kosovo both Albanian and Serbian, so that the forcibly extinguished Serbian hearths, often soaked in blood, might be settled by "immigrants" from Albania.

It is terrible even to think of, much less to experience the horrific reality that there are no longer any prospects for the Serbs in their own Kosovo, for Kosovo is no longer theirs (although we, the Serbs, have never said that it was only ours). Because, let us not be deceived by ornate phrases and utterances: today for the first time we are faced with the issue of whether Kosovo in indeed ours. There is much to suggest that the centuries-long Battle of Kosovo will end in our days—with the third and last migration of the Serbs, in a final defeat, the most terrible in the history of this na-

tion and this country. In other words, it will end up in a quiet, genocidal extermination which is so coolly being referred to as the "moving of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo," as if it was a tourist jaunt, a journey from south to north, and not a nightmarish trek all over Serbia, with and without provinces! What country in the world, friendly or unfriendly, could forcibly expel and terrorize the Serbs, or any one of our peoples and nationalities, while we looked on coolly and wondered "who is responsible," or said that "we are all responsible," which means 110 one is responsible? Outrage to one single human being on this earth causes a general outcry and stir in the world and within us. What about the yet unmeasured and immeasurable sufferings of 100,000 people who have emigrated, and another 250,000 men, women and children from Kosovo who have not moved; should they just be a subject of polemics in the press and on television? What is happening to us, to this community, what is happening to these proud patriarchal highlanders [the Kosovo Albanians] whose children and men bum down churches, destroy cemeteries, oppress and kill their age-old neighbors?

God and our conscience are our witnesses, and our people are our witness and judge: we do not wish the Albanians any harm: all we want is for our people and our holy shrines in Kos¬ovo to be preserved, for our sake and for their own sake. Because we know our calvary full well and we know our Kosovo pledge; we sincerely, to quote [Serbian nineteenth-century notable from Montenegro] Marko Miljanov, "wish the Albanian people everything of the best, God be our witness." But out question is as follows: who among us dares, and in whose name, to allow Serbian Kosovo to see its tragic end and obliteration? Who dares to destroy our symbol and our existence? Who can assume responsibility before history of having Kosovo ethnically and spiritually lost during his time? No one but he who does not know what Kosovo is. It is not just Gračanica that is at stake; it is the plain, of Kosovo and its shrines as far afield as Peć and Dečani, that is strewn with bones and holy relics, the undisputable and most enduring title to a land until the people inhabiting that land lose their self-awareness and cease to be what they are.

One thing is obvious: if someone moves from what has always been his home, to which he remained faithful in his most trying moments, it means that he has felt himself threatened to the core of his being. Therefore, today's situation in Kosovo can be adequately described by the words of [former Serbian consul in Priština] Branislav Nušić, noted at the beginning of this [twentieth] century, during Ottoman rule: "The Serbian population in Kosovo are feeling more and more isolated and abandoned..." Distressed and concerned by this fact, we the undersigned churchmen are doing what we can: we are expressing our solidarity with those who have been expelled from their and our centuries-old dwellings, and are raising our voice before our own and world opinion in defense of the most elementary human rights of the Kosovo population and of the threatened holy shrines of the Serbian people in their own homeland. We take the liberty of drawing this to the attention of the competent authorities and calling upon them to publicly and responsibly present the true reasons, and to re-examine them conscientiously, for which the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija have felt unprotected and abandoned to a brutal persecution. We are doing so in a sincere desire to find just ways of solution and reason, to remove the seal of shame and permit a normal life for all of us in our common home.

Signatories of this call for the protection of the Serbian population and their national shrines in Kosovo and Metohija, Serbian priests and monks:

On Good Friday 16/3 April 1982

1. Atanasije Jevtić—Belgrade
2. Ljubomir D. Ranković—Šabac
3. Ljubodrag V. Petrović—Belgrade
4. Pahomije Gačić—Monastery of Orahovica
5. Dušan Petrović—Novi Sad
6. Živko Todorović—Valjevo
7. Amfilohije Radović—Belgrade
8. Raško Radović—Zemun
9. Ljubisav Kovačević—Tamnava
10. Damaskin Davidović—Prizren

This appeal was addressed to the Presidency of the SFRY, the Presidency of SR Serbia, the Assembly of SR Serbia and the Holy Council of Bishops c/o the Holy Synod. The text was also sent to all the major Belgrade newspapers. The appeal was published in *Pravoslavlje* of May 15, 1982, the official journal of Serbian Orthodox Church as well. Many other priests and monks from Serbia (e.g. Abbot Dositej of Žiča), Serbian clerics from Bosnia and other parts of Yugoslavia, have wished to be signatories of this appeal.

Petition by 2,016 Serb Citizens of Kosovo (1985)

[The petition was eventually signed by more than 80,000 Serbs.]

We, the undersigned Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija, as victims of violence unprecedented in peacetime history in the cradle of our own fatherland, are making a last effort to protect in a legal manner* the right of our families to their lives.

The situation is appalling: a part of Yugoslavia, the land which is a part of our historical and national being, has been taken over, and fascist genocide against us, the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, has been legitimized. It is not a suitable opportunity nor is it possible to list the most evil misdeeds. The brutal pressure by Kosovo Albanian chauvinists against us and our families, farms, cemeteries and places of worship has been going on for decades. Unfortunately, whether intentionally or accidentally, it has been concealed and hushed up. Their open rebellion in 1981, de-

fying all reason, did not wake up the authorities of this country to put an end to the implementation of an ideology which in terms of its methods and aims is fascist. An ethnically pure [Albanian] territory, which Kosovo and Metohija virtually have become, is the basis for this fascist doctrine.

The tragedy lies in the fact that instead of taking radical measures to oppose it, the authorities in Kosovo and Metohija are clothing it in the garb of socialist ideology. While terror is being unleashed against us day after day and in every quarter, the institutions of government in the Province [of Kosovo] stand by with folded arms. Through their non-action they are acting, and their passivity provides absolute support for and legalization of violence. The mealy-mouthed utterances of the higher authorities about the need for a change in the situation in Kosovo and Metohija were obstructed by the lower authorities.

In the meantime, terror against the [Kosovo] Serbs increased daily in full sight of Europe and the world, and to Yugoslavia's shame.

Where is this leading us?

Convinced that our highest legislative bodies will not, cannot and dare not remain indifferent to the perpetration of genocide against our Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, we are making a last attempt to put halt to fascism.

We therefore demand the urgent convening of an extraordinary session of the Assembly of the SFRY and the Assembly of SR Serbia, and for the agenda we are presenting the following demands:

1. That we be guaranteed exercise of our basic human rights according to the Constitution of the SPRY and international conventions, which have been completely denied to us.

2. That the Socialist Republic of Serbia should acquire the same statehood as other republics in Yugoslavia.

3. That the Greater Albanian chauvinists who inspired and led the rebellion in Kosovo and Metohija and permitted the seizure of Yugoslav territory by the Greater Albanian chauvinists be immediately dismissed from the governments of the Province and the Republic and called to account. We also demand accountability for the cadres of Serbian nationality whose laxity and careerism have favoured this ideology.

4. That the names of the architects of the plan of genocide against the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija be made public, regardless of what positions they have held in our country. It is reliably known that this plan is not accidental, nor has it originated just in this Province and in this country.

5. That the emigres from Albania who have come since April 6th, 1941, be banished, irrespective of whether they were settled [in Kosovo and Metohija] under Mussolini's program or later, under Enver Hoxha's program. In violation of the law they possess property in the territory of the SFRY, and the majority of them engage in acts of terror against the Serbs. Yugoslavia, unfortunately, does not even know how many of them there are, but according to information we have, there are more than 260,000. Not one single Serb from Albania has emigrated to our country in past decades, although there are known to be more than 30,000 in Albania. Subjected to the direct terror, they [the Serbs] simply do not exist as a nationality in Albania. No responsible individuals or authorities of this country have ever raised this question.

6. That all deeds of sale of Serbian property be cancelled forthwith, regardless of whether they have been extorted by physical or legal persons.

7. That exiled Serbian families be permitted an immediate return under the supervision of the republican and federal governments.

8. That several thousand "missing" judicial cases be reconstituted, suspect decisions reviewed, and radical changes made in the functioning of the judiciary.

9. That the same official language as is used in the territory of the entire republic of Serbia be introduced in Kosovo and Metohija. It is our right, which has been illegally denied us.

10. That display of the Albanian flag with its present symbols be abolished. We do not want to live in our own country under a foreign flag. A foreign flag has always been a pretext for liberation wars against an occupier.

11. That the files of the Ballists [Albanian pro-Nazi nationalist] who live in this country and abroad, which were deliberately destroyed after 1966, be reconstructed. The security of the entire state makes this incumbent.

12. That the highest Party [League of Yugoslav Communists] organs rehabilitate all those cadres who because of their interventions against Greater Albanian chauvinists were morally and politically discredited and fell as the first victims of this ideology that has now been unmasked.

13. That in procedures of employment and appointment of delegates the illegal rules of national quotas, which are contrary to the Constitution and fundamental human rights, be suspended and replaced by the principle of parity.

14. That a delegation composed of the signatories of this petition whom we shall nominate be allowed to participate in the assembly sessions convened at our demand. The delegation would transmit and supply evidence for the fact which have brought us into this situation. We propose that our delegation be led by comrades Svetozar Vukmanović Tempo, Batrić Jovanović, Todor Slavinski and Zarija Martinović.

15. That the extraordinary sittings of the assemblies should be held as soon as possible, and we demand that they should be convened not later than October 30, 1985, in the presence of the information media.

The talks concerning the problems of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija have produced no results. The present behaviour of the authorities in the Province in denying a state its legality and introduced chaos.

The number of signatories of this petition is of a symbolic character. We believe that a larger number is not necessary, and the conditions in which this petition has come into being, and with which you are familiar, pose a risk to our safety. We expect reprisals against us and our families because of this petition.

If this time once again the positive socialist forces in the Republic and Federation are vanquished by ill-intentioned forces, we hereby serve warning that we are no longer willing to suffer unprotected the fascist genocide against us and our families.

The tragic consequences will not burden our conscience because they have been necessitated by the actual situation, because we are defending our lives and our fatherland.

The state of jeopardy in which the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija are living is tantamount to an absolute state of jeopardy for the Serbian people in general.

Sent to:

Assembly of the SFRY Presidency of the SFRY Executive Council of the SFRY Central Committee of the LCY Assembly of SR Serbia Presidency of SR Serbia Executive Council of SR Serbia; Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia; Federation of War Veterans' Associations of Yugoslavia; Socialist Alliance of Working People of Yugoslavia; Socialist Alliance of Working People of Serbia; Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences; Svetozar Vukmanović Tempo; Batrić Jovanović; Todor Slavinski; Zarija Martinović; Writers Union of Serbia.

[*Književne novine*, Belgrade, 15 December, 1985]

The New York Times, Monday, July 12, 1982
Exodus of Serbians Stirs Province in Yugoslavia

"Serbs... have... been harassed by Albanians and have packed up and left the region".

"The [Albanian] nationalists have a two-point platform, ...first to establish what they call an ethnically clean Albanian republic and then the merger with Albania to form a greater Albania."

"Some 57,000 Serbs have left Kosovo in the last decade... The exodus of Serbs is admittedly one of the main problems... in Kosovo..."

In Yugoslavia, Rising Ethnic Strife Brings Fears of Worse Civil Conflict

by DAVID BINDER, Special to the New York Times

The New York Times, November 1, 1987

Portions of southern Yugoslavia have reached such a state of ethnic friction that Yugoslavs have begun to talk of the horrifying possibility of "civil war" in a land that lost one-tenth of its population, or 1.7 million people, in World War II.

The current hostilities pit separatist-minded ethnic Albanians against the various Slavic populations of Yugoslavia and occur at all levels of society, from the highest officials to the humblest peasants. A young Army conscript of ethnic Albanian origin shot up his barracks, killing four sleeping Slavic bunkmates and wounding six others. The army says it has uncovered hundreds of subversive ethnic Albanian cells in its ranks. Some arsenals have been raided.

Vicious Insults

Ethnic Albanians in the Government have manipulated public funds and regulations to take over land belonging to Serbs. And politicians have exchanged vicious insults.

Slavic [i.e. Serbian Christian] Orthodox churches have been attacked, and flags have been torn down. Wells have been poisoned and crops burned. Slavic boys have been knifed, and some young ethnic Albanians have been told by their elders to rape Serbian girls. Ethnic Albanians comprise the fastest growing nationality in Yugoslavia and are expected soon to become its third largest, after the Serbs and Croats.

Radicals' Goals

The goal of the radical nationalists among them, one said in an interview, is an "ethnic Albania that includes western Macedonia, southern Montenegro, part of southern Serbia, Kosovo and Albania itself." That includes large chunks of the republics that make up the southern half of Yugoslavia. Other ethnic Albanian separatists admit to a vision of a greater Albania governed from Pristina in southern Yugoslavia rather than Tirana, the capital of neighboring Albania. There is no evidence that the hard-line Communist Government in Tirana is giving them material assistance.

The principal battleground is the region called Kosovo, a high plateau ringed by mountains that is somewhat smaller than New Jersey. Ethnic Albanians there make up 85 percent of the population of 1,7 million. The rest are Serbians and Montenegrins.

Worst Strife in Years

As Slavs flee the protracted violence, Kosovo is becoming what ethnic Albanian nationalists have been demanding for years, and especially strongly since the bloody rioting by ethnic Albanians in Pristina in 1981 - an "ethnically pure" Albanian region, a "Republic of Kosovo" in all but name.

The violence, a journalist in Kosovo said, is escalating to "the worst in the last seven years."

Many Yugoslavs blame the troubles on the ethnic Albanians, but the matter is more complex in a country with as many nationalities and religions as Yugoslavia's and involves economic development, law, politics, families and flags. As recently as 20 years ago, the Slavic majority treated ethnic Albanians as inferiors to be employed as hewers of wood and carriers of heating coal. The ethnic Albanians, who

now number 2 million, were officially deemed a minority, not a constituent nationality, as they are today.

Were the ethnic tensions restricted to Kosovo, Yugoslavia's problems with its Albanian nationals might be more manageable. But some Yugoslavs and some ethnic Albanians believe the struggle has spread far beyond Kosovo. Macedonia, a republic to the south with a population of 1.8 million, has a restive ethnic Albanian minority of 350,000.

"We've already lost western Macedonia to the Albanians," said a member of the Yugoslav party presidium, explaining that the ethnic minority had driven the Slavic Macedonians out of the region.

Attacks on Slavs

Last summer, the authorities in Kosovo said they documented 40 ethnic Albanian attacks on Slavs in two months. In the last two years, 320 ethnic Albanians have been sentenced for political crimes, nearly half of them characterized as severe. In one incident, Fadil Hoxha, once the leading politician of ethnic Albanian origin in Yugoslavia, joked at an official dinner in Prizren last year that Serbian women should be used to satisfy potential ethnic Albanian rapists. After his quip was reported this October, Serbian women in Kosovo protested, and Mr. Hoxha was dismissed from the Communist Party. As a precaution, the central authorities dispatched 380 riot police officers to the Kosovo region for the first time in four years. Officials in Belgrade view the ethnic Albanian challenge as imperiling the foundations of the multinational experiment called federal Yugoslavia, which consists of six republics and two provinces.

"Lebanonizing" of Yugoslavia

High-ranking officials have spoken of the "Lebanonizing" of their country and have compared its troubles to the strife in Northern Ireland. Borislav Jovic, a member of the Serbian party's presidency, spoke in an interview of the prospect of "two Albanias, one north and one south, like divided Germany or Korea," and of "practically the breakup of Yugoslavia." He added: "Time is working against us."

The federal Secretary for National Defense, Fleet Adm [iral]. Branko Mamula, told the army's party organization in September of efforts by ethnic Albanians to subvert the armed forces. "Between 1981 and 1987 a total of 216 illegal organizations with 1,435 members of Albanian nationality were discovered in the Yugoslav People's Army," he said. Admiral Mamula said ethnic Albanian subversives had been preparing for "killing officers and soldiers, poisoning food and water, sabotage, breaking into weapons arsenals and stealing arms and ammunition, desertion and causing flagrant nationalist incidents in army units."

Concerns Over Military

Coming three weeks after the ethnic Albanian draftee, Aziz Kelmendi, had slaughtered his Slavic comrades in the barracks at Paraćin, the speech struck fear in thousands of families whose sons were about to start their mandatory year of military service. Because the Albanians have had a relatively high birth rate, one-quarter of the army's 200,000 conscripts this year are ethnic Albanians. Admiral Mamula suggested that 3,792 were potential human timebombs. He said the army had "not been provided with details relevant for assessing their behavior." But a number of Belgrade politicians said they doubted the Yugoslav armed forces would be used to intervene in Kosovo as they were to quell violent rioting in 1981 in Pristina. They reason that the army leadership is extremely reluctant to become involved in what is, in the first place, a political issue.

Ethnic Albanians already control almost every phase of life in the autonomous province of Kosovo, including the police, judiciary, civil service, schools and factories. Non-Albanian visitors almost immediately feel the independence – and suspicion – of the ethnic Albanian authorities.

Region's Slavs Lack Strength

While 200,000 Serbs and Montenegrins still live in the province, they are scattered and lack cohesion. In the last seven years, 20,000 of them have fled the province, often leaving behind farmsteads and houses, for the safety of the Slavic north. Until September, the majority of the Serbian Communist Party leadership pursued a policy of seeking compromise with the Kosovo party hierarchy under its ethnic Albanian leader, Azem Vlasi.

But during a 30-hour session of the Serbian central committee in late September, the Serbian party secretary, Slobodan Milošević, deposed Dragiša Pavlović, as head of Belgrade's party organization, the country's largest. Mr. Milošević accused Mr. Pavlović of being an appeaser who was soft on Albanian radicals. Mr. Milošević had courted the Serbian backlash vote with speeches in Kosovo itself calling for "the policy of the hard hand."

"We will go up against anti-Socialist forces, even if they call us Stalinists," Mr. Milošević declared recently. That a Yugoslav politician would invite someone to call him a Stalinist even four decades after Tito's epochal break with Stalin, is a measure of the state into which Serbian politics have fallen. For the moment, Mr. Milošević and his supporters appear to be staking their careers on a strategy of confrontation with the Kosovo ethnic Albanians.

Other Yugoslav politicians have expressed alarm. "There is no doubt Kosovo is a problem of the whole country, a powder keg on which we all sit," said Milan Kučan, head of the Slovenian Communist Party.

Remzi Koljgeci, of the Kosovo party leadership, said in an interview in Pristina that "relations are cold" between the ethnic Albanians and Serbs of the province, that there were too many "people without hope."

But many of those interviewed agreed it was also a rare opportunity for Yugoslavia to take radical political and economic steps, as Tito did when he broke with the Soviet bloc in 1948.

Efforts are under way to strengthen central authority through amendments to the constitution. The League of Communists is planning an extraordinary party congress before March to address the country's grave problems.

The hope is that something will be done then to exert the rule of law in Kosovo while drawing ethnic Albanians back into Yugoslavia's mainstream.

Ethnic rivalries cause unrest in Yugoslav region

By Jackson Diehl

Washington Post Foreign Service

Saturday, November 29, 1986 ; Page A14

PRIŠTINA, YUGOSLAVIA—Growing tension between Albanians and Serbs here this year has converted this poor southern region from a chronic local trouble spot into the potential flash point of a country increasingly divided by national rivalries. Since the outbreak of riots here in 1981, authorities of the autonomous province of Kosovo have faced a steady challenge from separatist and nationalist groups among the dominant Albanian population. More than 1,000 people have been jailed for seeking Kosovo's independence from Serbia, the Yugoslav republic to which Kosovo nominally belongs, or unification with the neighboring nation Albania.

The significance of this conflict has been multiplied this year by the emergence of concern among Yugoslavia's Serbs, the country's largest ethnic group, about the "forced emigration" of Serbs from Kosovo under pressure from the Albanians. Small farmers, tradesmen and professionals have been steadily leaving the province's cities and the small Serbian villages around them, raising the prospect that a historic seat of the Serbian nation will soon be populated only by Albanians. More than 20,000 have emigrated since 1981 out of a total Serbian population of about 220,000. Meanwhile, the Albanian population of over 1.2 million is expanding at the fastest pace in Europe.

The local Serbs, arguing that Albanian-dominated provincial authorities have offered them no protection from violent attacks, have signed petitions and staged several demonstrations outside Priština this year. To the embarrassment of authorities, they have also sent three delegations to press their case in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia and of Yugoslavia.The acts have inflamed nationalist feeling among Serbians outside Kosovo and prompted demands by intellectuals and even Serbian communist political leaders for constitutional changes and other drastic action to stop the emigration and restore Serbia's control over Kosovo. The Serbian outbursts, in turn, have provoked concern by leaders of Yugoslavia's five other, smaller republics, who sympathize with some complaints but are wary of Serbian national aspirations.

The last delegation of Serbs to visit Belgrade early this month, meanwhile, warned that they would take up arms against their perceived tormentors among the Albanians." This should be very seriously considered. This is a warning, and we understand it that way," said Vukašin Jokanović, a Serbian member of Kosovo's governing executive council. "We must take urgent measures to win back the confidence of these people."

The official receptivity to complaints from Kosovo increased this year following local and national congresses of the Yugoslav League of Communists that purged many Kosovo leaders, and the inauguration of a new federal government under Prime Minister Branko Mikulić. Three federal delegations visited Kosovo last summer to examine Serbian complaints about the courts, local administration and police force. A package of measures was adopted to slow emigration, including a ban on land sales by members of one ethnic group to members of another.

Even a brief visit to Kosovo, which is about half the size of Maryland, quickly reveals seemingly intractable roots of ethnic tension.

"Laws will never stop the emigration," remarked Jokanović in an interview. "The law [on land sales] is only accepted by people who really don't want to emigrate."

The broadest cause of Kosovo's troubles, officials and residents say, is its pervasive poverty. Living standards here are comparable to those in Africa or Latin America and are less than one-third the level of those in Yugoslavia as a whole. About 124,000 workers, or more than 35 percent of the work force, are unemployed. Development programs here have repeatedly failed, pouring money into inefficient industrial projects and rickety, quickly rusting skyscrapers in Priština."For a long time we were wrong in our policy. We were afraid of investing in agriculture and the private sector," said Aziz Abrashi, the provincial economy secretary. "We tried to put peasants from the countryside straight into modern factories."

Meanwhile, much of the rapidly expanding Albanian population has come to view Kosovo as its homeland. Albanians felt oppressed by the rule of Serbians, imposed by former president Tito's police chief, for two decades after World War II. A relatively small minority in multinational Yugoslavia, the Albanians say they are discriminated against outside the province. In Albania itself, the world's most rigid Stalinist government has kept the nation so isolated and poverty-stricken that about 5,000 refugees have fled across the heavily guarded border to Kosovo. A powerful tradition of close-knit clans has bound the community together, raised the birth rate and discouraged emigration to other parts of Yugoslavia.

The result, said economists and government officials, has been pressure for land in Kosovo even from those Albanians who are neither separatist nor anti-Serbian. "Let me explain the psychology of an Albanian farmer about the land," said Abrashi, himself Albanian. "For centuries these people have been defining their existence and their worth only through land. They are ready to make great sacrifices, to work 30 years, to go and work abroad, to live in

terrible conditions so as to collect, dinar by dinar, the money to buy a piece of land. And the land must be near that of the rest of the family. For that they will pay almost any price."

Land prices in Kosovo, despite its poverty, are five times those in Serbia and typically range around $35,000 for an acre of good farm land, Abrashi said. Newspapers have reported sales of farms for over $1 million. As a result, Serbs, who unlike the Albanians have attractive alternatives outside the province, have had a powerful economic incentive to sell their land to Albanians.

For the Serbs who have remained, frustrated Albanian youth have kept up a steady harassment ranging from the painting of hostile slogans on Serbian homes and vandalism of Serbian graveyards to beatings and rapes.

"One cannot speak of these developments as being only the deeds of individual [Albanian] groups anymore," said Serbia's interior minister Svetomir Lalović in a recent speech. "At issue are seriously disturbed inter-ethnic relations."

Few killings have been recorded since the 1981 riots. But in the three months of July, August and September, authorities recorded 34 assaults by Albanians on Serbians. Two instances of rape provoked outraged demonstrations near Priština and motivated the last, angry delegation that marched on the federal parliament in Belgrade.

Yugoslav officials predict that it will take many years to resolve the tensions in Kosovo, and dissidents are even less sanguine.

"We did not deal with the emigration for a long time, and now that it has reached this stage it is very difficult to break the chain of events," said Jokanović.

Closed Hearing on Serb-Albanian Relations in Yugoslavia before the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs, 1988

TESTIMONIES

MICHAEL RADENKOVICH

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Members of the Congress, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Americans of Serb descent stand before you today, together with Serbs from Yugoslavia, united, as many times before in American history, in the defense of both the American and Serb democracy, independence, and way of life. The American Serbian Heritage Foundation has been set up in 1980, to promote the same values that have brought our forefathers to America, and inspired them to fight for this country.

In 1917, our grandparents enlisted in the U.S. Armed Forces, fought with the allied Serbian Army, or joined the Allied Expeditionary Force in Salonika, in a world war that unhappily ended as a cause for another, ever fiercer holocaust.

In 1941, our fathers fought again, under the same flags, for even more depressing results. Our country was turned over to the Communists, and the Soviets occupied those parts of Europe that had ostensibly been denied to the Nazis.

Our Old Country homeland is unfree, and our American homeland is threatened, by the same enemy. In Managua, Daniel Ortega is doing today what Josip Broz Tito did in Belgrade, in 1946.

In Yugoslavia too, totalitarians made promises they would democratize, "given a chance." After all the chances of the last 40 years, and all the billions of dollars of annual American aid, they are still promising. Two generations of postwar Serbs are immigrants in America and Western Europe today because of these blandishments.

During their 150 years in America, close to two million Americans of Serb origin have given this country noted scientists, academics, publishers, writers, soldiers, businessmen, and hard and diligent workers. Serbs are a freedom-loving people, and one of the few in the Balkans who have no record of genocide against their neighbors.

The country of our origin, Serbia, has had the most favored nation status with the United States for over 100 years.

The reason, ladies and gentlemen, I am mentioning all this is to add perspective to why we have all gathered here, today. For, events are happening in Serbia, in its province of Kosovo, that may, if unchecked, lead again to our sons going Over There to pull the chestnuts out of another Old World fire—perhaps with even less lasting success than before.

The chestnuts, ladies and gentlemen, will be American national security, and American national interest, as much as Serb national survival; the fire will be a Balkan War, with probable Soviet involvement. And, for all their remoteness and un-newsworthiness, the historical and ethnic borders of Serbia, Albania, Greece, and Bulgaria—all meeting in or around Kosovo—are not the same as the contested areas in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, or Angola. Local European wars are hard to conceive of, in this day and age.

In 1389, ladies and gentlemen, the Christian Kingdom of Serbia fought the oncoming Ottoman Turks, and lost. In a great battle on the Serbian Plain of the Blackbird—called Kosovo in Serbian—the Serbs fought for their national, religious, and biological existence, and their European heritage.

Though this happened almost exactly 600 years ago, the war of the East against the West is yet to become history. Participants have changed, but the Plain of the Black-

bird is still a battleground. On one side, as before, are the Serbs, on the other the Albanians—newcomers to Kosovo.

As ever, Serbs are Christian and European, whereas neighboring Albanians are still mostly Moslem, and Mideastern. For centuries, Albanians had been the most supportive element of the Ottoman Empire. They fought even the Young Turks' attempts to modernize and Westernize Turkey. Dozens of Ottoman Grand Viziers were Albanian. The Albanians provided the Sultan with a personal bodyguard, served as Ottoman gendarmerie as far as Egypt, and, together with the Kurds, the Circassians, the Tatars, and other Asiatic raiders formed the bashibozouk—the dreaded irregular troops of the Ottoman Empire.

For those who consider this history, suffice it to say that there are Serbs and Albanians still living in Kosovo today who remember the Ottoman times.

Like their Asian counterparts, the Kurds, who committed the genocide of the Armenians, the Albanians owe a similar debt to the Greeks, the Bulgars, and the Serbs. Yet today, to those who do not know or care for the past, the Albanians present themselves as the innocent victims of their ascendant neighbors.

The territorial status quo that the Albanians are insisting on, today, is an outcome of centuries of loyal, quisling service in the Ottoman occupation forces, and later, in the armies of the Italian Fascists and the Nazis. Unfortunately for the Albanian cause, their territorial gains—in Kosovo, Macedonia, or Greek Epirus—are not of very old standing, especially when contrasted to the duration of Balkan ethnic memories.

In World War I, tens of thousands of non-combatant Serbs mostly refugee women and children, the old, the sick, and the wounded-were massacred by Albanian marauders in less than a week, as they made their way toward the Allies waiting for them on the Albanian coast. Further thousands died of the aftereffects of their Albanian Golgotha (as the Serbs still call it today) on the Italian, British, and French ships that took them to safety in Greece, and elsewhere.

A quarter of all the Serbs who had retreated before the combined armies of the Central Powers were killed or savaged not by enemy in combat, but by merciless bandits who preyed upon unprotected strangers, and murdered for the clothes on the refugees' backs.

In 1941, the Albanians joined the fascist Italians, and under their tutelage formed a Great Albania which, among other non-Albanian territories, encompassed Serbian Kosovo as well. Albania, for the first time in history set up at Austro-Hungarian insistence following the Balkan wars of 1912, never included the Serbian Plain of Kosovo. One of the first acts of the new fascist occupational regime in Kosovo was to expell over 100,000 Serbs out of some 400,000 who lived there. In 1943, the Albanians provided the Nazis with a full-fledged legionary SS division, the 23rd Gebirgs-division SS "Skanderbeg."

Yet, after the war, as after the previous two wars (the Balkan and World War I), all this was forgotten and forgiven by the victorious Serbs.

Moreover, the Communist government of Yugoslavia forbade Kosovo Serbs to come back to their hearths, in compliance with an accord reached by Tito and the Albanian communist leadership. True, for 20 years after the war, Yugoslav Communists ruled Kosovo by police and martial law, because in 1945 a whole division of the Yugoslav Army had been wiped out in an ethnic Albanian uprising.

But, in 1963, Tito gave the Kosovo Albanians autonomous status, and in 1966 fired the man he claimed was responsible for repression against them—his principal henchman, Aleksandar Ranković. Unfortunately, Ranković never did anything without explicit command from Tito.

The Communist Party in Kosovo, the courts, the administration, the police, business, industry, education—everything but the army-was turned over to ethnic Albanians. The official language of this Serbian province became Albanian, while its schoolchildren were educated with the aid of textbooks shipped in from neighboring, Enver Hoxha's Albania.

From 1966 until today, the Kosovo Albanians have meticulously worked at driving out of their region everyone who is not an Albanian, or does not want to become one. Many thousands of ethnic Kosovo Turks have left for Turkey, Kosovo Gypsies have been pressured into declaring themselves Albanian, while Kosovo Serbs have been driven out, en masse. 200,000 of them have left in the last two decades, under pressure.

Even according to the controlled, communist Yugoslav press, Albanian chauvinists are using murder, rape, pillage, humiliation, property damage, desecration-their age--old, proven methods to ensure their goal of an "ethnically pure Kosovo." And all this is happening not in an occupied country at a time of war, but in a "socialist, self-managing" Yugoslavia—a legal state at peace, an honored member of the United Nations, an alleged friend of the U.S.

Unfortunately, also, there are no American, or any other TV crews to cover the events, as in Israel, Panama, or elsewhere. Everything—as interpreted by the Yugoslav Government, and the U.S. state Department-falls within the scope of "internal affairs of a friendly state." There are some well-meaning individuals in America who, in their enlightenment, call Serbian Kosovo "Kossova," honoring the Albanian usage.

Yet "Kossova" means nothing in Albanian, while the various Kosovos in Yugoslavia have a definite meaning in Serbian—not to mention the emotional, historical, and cultural meaning of the Epic of Kosovo for all South Slavs, who have survived 500 years of barbaric, often genocidal Ottoman occupation mainly on the strength of the Ko-

sovo Myth—forged before, during and after the Battle of Kosovo.

Many brilliant Westerners: Goethe, Sir Walther Scott, Dame Rebbeca West, to name just a few, have written, passionately, about the Serbian "epic of defeat" at Kosovo. The Kosovo cycle of heroic folk poems is the very soul of the Serbian people. To excise it from the Serb national being by turning Kosovo over to Albania would be like giving away the Alamo to Mexico, or Pearl Harbor to Japan.

All over Kosovo stand Serbian medieval churches and monasteries, with the frescos that have, in some ways, antedated or paralleled the Italian Renaissance. There are, however, no Albanian cultural, religious, or any other monuments there, unless the turbe (an Islamic chapel)—erected over the bowels of Ottoman Sultan Murat I, killed at the Battle of Kosovo by a Serb noble—is to be counted as such.

It is extremely unrealistic to expect the Serbs, a historically fighting people, to stand by forever, and watch their Kosovo compatriots driven away from the historic heartland of all Serbia.

[...]

Mr. Chairman, members of the American Congress, ladies and gentlemen, I hope that the following gentlemen will make the whole Albanian-Serb issue of the Plain of Blackbird more clear to you in the next hour. As the most powerful nation on earth—still—there is much we can do, given our knowledge, and the will to use it.

Thank you very much.

ALEX DRAGNICH

(Dr. Alex Dragnich was unable to attend because of poor health and his paper was read by Mr. Miloš Milenković.)

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Congress:

I am Alex N. Dragnich, retired professor of political science at Vanderbilt University. In the years 1947–1950, I was Cultural Attaché and Public Affairs Officer in the American Embassy in Belgrade, and have since written a number of books and articles about Yugoslav history and politics. I also served in other capacities in the U.S. Government, including that of Chester W. Nimitz Professor at the United States Naval War College in Newport.

I am sure that you and other members of the House and of the Senate have asked yourselves why you needed to concern yourselves with American citizens who involve themselves in the quarrels of the inhabitants of the countries of their forebears.

As a free American, born here of Serbian immigrant parents, permit me to try to answer that question in terms of United States national interests. I am pleased that my parents came here, because we their children have been able to grow up in a society of free men and women who enjoy the blessings of liberty.

Americans of Serbian background have been well aware, and proud, that these blessings of freedom are precisely what their forebears struggled for in the old homeland. In the course of the 19th century, after nearly 500 years of Ottoman domination, the Serbs fought successfully to regain their independence, and toward the end of the century were successful in establishing democratic political institutions. All of this was done with virtually no help from the outside and with great sacrifices.

But there is more than this identity of aspirations that brought Serbs and Americans together. The Serbs fought as our allies in two world wars, and with untold suffering.

More important, in terms of United States national interests, is the role of Serbs in Yugoslavia. They are the most numerous, nearly twice as large as the next largest group, the Croats. They were the principal instrument in the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918—the ones who sacrificed the most on its behalf and in the interwar years they were the strongest supporters of the common state.

There have been allegations that in those years the Serbs abused their dominant position. Recent studies, both here and in Yugoslavia, have demonstrated that such was not the case. But whatever history's ultimate judgment on that question, it remains a fact that there cannot be a Yugoslavia without strong Serbian support.

No one should lose sight of this fact, because United States foreign policy is committed to an integral Yugoslav state. It was so when I served in our embassy in Belgrade 40 years ago, and I believe that that is still U.S. policy.

At the same time it is important to note that recent years have witnessed disintegrative forces at work in Yugoslavia. The actions of the Albanians against the Serbs in Yugoslavia's Kosovo province in recent years is only the most visible of these. One result is that the Serbs, who are convinced that they have generally been getting the "short end of the stick" in Tito's Yugoslavia, have been asking themselves why they should continue to support a common state if others seemingly do not want to do so.

This has, it seems to me, important implications for the United States. I believe that the Congress should avoid taking actions that may further contribute to disintegration in Yugoslavia, and thereby undermine United States policy. Moreover, I should also like to add that I believe that the State Department needs to be more on the alert. While I cannot prove it, I have the distinct impression that the State Department has for far too long been taking the Serbs for granted.

This does not mean that any group in Yugoslavia should be free of criticism. But members of the Congress should keep in mind that no nationality group in Yugoslavia favors a communist system. Unfortunately, there are times when some of these groups blame each other for their plight. Consequently, if members of the Congress are inclined to respond to injustices in Yugoslavia, they should do so on behalf of all the peoples there. To align them-

selves with one or another group, especially groups that do not share America's policy objective of an integral Yugoslavia, would, in my opinion, be sheer folly.

A case in point, Mr. Chairman, is House Concurrent Resolution 162 and Senate Concurrent Resolution 65, about the alleged mistreatment of Albanians in Yugoslavia. But it is precisely those Albanians who are the problem. They are in an overwhelming majority in the province of Kosovo, and have in effect sought to create a state within a state. Although Kosovo is theoretically an autonomous province of Serbia, the Serbian authorities have by design or otherwise been powerless in matters concerning Kosovo. In short, the Kosovo Albanians have created an almost impossible situation for the Yugoslav government. I say this as one who, in books and articles, has been most critical of the Communist government of Yugoslavia. While that government has been responsible for most of its problems, in the present situation, I believe that it behooves all of us to view in some perspective the feeble efforts of that government to deal with a problem that threatens to tear the country apart.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to make this statement.

MOMČILO SELIĆ

Honorable Mr. Chairman, Honorable Members of the Congress of the United States, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Momčilo Selić, and I was born in 1946 in Yugoslavia into a Communist Partisan family. In 1980, I was sentenced by Belgrade court to seven year's imprisonment, for trying to explore Yugoslavia's recent history in a literary article. In 1982, I was pardoned following action by Amnesti International. International PEN, Freedom House of New York, the U.S. Helsinki Watch and other humanitarian organizations.

In 1983, I was given political asylum in the West and am now the Managing Editor of Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture, published by Rockford Institute, in Rockford, Illinois.

My early childhood, student days, and adulthood until 1983 were spent in Belgrade, where the only Albanians I saw were the menial laborers in the streets and market places. They seemed frugal, modest, hardworking people whom I, and many other Belgraders, admired for their hardiness and honesty.

At the Belgrade University, I met some Albanians from Kosovo, and they acted as good friends and upstanding men. When the students demonstrated against the government in 1968, the Albanians were with us, decrying social injustice. Yet none of us, then, knew there were nationalist Albanian students demonstrations going on in Kosovo at the same time.

In 1978, a friend and I decided to make a tour of the medieval Serbian monasteries in Kosovo. As soon as we came in Prizren, the ancient Serbian capital, we went to visit the monument to the Albanian League. We had no idea that the League had been specifically anti-Serb. We had been told instead, by the official Yugoslav press and historiography, that the Albanian League was an anti-Ottoman liberation movement. As wee stood in the monumental complex, we were surrounded by a group of twenty Albanian young men. They were friendly, but very eager to know what we, as Serbs, were doing there. We told them that we were interested in our mutual past. The youths went to consult someone standing in the background (an older man) and came back smiling. They were to show us Prizren and its sights, they said.

We gladly accepted. As we moved through the streets, we were followed by a crowd of small Albanian and Gypsy children who laughed and pointed at us. We came by a small, ruined Serbian Orthodox church where two men were burning candles. They looked at us with apprehension, but, hearing our Serbian, seemed somewhat reassured.

The two women whispered to us that we should visit ruined Cathedral of the Holy Archangels, for a Serb festival was to be held there next day.

"You have to take care," they said, glancing toward our Albanian escort.

"You don't know what is like here," one of them whispered.

"What do you mean," I asked, but she looked down and would speak of nothing as long as the Albanians were around.

"The people are afraid," she whispered to us, before we left.

Afraid of what, I thought.

"Did you see those Albanian boys," my friend said to me after we had parted with our guides. "Did you see how their bones eyes shone? We Serbs could use some of their spirit!"

"We were probably like that in 1941," I said, and we both fell silent.

It took me several years, and many articles and stories in a suddenly not-so-cryptic Belgrade press, to find out there had been a virtual genocide of my people in Kosovo. And, when I was imprisoned in Zabela penitentiary, for questioning the Yugoslav status quo, I heard accounts of the Albanian rebellion in Zabela, of only few years back.

In the Fifth Pavilion, I was told by eyewitnesses, the Albanian criminals armed with knives had gone berserk. Without warning, they had wounded dozens and murdered several Serb inmates in cold blood, before taking hostages. One of the Albanians had come out of the Pavilion with a bottle of blood in hand. He drank from it in front of the assembled prisoners and riot police.

"I am drinking Serbian blood," he shouted, and the guards had to restrain the crowd from lynching him.

Only after that did the Albanians (not a single political prisoner among them) make known their demand for

transfer to an all-Albanian prison in Kosovo. They wouldn't, any more, they said, share quarters with Serbs for anything in the world.

Yet, during my two and a half years in two different Yugoslav jails, I have not seen a single instance of anti-Albanian discrimination, either by the inmates or the administration. The Albanian prisoners' grievance, in my eyes, seemed totally inexplicable.

Something, apparently, was in the air among the Kosovo Albanians of which other Yugoslavs, me included, were not aware. In one of the most federated, ethnically equitable states in the world (for all its other travesties), it seemed as if the Albanians, suddenly, wanted nothing to do with anyone but themselves.

"Welcome to the club," a boyhood friend said to me, when I came out of prison and told him what I learned. Like much else, including my anticommunism, a more realistic perception of our Albanian compatriots had come to me latter—and deared—than to most of my friends.

DIMITRIJE DJORDJEVIĆ

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Members of the Congress:

My name is Dr. Dimitrije Djordjević. I am a Professor of History at the University of California Santa Barbara. Let me begin by a grievance of an ethnic Serb from Kosovo, quoted in the weekly journal NIN (March 13, 1988, № 1941). "The greatest fear I have," said the peasant, "is to wait for my daughter to be back home safe, before the sunset." This atmosphere of insecurity and hopelessness has provoked a continued and massive exodus of Serbs from the land of their forefathers. Instead of words, let figures and statistics speak. The percentage of Serbs in the Kosovo area dropped from 27.9% in 1953 to 20.9% in 1971, 14.9% in 1981, and to 10% in 1987. During the last seven years, from February 1981 until December 1987, 24,209 Serbs emigrated from Kosovo, pressured by the Albanian majority. On the other side, an Albanian demographic explosion in Kosovo occurred. From 450,000 in the 1920's the population grew to 733.000 in 1948, and 1,805, 000 in 1986. The projection for the year 2,001 is 2,500,000. The birth rate among Albanians in Kosovo is the highest in Europe: in the 1950's it was 7.42 pro mille, and in 1984 4.58 pro mille. Recently an Albanian peasant Etem Shabani celebrated the birth of his twenty first child and obtained at that occasion state support of 41 million dinars.

The story of the Kosovo Province has two faces. On the one side the economic development is more than evident. The investment obtained from the Yugoslav Federal fund assigned to the non-developed regions amounted to 72.3 billion dinars until 1980, and during the last years made 44.3% of the entire amount offered for this purpose to all non-developed areas on the country. Villages got electricity, roads were built, domestic industry developed. Significant achievements were obtained in the field of education. The Kosovo Academy of Science was founded; the Priština University became one of the largest in the country. In Prizren the Pedagogical Academy and the Medical School were organized. Basically, Kosovo obtained all attributes of a republic (except the status of a sovereign state). The Albanians have their representative in the Presidency of Yugoslavia, and the right of veto to federal legislation. In 1986–1987, the Albanian Mr. Hasan Sinani was President of Yugoslavia.

On the other side of the picture is the fact that Kosovo is still the least developed region of Yugoslavia. The reasons are manifold. They range from the inherited poverty, from the Albanian demographic explosion, from wasted and non-profitable investments (coupled with nepotism and corruption), the emergence of a new class of Albanian bureaucrats (white collar workers in Trepča make up 40% of the total workers), the low productivity of the unskilled worker to the hyper-production of local Albanian intelligentsia, trained in Albanian and unable to compete in the Yugoslav market.

This situation stimulated the already existing Albanian nationalism which turned against the Serbian minority in the Province. Exposed to daily pressures, with personal and family existence threatened (desecrated graveyards, mutilated cattle, damaged crops, orchards and vineyards) and feeling unprotected by the Albanian authorities, Serbian peasants are responding in two ways. They are either moving out of the Province, selling their property to Albanians and trying to find refuge in Serbia proper, or they are spontaneously organizing their self-defense and electing their own leaders. Thousands of these desperate people crowded trains and buses to come to Beograd—their only hope—to present their grievances and to ask for help and protection from the federal government.

For us historians the national irredenta is a well-known historical phenomenon. Nationalism has its historical, socioeconomic, and emotional roots—it is rational and irrational. The Albanian movement in the Kosovo region of Yugoslavia is a typical example of the escalation of nationalism directed against the Serbian population in the Province, but also against the integrity of the Yugoslav federal establishment and against the state itself.

Slogans extolled by Albanian nationalists during the massive demonstrations that erupted in Kosovo in 1981, are still circulated and are characteristic in this regard. Four kinds of slogans were forwarded.

The first type was explicitly irredentist: "We are Albanians-not Yugoslavs," and "We are children of Skender Beg—the army of Enver Hoxha." Maps of a great Albania including Sanjak and large portions of the Serbian and Macedonian republics as well as northern Greece were joined with Enver Hoxha's portraits and the Albanian flag.

The second type of slogans, also nationalistic, was more complex. The loudest slogan was: "We want a republic," "Kosovo republic," and "Republic by treaty or force." This

demand could have a double meaning—directed toward secession from Yugoslavia or toward a republic in the framework of the Yugoslav federal system. However, according to the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, the republic is a sovereign state with the right of secession. Once established and supported by irredentism, the republic could lead in two directions—in and out of Yugoslavia. In the latter case it would produce two Albanian states (like North and South Korea, North and South Vietnam, Cyprus, Palestine, etc.) or the merging of both into a Great Albania.

The third type of slogan had a socio-political character: "Down with the bourgeoisie," "Down with revisionism," and was extolled by the Albanian Communist Marxist-Leninist Party in Western Europe.

Last but not least, slogans against the Serbian national minority in Kosovo, encouraging the ongoing exodus of the Serbs from the Province, dominated.

What is the impact of the Kosovo problem today?

The significance is threefold: Yugoslav, Balkan, and European, involving also the United States and the Western World.

Albanian demands for a separate republic will destabilize Yugoslavia, which is already going through a serious economic and political crisis. It would require the reshuffling of the neighboring federal republics of Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia, in which many ethnic Albanians are living. This will impose a fundamental revision of the Yugoslav federation to which none of the mentioned republics would agree. The Serbs in the Albanian republic would be left at the mercy of Albanians and that will inevitably augment the already existing pressure on them. As already mentioned, it would offer to the new republic the right of secession.

The Kosovo Republic means the revival of the Albanian League from the past, and would cross beyond the Yugoslav borders, stimulating Albanian demands against Greece and North Epirus. (Greek and Serbian minorities in Albania proper are already deprived of all basic national and religious rights.) It could encourage Bulgarian aspirations toward Yugoslav Macedonia. Taken together, it would destabilize the entire Balkan region and open the way to the Soviet access to the Adriatic, the Aegean and the Mediterranean seas. The eventual merging of two Albanian states into one would challenge the status quo and the southern flank of NATO, jeopardizing the integrity of Italy, Greece and Turkey. When moving out of the status quo, the Pandora box of Albania can provoke innumerable problems.

This statement is not directed against the Albanian people who have the human and democratic right to live in peace and to strive toward a better life. Especially not against the common people who suffer from poverty and try to overcome the heavy burden inherited from the past. But sympathy goes to the Serbian minority in Kosovo which has the same rights and is forced to leave the domicile of their forefathers. An "ethnically pure Albanian Kosovo" which is the goal of Albanian nationalists today reminds one of racist theories against which this great country fought during the war. Albanians, Serbs, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Turks, have to find a democratic solution to live together in their common state of Yugoslavia which was created in wars and revolutions and is not ready to surrender without resistance, especially where and when its Serbs are concerned.

Thank you for your attention.

MILORAD DRACHKOVITCH

(Dr. Milorad M. Drachkovitch's paper was read by Mr. Miloš Milenković.)

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Members of the House of Representatives:

My name is Milorad M. Drachkovich. I am—since 1959—a Senior Fellow of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, at Stanford University, California. My fields of study are the history of the Communist International (Comintern) since its foundation by Lenin in March 1919, and the history of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia from its inception in 1920 up to the present. (The Sixth Party Congress, November 1952, changed the CPY's name into the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, [LCY].) I have extensively published (books and articles) in these fields both in the United States and abroad.

Aware that my time is short and the topic of this presentation huge, I shall concentrate my remarks on the relationship between the Yugoslav and Albanian Communist parties and the two neighboring states over the last several decades. Instructed by the Comintern, Tito was instrumental through two representatives of his Party in the establishment of the Albanian Communist Party on November 8, 1941. Seven years later the Albanian Party changed its name into the Albanian Party of Labor (APL) which is still in use. A former schoolteacher of French, Enver Hoxha became its first secretary. Until his death on April 11, 1985, Hoxha was the absolute ruler of both the Albanian Party and State. A skillful and ruthless political maneuverer outside and inside Albania, he was at different times and for different reasons pro-Yugoslav and anti-Yugoslav; pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet; pro-Chinese and anti-Chinese. He merged his Communist ethnocentrism with his cult of personality, and distinguished himself by a series of internal Party purges—among the bloodiest in the history of the international Communist movement.

Initially a Yugoslav satellite, he turned against Tito and the Yugoslav State and Party after Tito's expulsion from the Cominform on June 28, 1948. From that time on Hoxha was permanently a foe of the "revisionist" Yugoslavia. This did not change under his successor, Ramiz Alia, whose alleged greater flexibility runs parallel with the perpetuation of Hoxha's personality cult.

Following his break with Tito's Yugoslavia, Hoxha's attention was riveted to Kosovo—since 1963 an Autonomous Province within the Republic of Serbia. Other speakers will examine the details of Kosovo's principal contradiction: as cradle of the Serbian medieval state, it was for centuries, and still remains, a sacred land for the large majority of Serbs; its loss would represent an irreparable blow to Serbian self-confidence. On the other hand, the native Albanians represent a large ethnic majority in Kosovo; the most politically active among them, especially the university youth (in 1981 the Priština University numbered 37,000 fulltime and 14,000 part-time students, overwhelmingly Albanian by origin) feels little allegiance to the Yugoslav State and the Communist League of Yugoslavia. In their alienation they were looking with different degrees of admiration at Enver Hoxha's Albania. Proletarian internationalism, the basic tenet of Marxism-Leninism, or the workers' self-management, Tito's contribution to post-Stalin communism, have lost any significance or attractive power at Kosovo.

Since the autumn of 1968 Kosovo became a theater of both underground agitation and occasional violent outbursts against the established order. The climax occurred between March 11 and April 3, 1981, when thousands of Albanian students and other citizens took to the streets in Priština, the capital of Kosovo, and other cities, shouting various slogans, ranging from requests for the instauration of Kosovo as full-fledged Republic within Yugoslavia, to demands for an ethnically pure Kosovo as part of a Great Albania under Enver Hoxha. Strangely enough the authorities were unaware of the well-planned demonstrations, and reacted with the force of police and army units. There were casualties on both sides, mainly among the demonstrators. Repression followed, causing even greater determination among the militants to restructure or destroy the Yugoslav state.

Kosovo confrontations have become more tense and ugly during the last few years. On the one hand, the anti-Serbian feelings among the Albanians have assumed violent forms. Large numbers of Serbs and Montenegrins have been forced to leave their homes with their families and find refuge in Serbia. Stories of their predicament aroused strong emotions among the Serbs in other parts of the country. Simultaneously, terrorist acts were perpetrated against the symbols of Serbian existence in Kosovo: churches and monasteries were fully or partly destroyed, Orthodox priests were persecuted, nuns molested. It was indeed a Nazi-like campaign of denial of basic human rights to the non-Albanian population in Kosovo. Violence caused repression. Yugoslav regime's special police units arrested many Albanians (without always distinguishing between perpetrators of crimes and simple citizens) who later were sentenced to stiff prison terms. The LCY leaders, still disoriented by Tito's death on May 4, 1980, were not of a single mind on how to pacify Kosovo, while the military brass openly criticized the "politicians'" inability to cope with an explosive situation.

My final remarks pertain to the asymmetrical relationship between the Albanian and Yugoslav states and their respective ruling parties. On the state level relations exist: there are trade exchanges between the two countries, and Albanian representatives attended the recently held meeting of Balkan countries' foreign ministers in Belgrade. On the Party level mutual enmity is total and it is hard to envision any change in the foreseeable future. A major paradox of the 20th century is that the Communist parties, ideologically conceived and built to eliminate conflicts among the states, have served and are serving as conflict promoters.

My report to you, ladies and gentlemen, is mute on the crucial issue of what the Kosovo confrontations mean for the United States foreign and human rights policies. Fortunately other participants of this meeting will address these questions. And if I have added some relevant grains of insight, my mission has been accomplished.

VESELIN DJURETIĆ

My name is Dr. Veselin Djuretić, and I am a Learned Fellow of the Balkan Institute in the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Beograd, Yugoslavia. I published three books and seventy papers and articles. I completed my graduate and post graduate studies in Beograd, where I was granted the title of Doctor of History. I specialized in the history of the October Revolution and Soviet Society at the Lomonosov University in Moscow.

Divisive forces and diverse national characters have stood in the way of Yugoslavia and her unifying idea from the first day of the existence of the country. What began as fictional "Great Serbian Hegemony" has become a carefully orchestrated campaign of disinformation to perpetuate the alleged Serb oppression of other peoples in Yugoslavia. In Kosovo and Metohija the Albanian anti-Yugoslav philosophy called for the liberation of the Albanian spirit from the oppression of the "terrible Serbian regime." Along with this obvious falsehood, the Albanians today claim historical continuity of ownership of Kosovo, tracing their purported origin back even to Illyrian times.

With such posturings, they ignore hundreds of ancient Serbian historical monuments which represent a cultural center of Europe. They ignore the churches and monasteries which have withstood the centuries of Ottoman oppression, much of which was accomplished with assistance from the Moslem Albanians themselves.

The origins of various Balkan anti-Serbian forces date back to the old Austro-Hungarian politics which opposed the Serbian Revolution of 1804. This revolution initiated a liberating wave which threatened to mobilize the Slav population en masse, triumphing over the parochial Croatian nationalism, anti-Yugoslavism and anti-Serbianism. Petty interests agitating for separatism gained their ideo-

logical and political power base when the system of federal states was introduced within the Communist and Workers Party of Yugoslavia. This ill-considered departmentalization of Yugoslavia again ignored historical facts: in this case, the historical make-up of Yugoslav national ethnic groups. This Balkanization of Yugoslavia was facilitated by the Comintern via its transmissions. This unnatural complexity that, objectively speaking, was promoted by the Communist party and national extremists, caused a specific political development which, in turn, gave rise to various forms of anti-Serbianism. The process of "re-Serbianization" was halted though many "Albanians" still remembered their Serbian ancestry, and the Communists moved Albanians as well as some other nationalities against Yugoslavia.

Symbols of the "socialistic utopia of the future" embodied by the Russian Revolution of 1917, ideologically joined tradition and revolution. This was particularly attractive to the Serbian people because of their Pan-Slav sentimentality. It resulted in the campaign directed against the alleged "great Serbian hegemonism" and in favor of the struggle for "equal national rights."

However, the adjective "national" was used less in the West European sense and more in the idiom of Soviet federalism. This "equal national rights" course led to the breaking up of Yugoslavia as well as the destruction of the ideal of a Yugoslavia, and gave rise to national distinctions based on the historical division of religions. On the other hand, in a Machiavellian way, the Serbian national fiber was torn into several pieces. This stimulated the process of artificial creation of "national identifications" within Serbia, which had no historical relevance. These artificial "nationalities" were nothing but regional specifics developed under the long Ottoman domination. These cracks in the otherwise integral Serbian whole of the Central Balkans have facilitated the precipitous Albanian intrusion into Serbian lands. This is especially true in Macedonia, where the intrusion was expedited by separating this region from the Serbian cultural and historical fold.

Another exploitation of "national identifications" is motivated by religious interests, especially by Roman Catholic groups. The Kosovo tragedy is a natural result of anti--Serbian tactic which used Albanians as a tool for anti-Serbian politics.

Albanian nationalism and separatism have grown quickly into chauvinism thanks in large part to the "mystification" of the "revolutionary formulas" and this, in turn, was promoted by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, which adopted as one of its fundamental slogans the myths of "Great Serbian hegemony" and "national oppression" of other peoples by the Serbs. In this regard a special role was played by the agencies of Stalinist Russia, which promoted the calculated "anti-Great Serbian" line, using it in its interplay with the Western democracies. Tendencies to break up Serbia were also manifested very early at the highest levels of the pre-war Communist Party of Yugoslavia. These tendencies became part of CPY's wartime politics as well as of its theories of national state organization. In the outline of the communist "Anti-Fascist Council" drawn up on November 29, 1943 to reorganize Yugoslavia along federal lines, Serbia was broken up into several federal units, while Croatia remained integral, comprising three regions partially or mainly inhabited by Serbs. This solution was put forward as a matter of the will of the people although the conditions for the articulation of the national will did not exist in the wartime: it could only be the decision of a few communist protagonists. Serbs, who at that time comprised some eighty percent of the Partisan (communist) forces, thought more in non-Serbian terms of "proletarian internationalism," than they did in terms of nationality. The genocide, which was inflicted on the Serbs from the first day of the war, did not induce in them a will to resist self-destruction. Later, this communist federal outline further separated Islamized Serbs from their roots and turned them into allies of Albanian separatism while at the same time the existence of Serbian Roman Catholics was systematically denied (they were regarded as Croats).

The individuality of Kosovo was not included in the Anti-Fascist Council's concept of the federal structure probably because their was no Partisan Albanian movement (if one does not count a few Albanian communists) which could be represented. In our time their late entry as an independent region is used for propaganda reasons to demonstrate that Albanians were not able to determine their own destiny. Western public opinion could get the impression that Kosovo was until recently a part of Albania.

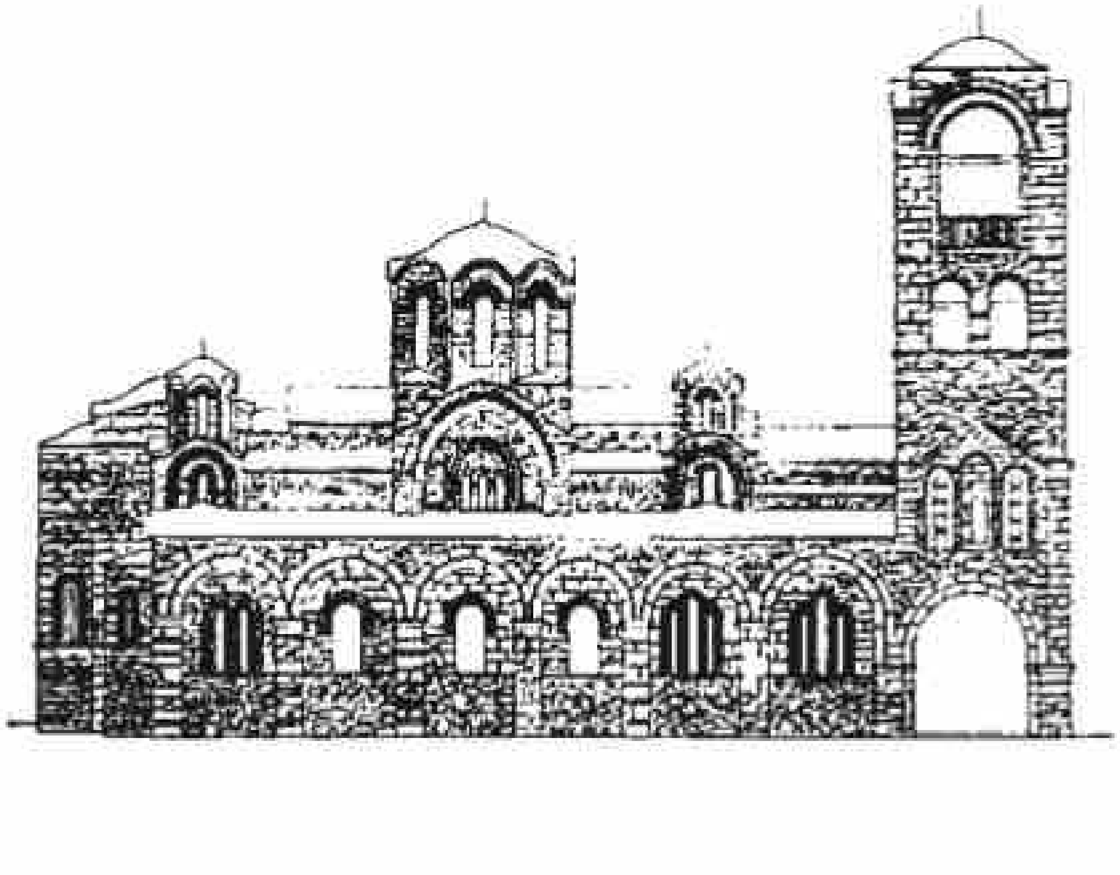
After World War II, a declaration of the Federal Anti-Fascist Council gave birth to the federal state which left half of the Serbs outside their ancestral Serbia, while what was left of Serbia was torn into two autonomous regions (Kosovo-Metohija and Vojvodina). The Serbian national problem was obscured at this time by ideological enthusiasm as well as by the state centralization. The Serbian question was pushed back by scandals in which the "Great Serbian" ghost was always found to be lurking. One of these affairs, linked to the overthrow of the Minister of Internal Affairs Aleksandar Ranković in 1966, explicitly recognized the "post-war oppression" of Albanians. A vigorous campaign validated the wartime Albanian genocide against the Serbs, as well as the "long Serbian oppression" of this small people. At the end, a strange result was obtained by joining politics to propaganda: Kosovo was separated not only from Serbia but Yugoslavia as well. With the advent of the national Constitution of 1974—one which jeopardized the equal standing of Serbia vis-à-vis other republics and her own regions—the full effect of the slogan "the weaker Serbia is, the stronger Yugoslavia becomes" was finally felt. The long-term effect of this policy is political disintegration and human conflict. The application

of this slogan means indescribable atrocities occurring today in Kosovo. Its future result is the drama that will ineluctably follow the Serbian backlashes. What is not so apparent are the anti-Serbian political and ethnic forces which have promoted the de-Serbianization in the federal units outside the republic of Serbia which have also resulted in the constant and silent tide of Serbs migrating from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina to "Serbia Proper."

The aimless, empty character of contemporary Yugoslav policy toward Kosovo is symptomatic of the atmosphere which has answered atrocities with benign neglect. There exists not even a plan how to peacefully return the ethnic situation in Kosovo to the status quo ante Albanian incursion. Also symptomatic is the reaction of many non-Serbs to the requests of the new Serbian leadership for Serbian equality with other federal republics—these requests are compromised by using the old-fashioned Stalinistic cliché of "new Serbian hegemony."

In the writings of many Americans about the Kosovo tragedy, as well as in the statements of many American officials, the Serbian people find support and a belief that the end of anti-Serbian manipulation is at hand, and that the Serbs will finally receive help from the Western democracies. In a recent pronouncement by Gorbachev in Belgrade, regarding the "genetic relation of Serbs and Russians" the Serbs have also heard another voice acclaiming the end of Stalinist anti-Serbianism. Yugoslavs recognize that artificial protection of certain groups to the detriment of others has been carried to an absurd extreme. They are aware that a new process of true democratic development must occur in Yugoslavia: democratic development that will triumph over the Comintern anti-Serbianism and once again revive and strengthen the Yugoslav idea. Any other course, honorable ladies and gentlemen, would lead to a quite predictable disaster.

Closed Hearing on Serb-Albanian Relations in Yugoslavia Before the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs, Edited by Momčilo Selić; American Serbian Heritage Foundation: 1988. This is an edited transcript of the papers read on April 27, 1988, before the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Human Rights, in a Closed Hearing in Room H129 of the Capitol Building, Washington, D.C.



The War: The Serbs Had Little Choice

Ronald L. Hatchett

The primary justification for our military strikes against Yugoslavia is its refusal to sign the Kosovo peace agreement put forward by the United States and its allies at Rambouillet, France. The president told us that the Albanians chose peace by signing the agreement even though "they did not get everything they wanted." The Serbs, he said, refused to negotiate, even though the agreement left Kosovo as part of Yugoslavia. However, as in several other instances over the past months, the president is telling us only part of the story. Most Americans assume that the deal we put together at Rambouillet was evenhanded, offering advantage to neither side, but including the core concerns of both Albanians and Serbs alike. But few of us have taken the time to look at the actual agreement the president is condemning the Serbs for not signing. I urge you to do so.

Under the agreement, "Kosovo will have a president, prime minister and government, an assembly, its own Supreme Court, constitutional court and other courts and prosecutors."

"Kosovo will have the authority to make laws not subject to revision by Serbia or the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including levying taxes, instituting programs of economic, scientific, technological, regional and social development, conducting foreign relations within its area of responsibility in the same manner as a Republic."

"Yugoslav army forces will withdraw completely from Kosovo, except for a limited border guard force (active only within a 5 kilometers border zone)."

"Serb security forces "police" will withdraw completely from Kosovo except for a limited number of border police (active only within a 5 km border zone)."

The parties invite NATO to deploy a military force (KFOR), which will be authorized to use necessary force to ensure compliance with the accords."

"The international community will play a role in ensuring that these provisions are carried out through a Civilian Implementation Mission "appointed by NATO."

"The Chief of the CIM has the authority to issue binding directives to the Parties on all important matters he sees fit, including appointing and removing officials and curtailing institutions."

"Three years after the implementation of the Accords, an international meeting will be convened to determine a mechanism for a final settlement for Kosovo on the basis of the will of the people."

The Rambouillet accord would have turned Kosovo into a NATO colony in every respect, but it also would have gone a long way toward subordinating all of Yugoslavia. It revived the hated colonial concept of "extraterritori-

ality," under which the colonizers were immune from being tried by the courts of the colonized country, even if they committed—as they often did—rape or murder. But most remarkably of all,

"NATO personnel shall enjoy, together with their vehicles, vessels, aircraft, and equipment, free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout the FRY including associated airspace and territorial waters. This shall include, but not be limited to, the right of bivouac, maneuver, billet and utilization of any areas or facilities as required for support, training, and operations."

"NATO is granted the use of airports, roads, rails, and ports without payment of fees, duties, dues, tolls, or charges occasioned by mere use."

"The Parties (i.e. Yugoslavia and "Kosovo") shall, upon simple request, grant all telecommunications services, including broadcast services, needed for the Operation, as determined by NATO. This shall include the right to utilize such means and services as required to assure full ability to communicate and the right to use all of the electromagnetic spectrum for this purpose, free of cost."

"NATO may, in the conduct of the Operation, have need to make improvements or modifications to certain infrastructure in the FRY, such as roads, bridges, tunnels, buildings, and utility systems."

"NATO shall be immune from all legal process, whether civil, administrative, or criminal." "NATO personnel, under all circumstances and at all times, shall be immune from the Parties, jurisdiction in respect of any civil, administrative, criminal or disciplinary offenses which may be committed by them in the FRY." "NATO personnel shall be immune from any form of arrest, investigation, or detention by the authorities in the FRY."The arrival of NATO troops in Kosovo would, by itself, be a gross violation of Yugoslavia's and Serbia's sovereignty. But the proposed accord requires that Yugoslavia allow NATO unfettered access to *any and all* parts of the country's territory, with all costs to be borne by the host country! This blatantly violates Yugoslavia's sovereignty in so provocative a manner that it cannot have been accidental. As another commentator has noted, "It is not difficult to imagine a working group in the State Department charged with the task of thinking up the most intrusive and insulting clauses possible to insert into the agreement. Clearly, U.S. policymakers never intended for Yugoslavia's leadership to sign this document." For the Kosovo Albanians, the Rambouillet agreement gives them total control over the province immediately. The only sacrifice required of them is to wait three years before the arrangements are made legally permanent. For the Serbs, the Rambouillet agreement means that immediately upon signing they lose all sovereignty over Kosovo. Total political control would be in the hands of the Albanians and the NATO Civilian Implementation Mission. Yugoslav laws would no longer apply in Kosovo. Neither would Yugoslavia be able to exercise police powers in Kosovo. After three years, these arrangements would be made permanent by the "will of the people"—not the people of the whole country of Yugoslavia of which Kosovo is supposedly a part, but only by the will of the people of Kosovo, who are mainly Albanians.

The Rambouillet Accord was, in truth, a declaration of war disguised as a peace agreement. The Yugoslavian delegation at Rambouillet agreed to give the Albanians autonomy in Kosovo—control over their day-to-day lives including religious, education and health care systems, and local government operations. But they tried to negotiate changes to preserve the right of the Yugoslav federal government to determine economic and foreign policy, for Yugoslav national law to continue to apply in Kosovo, and for any international presence in Kosovo to be limited to observation and advice, not control. The Serbian negotiating efforts were summarily dismissed and the Serbs were told they had only two choices: sign the agreement as written or face NATO bombing.

What would you have done if you were on the Serb delegation?

An abbreviated version of this article was originally published in *The Houston Chronicle*, on March 28, 1999.

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February 17, 2002

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE SERBS KILLED NEAR PODUJEVO HELD IN THE MONASTERY OF GRAČANICA

Gračanica—His Grace Artemije, the Bishop of Raška-Prizren, served the memorial service for the Serbs killed in the terrorist attack of the Kosovo Albanians on the convoy of Serbian buses at a place Livadice near Podujevo. Bishop Artemije served together with the clergymen of the Diocese of Raška-Prizren in the churchyard of the Gračanica Monastery on Saturday, February 16.

"Had the committers of this terrorist attack been found and brought to justice, that would have surely been a great comfort to the Serbs in Kosovo"—said Bishop Artemije in his speech after the memorial service, and added that he "expects the day would come when the Serbs would be able to breathe freely, to move and live on their ancient hearths."

Besides several thousands citizens, there were also Mr Nebojša Čović, Vice-President of the Serbian Government and the leader of the Coordination Center for Kosovo/Metohija established by he Federal and Republic Governments; members of Parliament of Kosovo/Metohija—representatives of the Serbian coalition "Return;" and Mr Momčilo Trajković, President of the Serbian Movement of Resistance.

After the memorial service, the gathered citizens started walking from the Monastery to the center of Gračanica, thus showing protest since the international community has not provided security to the Serbs in Kosovo/Metohija up to now.

The representatives of the Serb national community in Kosovo and Metohija put flowers on the spot where 11 Serbs were killed and more than 30 wounded in a mined bus of "Niš Express," at the village Livadice near Podujevo, a year ago, on February 16, 2001.

February 18, 2002

FIRE SET TO AN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF KOSOVSKA MITROVICA

"If it is absolutely certain and clear that terrorists in Kosovo and Metohija have thus far razed and burned 108 Orthodox churches and monasteries, why then would there be any difference with this, the 109th case. Those desiring to cover up terror committed against the Orthodox Church in Kosovo and Metohija have to put forth stronger evidence to convince us that it was merely carelessness, forgotten lit candles, or malfunctioned installations. The clergy ascertain that on that day there was no service, candles were not lit, and also that there was no electricity that evening in the entire block surrounding the church"—reported the Bishop of Raška-Prizren to the Information Service of Serbian Orthodox Church regarding the fire of this past weekend in the southern part of Kosovska Mitrovica that destroyed the western side and narthex, encompassing the area in which candles are sold and the entrance to the Church of the Translation of the Relics of St. Sava.

Gratefully, the fire was extinguished by Greek soldiers in KFOR that have been protecting this church, which was built in 1896 and is located in an area of Kosovska Mitrovica that, following the 1999 arrival of the international armed forces and the withdrawal of the Serbian population across the Ibar River, is inhabited solely by Albanians.

After preliminary investigations were conducted by members of the UNMIK Police, Giorgi Kakuk, UNMIK spokesman in Kosovska Mitrovica reported that the fire in the Orthodox Church in the southern area of the city was "accidental, due to electrical problems or lit candles." Kakuk stated that the Greek soldiers maintain an around the clock guard at the church in southern Mitrovica and that it is "nearly impossible that someone could have entered the church undetected," according to news agencies.

March 13, 2002

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE NATO-BOMBING ON 24 MARCH

By decision of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, on the 24th of March of this year, the third anniversary of the beginning of the bombing of our Fatherland by the NATO pact, in all places of worship of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and in places where victims have fallen and in other such appropriate places, Memorial Services will be held for the defenders of our Fatherland and for victims from the civilian population, among which there were over 100 children.

Praying to God that the likes of this should never again occur nor befall anyone else, we ask Orthodox Serbs on this forthcoming, and thereafter on every 24th of March to participate in prayer for the repose of the souls of these innocent victims.

March 22, 2002

PATRIARCH PAVLE SERVES THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR NATO AGGRESSION VICTIMS IN THE SOKO MONASTERY

On Sunday, March 24, Sunday of Orthodoxy, His Holiness Pavle, Serbian Patriarch, is going to be the guest of His Grace Lavrentije, Bishop of Šabac-Valjevo. Patriarch Pavle and Bishop Lavrentije are going to serve memorial service for all the victims of NATO aggression on our Fatherland in the Soko Monastery, and thus mark the three-year anniversary of the bombardment.

It is expected that eminent State officials and various representatives of traditional Churches and religious communities are going to attend this prayerful gathering.

After this service, His Holiness is going to consecrate the monument dedicated to Bishop Nikolaj (Velimirović) of blessed memory, authored by our famous sculptor Mrs Drinka Radovanović.

According to the decision made by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the memorial service for the victims of NATO aggression is going to be regularly served every year on March 24 in all the churches in the country and in diaspora, as well as in all the other places where people were killed and in the locations appropriate for such a service.

His Grace Atanasije Bishop of Hvosno, Auxiliary Bishop of His Holiness, is going to serve the memorial service after the Holy Hierarchal Liturgy in the Church of Saint Mark the Apostle and Evangelist.

March 25, 2002

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE VICTIMS OF NATO AGGRESSION ON FRY HELD IN ALL THE CHURCHES IN THE COUNTRY AND ABROAD ON MARCH 24

"Innocent victims will remain alive before God".

Pursuant to the Decision made by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church a memorial service was held for the victims of the NATO aggression on FRY in all the churches in the country and abroad, on March 24, the three-year anniversary of the bombardment. On Sunday of Orthodoxy, after the Holy Hierarchal Liturgy, His Holiness Pavle Serbian Patriarch served, together with His Grace Lavrentije, Bishop of Šabac-Valjevo and many priests and deacons, memorial service to the victims of the NATO bombardment in the newly build Monastery of Saint Nicholas at Soko, near Ljubovija, where he also consecrated a monument—a bust of the Bishop Nikolaj (Velimirović), authored by our famous sculptor Drinka Radovanović.

Praying to Lord to place the souls of the killed in NATO bombardment "where the souls of the righteous reside," Patriarch Pavle pointed out that "if we are innocent and suffer afflictions, we will remain alive before the living God," as well as that "without the faith in Lord we will be unable to exist as a people, either biologically, or as the people of God."

Unveiling the first monument to Bishop Nikolaj in the Fatherland, Academician Matija Bećković pointed out that this year's March 24 united "not only memorial service and a holy day, but also Europe's true face and its counterpart, actually its heartlessness and its conscience."

Patriarch's Auxiliary Bishop Atanasije, Bishop of Hvosno, served the Holy Hierarchal Liturgy and the memorial service in the Church of Saint Mark the Apostle and Evangelist. Dr Vojislav Koštunica, President FRY, as well as a great number of eminent people, attended the Liturgy and the memorial service.

The Bishop of Raška/Prizren served the memorial service to the victims of NATO bombardment together with the clergy of this Diocese in the overcrowded Church of the Gračanica Monastery. The bishop pointed out in his speech that "after nearly two and a half years of the presence of international community in Kosovo and Metohija, not only that Orthodox Serbs are not free to move or to exercise their basic human rights, but are also represent permanent targets."

April 3, 2002

PATRIARCH PAVLE RECEIVED MICHAEL STEINER, HEAD OF UNMIK

His Holiness Pavle, Serbian Patriarch, received Mr Michael Steiner, special envoy of the UN Secretary General for Kosovo and Metohija in the Patriarchate Palace in Belgrade today. The talks dwelled on the current situation in Kosovo and Metohija, participation of the Serbian people in the governing institutions in Kosovo and Metohija, as well as on the possibilities for establishing multiethnic society in Kosovo and Metohija, for setting democratic rights and providing a normal life and work for the refugees willing to return.

Talking with the primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Head of the UN Civil Mission in Kosovo repeated that the return of the exiled Serbs to Kosovo and Metohija represented the process that the international community is in charge of. "Our goal is multiethnic Kosovo. We need help from all authorities, first of all from the Serbian Orthodox Church" Steiner said.

Patriarch Pavle said that he himself had met with representatives of various other religions and Churches in Kosovo and Metohija in the period when he had performed the duty of Bishop of Raška-Prizren, adding that he was still ready to talk with them any time.

His Grace Pahomije, Bishop of Vranje, member of the Holy Synod of Bishops, attended the meeting of Patriarch Pavle and Michael Steiner (who was heading the delegation).

This is not Patriarch's first meeting with Michael Steiner. They had already met during the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

June 1, 2002

THE HOLY ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH COMMUNIQUE FROM THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE HOLY ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH HELD IN BELGRADE FROM MAY 23 TO 31, 2002

The regular session of the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, presided over by His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle and attended by all the hierarchs, was held in Belgrade, from May 23 to 31, 2002.

On Sunday, May 26, 2002, the hierarchs and His Holiness participated in the Liturgy and solemn festivity in the Morača Monastery, marking the 750th anniversary of this Monastery. A great number of the faithful attended this ceremony, among who there was the Crown Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević.

Discussing and considering with great responsibility and attentiveness the life of our local Church in general, both in the country and abroad, the Assembly especially attended to the issue of reform and improvement of the church educational system, as well as to the issue of religious instruction in schools. Greeting with joy the return of religious instruction into primary and secondary schools in Serbia, the Assembly expressed hope that the same would be done in Montenegro soon.

The Holy Assembly also greets the recent visits of the Archbishop of Athens Christodoulous and Patriarch of Alexandria Petros VII to our Church, as well as many other bilateral visits of this kind, as signs of pan-Orthodox unity, and also supports dialogues and meetings with other Christians, members of other religions and all the people of good will.

The Assembly accepted and approved the Draft Agreement on the Establishment of the Church Unity which the commissions from Belgrade and Skoplje respectively made and signed in Niš, on May 17 this year. With prayer and love in the Holy Spirit does the Assembly expect the hierarchs of the Church in Macedonia to do the same. Such a gesture would be an exceptional contribution to the unity and profession of Christianity in the modern world, something which the pleroma of the Orthodox Church expects.

The Holy Assembly did not fail to observe the essential necessity of the protection and improvement of human and religious rights and freedoms, both in our country and in the whole world. As for that issue, the Assembly is of the opinion that it is highly necessary to do everything so that the voice of the Church be heard in international organisations which deal with the protection of human rights. This refers not only to human rights but also to the basic human right to life which have been jeopardised in the region of Kosovo and Metohija. In connection with that, the Assem-

bly paid special attention to the exiled and refugees from all the regions of the former Yugoslavia. Therefore, the Assembly once again asks all the exiled and refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, and especially those from Kosovo and Metohija, to return to their hearths, expecting at the same time from our state authorities and representatives of the international community to help their return and create conditions necessary for their normal life.

The Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church expresses positive opinion on the agreement on the joint state of Serbia and Montenegro. Being of indestructible nature and having original unity, the Church invites everyone to fasten this unity, and requires that the unity should very soon be defined in suitable constitution, as state community of Serbia and Montenegro, with respect of God's and human laws both in our country and in the whole world. Unnecessary conflicts and irresponsible party discords just lead the people into new misery and humiliations, prevent the state from integrating into international community in a sound manner and hinder spiritual, cultural and economical progress of our society.

To the end of reconciliation of the Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church with the canonical tradition of the Church and to the end of its modernising, helping the Church to realise its Evangelic mission in more effective manner in the modern world, the Assembly urges more intensive work of its Commission and various committees on the review of and supplements to the general Constitution of our local Church and of its Dioceses in America, Australia and Western Europe.

Being fully aware that the European and world environment changed radically and greatly after September 11, the attack on America, the Assembly reminds all the people of good will both in Europe and all over the world that it is essentially necessary to unite not only in economical and political sense but also on the foundations of the eternal spiritual and original Christian principles.

Since Bishop Sava of Šumadija of blessed memory passed away, the Assembly appointed His Grace Jovan, present Bishop of Western America, to perform this duty. Instead of Bishop Danilo of Budim also passed away recently, the Assembly appointed Bishop Lukijan (Pantelić) to perform the duties of the Bishop of Budim and Administrator of the Diocese of Timisoara. The Assembly appointed His Grace Joanikije, Vicarious Bishop of Budimlje, to be the Bishop of the Diocese of Budimlje/Nikšić, while Bishop of America and Canada of the Metropolitanate of New Gračanica was appointed the Administrator of the vacant chair of the Diocese of Western America. Besides, the Assembly appointed His Grace Atanasije, the retired Bishop of Zahumlje-Herzegovina, to be the assistant to Bishop of Žiča Stefan, for healthy reasons, as his deputy.

At the next session, the Holy Synod of Bishops will comprise the following members: PRESIDENT: His Holiness Pavle Serbian Patriarch, and MEMBERS: His Eminence Amfilohije, Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral and Their Graces Lavrentije, Bishop of Šabac/Valjevo, Irinej, Bishop of Bačka and Pahomije, Bishop of Vranje.

July 2, 2002

THE HOLY SYNOD OF BISHOPS HELD TALKS WITH THE OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF THE PROTECTION OF SHRINES AND CULTURAL TREASURE IN KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle together with the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops, their Graces Lavrentije, Bishop of Šabac/Valjevo, Irinej, Bishop of Bačka and Pahomije, Bishop of Vranje received Prof. Dr. Vojislav Milovanović, Minister of Religions in the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Mr Branislav Lečić, Minister of Culture in the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Mr Branislav Krstić, Vice President of the Coordination Center of the Federal Government and of the Serbian Government for Kosovo and Metohija, Mr Marko Omčikus, Director of the Institute for the Protection of the Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia, and Mr Jovan Despotović, Assistant to the Minister for Culture in the Government of the Republic of Serbia in the Patriarchate Palace in Belgrade today.

The talks dwelled on the protection of the Orthodox shrines and cultural heritage of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija, including the cultural monuments of all the peoples (Albanians, Turks and others) residing in the southern Serbian region.

Bearing in mind that the major part of the entire cultural heritage located in Kosovo and Metohija is owned by the Serbian Orthodox Church and under its direct management (more than 80%), the Holy Synod of Bishops strives that both the cultural monuments of the Serbian Orthodox Church and those of other peoples residing in that region be protected and maintained.

The Serbian Orthodox Church accepts the strategy of preservation and protection of cultural monuments advocated by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Government of the Republic of Serbia through the authorised institutions and strives that all the responsible elements work together on the preservation of the sacral objects and cultural monuments in Kosovo and Metohija.

It was agreed that the Governments of both the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and of the Republic of Serbia and the Holy Synod of Bishops should continue to implement—through the Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija, as well as through other relevant institutions—all the measures necessary for the protection of the shrines and the entire cultural heritage, thereat rendering regular information and performing other activities which would contribute to a continual preservation of the Serbian and European cultural heritage in Kosovo and Metohija.

July 25, 2002

THE MONASTERY OF SOKOLICA LEFT WITHOUT KFOR'S PERMANENT PROTECTION

Bishop Artemije made a protest to the KFOR representatives due to the fact that the Danish contingent, which had been protecting the Monastery of the Most Holy Mother of God-Sokolica, near Kosovska Mitrovica, suddenly left this shrine without any military protection. KFOR local commander informed mother Makarija, the Abbess of the Monastery, that in the future KFOR would protect this shrine by sending military patrols there occasionally. Bishop Artemije urgently requested Mr De Siters, General Valenten's political adviser, to return—as soon as possible—the check point in front of the Monastery of Sokolica, which is surrounded by Albanian villages and very far from the closest Serbian village.

July 30, 2002

A MESSAGE TO THE DISPLACED SERBS OF KOSOVO AND METOHIJA TO RESPOND TO THE VOTER REGISTRATION

We herein invite the faithful children of the Serbian Orthodox Church and all of those who have been forced to leave their home and homeland, as well as those who remain in Kosovo and Metohija, and did not register last year, to respond to the voter registration which is in process, for their own benefit, the benefit of their children and fatherland, so that the Commission for Refugees in the Republic of Serbia will have accurate statistics concerning the number of expellees for whom Kosovo remains at heart, and especially for those whose graves and roots are in Kosovo and Metohija.

†PAVLE, SERBIAN PATRIARCH

August 1, 2002

BISHOP ARTEMIJE STRONGLY CONDEMNED TERRORIST ATTACKS IN KLOKOT AND THE HOLY ARCHANGELS MONASTERY

Gračanica July 31, 2002, 20:50

Bishop Artemije strongly condemned today's Albanian terrorist attack in Klokot and expressed his profound consternation due to the confirmed news that the Albanians had planned a devastating terrorist attack on the Holy Archangels monastery last week. "Serbs will never be peaceful and able to move freely in Kosovo and Metohija as long as Albanian terrorists move around without any restrictions and blow up Serbian houses and shrines, now—three years after the war. It is high time for the international community to face the reality and confront Albanian extremism with concrete military and political actions. Terrorism must be stopped, perpetrators brought to justice and all the citizens be thus allowed to move freely and exercise all other basic human rights," Bishop Artemije said, giving the statement to the Information Service of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren this evening.

ALBANIAN TERRORISTS PLANNED TO DETONATE 9KG OF EXPLOSIVES AT THE CHURCH CELEBRATION WELL-INFORMED SOURCE CLOSE TO KFOR AND UNMIK INFORMED CHURCH OFFICIALS THAT A DEVASTATING TRAGEDY WAS AVOIDED AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE 650TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HOLY ARCHANGELS MONASTERY LAST SATURDAY

Gračanica July 31, 2002

Well-informed anonymous source close to highest KFOR and UNMIK authorities informed the Orthodox Diocese of Raška/Prizren that KFOR soldiers had found 9 (nine) kg of explosives behind a large rock on the slope of a hill above the Monastery of the Holy Archangels, close to the medieval tower of Višegrad. The military experts apparently believe that the explosives were activated by a mobile phone. Surprisingly, not all the explosives were detonated, otherwise the rock could have rolled into the monastery grounds and cause casualties among the congregation, Bishop and clergy who were praying only 100 meters away.

This information from the official international circles confirmed the fears and suspicions that a very serious terrorist attack was planned during the celebration. Informal reports obtained in the last few days from the local representatives of the German KFOR stated that the explosive had already been found (minimum 4kg, while only a few hundreds of grams actually exploded). It is very difficult to understand that KFOR has not searched the grounds around the Monastery before the celebration in which 1000 Serbs were supposed to participate. It is equally surprising that KFOR authorities have not yet issued an official statement and that the incident was not even mentioned in regular public KFOR press releases. Unfortunately, this appears to be a typical example of avoiding one's responsibilities so as to conceal the real situation in the region.

August 9, 2002

ORWELLIAN REALITY IN KOSOVO AND METOHIJA AND SERBS' POSITION THERE

Yesterday in the afternoon, media broadcast unbelievable news that the Abbess of the Gračanica Monastery, Mother Efrosinija, was arrested on August 7 in the evening and detained in the police station till midnight. Mother Efrosinija was questioned by a German police inspector under suspicion that cannabis is being grown and allegedly consumed on monastery grounds (sic).

Honourable nun who dedicated her entire life to feats, praying, helping both friends and enemies, was forced after the police harassment and humiliation to deny officially that absurd accusation, aiming to preserve unsullied her own reputation, the reputation of the sisterhood she takes care of, as well as the reputation of the Serbian Church and its faithful.

Why did the UNMIK police carry out this "great action," when just a day later, on August 8, their official—the

chief of Gračanica UNMIK police station Charles Weber—stated that the cannabis allegedly detected in the Gračanica Monastery garden was just wild growing hemp? (Naturally, this news did not stir the public as much as the previous one). Who profited most out of this situation?

It seems that UNMIK policemen know the answer to these questions very well!

UNMIK policemen know that the terrorist KLA has been financed by dirty money of Kosovo Albanians' drug mafia, the mafia which trades in drugs and kills children throughout Europe. European public must also hear the words of Gordon Baros, Deputy Director of the Harriman Institute at Columbia University in the city of New York: "Kosovo is an entity in which organised criminal influences everything. It is hard to make distinction between a criminal and a politician there, since everything is mingled."

This arresting of Abbess Efrosinija and this statement of the American expert vividly demonstrate the Orwellian reality in Kosovo and Metohija. Obviously, black is white, and white is black.

Another thing keeps looming in our minds… how come that the European Union advocates the return of the exiled Serbs, and on the other side international authorities mock the most beautiful part of what the Serbian and European cultural heritage possess (and that is, for sure, the ancient endowment of Saint King Milutin) and arrest the most eminent Serbs? If we just add that devastating bombs some time ago fell next to the very Monastery of Gračanica, any other question becomes redundant.

August 12, 2002

LOCAL COURT IN DEČANI ILLEGALLY TAKES AWAY MONASTERY LAND

Visoki Dečani, August 9, 2002

On Friday, August 2, 2002, after nine consecutive sessions the muncipal court in Dečani, with Judge Haki Balaj presiding, annulled the decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia from 1997 returning to the Monastery of Visoki Dečani a part of the land which was nationalized illegally and without compensation in 1946.

For more than three years there has been continuous pressure from the Dečani municipality to deprive the monastery brethren of their right to use the land returned to the monastery by a special contract with the Government of the Republic of Serbia in 1997. This includes two land parcels totalling 23.45 hectares in immediately proximity to the monastery which were, together with 700 additional hectares of monastery property, illegally nationalized in 1946. For years the monastery unsuccessfully sought to correct this injustice and return at least a part of its property; however, the local authorities had simply distributed the greater part of the monastery land into the private hands of Albanians, who built their houses on it.

Built on the two above mentioned and now contested land parcels over time were the Visoki Dečani Motel, in the forest immediately above the monastery, and "Apiko," a small honey-packing plant; both of these were abandoned and have been closed since the beginning of the 1990's. Finally in 1997 the monastery succeeded in getting these two land parcels and the buildings on them back from the Government of the Republic of Serbia. The contract with the Government of the Republic of Serbia was duly processed and recorded in all relevant land registry books, and the brethren began to use their property, which had belonged to the Monastery of Visoki Dečani for centuries.

After the war the newly established Albanian municipal authorities immediately contested the decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and sought every possible means to take away this land from the monastery. In 2000, because of the firm position of the monastery brotherhood on the property issue, two mortar attacks were launched against the monastery in which, fortunately, no one was injured. KFOR secured all monastery property and UNMIK head Dr. Bernard Kouchner issued a special letter confirming the right of the monastery to use its own land. However, the municipal authorities pursued the matter and immediately filed a petition which has, in the meanwhile, been transferred to the district court in Peć, only to be bounced back to the municipal court in Dečani. The monastery brotherhood did not attend hearings for the simple reason that the municipal court has no jurisdiction in this type of case and because it considered such acts on the part of local municipal authorities to be blatant examples of institutional repression.

The municipal court based its decision on unfounded facts and inaccurate information with the intent of proving the illegality of the decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Special significance was given to UNMIK Regulation 1999/24, according to which all contracts concluded after March 22, 1989 are supposedly "illegal." The best evidence of the arbitrary interpretation of this regulation is the fact that the Albanians are not contesting any of the contracts concluded in the last ten years which are to their benefit.

The Monastery of Visoki Dečani will seek protection from UNMIK from blatant institutional repression waged against the last remaining Serb enclave in Dečani municipality. While hundreds of hectares of privately-held land owned by Serbs have been usurped by the Albanians and state-owned property is being illegally appropriated left and right, UNMIK must nevertheless seek to protect the legitimate rights of the monastery which desires to preserve its property and which is essential to its economic survival. The monastery will also officially seek the assistance of the Government of the Republic of Serbia which must not allow its decisions to be annulled by court institutions without jurisdiction or objectivity.

Information Service of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren

August 14, 2002

After the decision of the Municipal Court at Dečani to seize the land of the Visoki Dečani Monastery—more precisely the land which was returned to this Monastery by a decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia made in 1997—the Federal Secretariat for Religious Affairs issues the following:

STATEMENT TO THE PUBLIC

The decision of the Municipal Court at Dečani cancelling the decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia made in 1997 by which the property nationalised in 1946 was to be returned to the Visoki Dečani Monastery represents a striking example of legal violence before the very eyes of the international community which does nothing to stop decisions like this one, decisions which clearly send the message to all the displaced persons that they have no right to return, and to the remaining Serbs and Montenegrins that there is no peaceful life for them in Kosovo and Metohija wherefore they should move out, since neither personal nor property safety is guaranteed to them.

This decision reminds us of the past, which we thought never to come back, when the communists confiscated property of the Church and of people without any legal basis, and later on forbade the ones who fled Kosovo and Metohija under pressure to come back. Irony is even greater since everything happens in the presence of UN Mission which advocates the establishment of legal order and the return of displaced and persecuted people from Kosovo and Metohija.

We appeal to all the relevant international organisations, and especially to UNMIK, to cancel this absurd and illegal decision of the Municipal Court at Dečani, which only produced additional negative tensions among national and religious communities, tensions that can destabilise the entire region, which is surely not the aim of benevolent people who want to establish peace and tolerance in Kosovo and Metohija.

August 16, 2002

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONDEMNED ILLEGAL DECISION OF MUNICIPALITY COURT AT DEČANE

Federal Government expressed deep concern due to a recent decision made by the Municipality Court in Dečane to cancel the decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia brought in 1997 by which a part of the land—which had been nationalised in the past—was to be returned to the Dečane Monastery in Kosovo. Federal Government stated that the decision of the Municipal Court was "illegal" and that it represented a "repressive measure toward the remaining Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija and toward their property and shrines," the Federal Secretariat for Informing stated.

The Government also stated that the decision of the Municipal Court in Dečane was "directly opposite to the Resolution 1244 of the UN Security Council" and expressed deep concern for the fact that UNMIK did not react to that "illegal act that can produce long-term material and political consequences for finding the solution to the current situation in Kosovo and Metohija." By the decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia of 1997 two tracts of land of 23.45 ha nationalised in 1946 (the total amount of nationalised land was 800 ha) were to be returned to the Monastery of Visoki Dečani.

August 16, 2002

PATRIARCH PAVLE REQUIRES FROM KFOR AND UNMIK TO PROTECT ICONS, SERVICE BOOKS AND OTHER CHURCH VALUABLES

His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle addressed a letter today to the Lieutenant General Marcel Velentin, Commander of KFOR and to Mr Michael Steiner, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for Kosovo and Metohija and asked them to undertake all the necessary measures falling within their scope of authorisations to stop the theft and taking out of icons, service books and other very valuable church/art objects from Kosovo and Metohija. Part of the letter reads:

"With regret do We remind You that as of June 13, 1999 when the international forces had entered Kosovo and Metohija till the day when You undertook this responsible duty, Albanian terrorists destroyed more than 120 Orthodox churches, many of which date from the Middle Ages and belong to the world cultural heritage.

Although such destructive attacks still happen, for example the St. Elijah Church in the village of Smace near Prizren was for the second time destroyed by explosive, they are somewhat rarer than in the first months of KFOR and UNMIK administration. Right now some other kind of danger is hovering over church valuables. More precisely, We were informed that valuable icons, church vessels, service books and other valuable church/art objects could recently be found on the black market of antiquities and art objects in several European countries. One German soldier has already been given a sentence in his country, although a suspended one, for taking a valuable icon and some other valuables from the Cathedral in Prizren and trying to sell them. A similar event occurred in Greece, where the police arrested smugglers who transferred from Albania into Greece service books dating from the 19th century and carvings and icons originating from the 18th century, as well as some other objects previously stolen in Kosovo and Metohija. Slovenian police arrested several Albanians who brought dozens of icons into that country with the aim to sell them.

Experience shows that suchlike cases are only "the tip of the iceberg," meaning that from the area where there are no Serbian priests or people—since there are no conditions for a normal and safe life—many more church/art objects have been taken away then what people think.

Therefore, dear Sir, do We ask You to, within the term of office of KFOR and UNMIK, undertake all the necessary measures so that all the movables, together with all the immovables, of the Serbian Orthodox Church should be preserved. If they are destroyed or displaced, not only that we as a people suffer a loss, but also the entire European culture. Numerous traces of existence of the Serbian people and its martyr Church disappear from the Kosovo-Metochian land, the cradle of our people, in the presence of strong international military and police forces."

August 20, 2002

THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN CHURCHES REQUIRE PROTECTION OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser, the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, and Rev. Dr Keith Clements, the General Secretary of the Conference of European Churches, addressed two letters to His Holiness Pavle, Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and Mr Michael Steiner, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and Head of the UN Interim Administration in Kosovo.

The two officials of these two international ecumenical organisations expressed their profound concern "at the continued violence facing members of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its cultural and spiritual property in Kosovo and Metohija in the recent period." They consider the increase of deliberate attacks on the churches and holy places of the Serbian Orthodox Church to be "painful and scandalous manifestation of the extremism and instability" in the region.

Condemning strongly these acts of violence, the General Secretaries of WCC and CEC with sadness observed that "the international protection provided by the interim authorities in Kosovo to the minority communities, and particularly to the Serbian community" is inadequate. Therefore, they appealed to Mr Steiner and all the other responsible authorities to ensure effective security for all the peoples in Kosovo and Metohija as well as for their spiritual and cultural heritage.

The highest officials of WCC and CEC informed His Holiness Patriarch Pavle that they would continue to work on the improvement of dialogue and peace-building in the region, and that they would strive to raise the awareness of the international authorities about the difficult situation of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija.

August 21, 2002

COMMUNIQUE OF THE MINISTRY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA CONCERNING THE CONFISCATION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE VISOKI DEČANI MONASTERY

Republic of Serbia

Ministry for Religious Affairs

Belgrade, August 20, 2002

The Ministry for Religious Affairs of the Republic of Serbia strongly condemns the attempt of the Municipal Court at Dečani to seize the property of Imperial Monastery of Visoki Dečani.

Up to 1946 the Visoki Dečani Monastery had possessed more than 800ha of land, as well as other valuables. Everything was confiscated that year, without any compensation. In 1997, out of the entire mentioned property of the Monastery, the Government of the Republic of Serbia returned to the Monastery two smaller plots of land with the accompanying constructions by concluding an agreement on presenting the Monastery with a gift.

The decision made by the Municipal Court at Dečani at the beginning of August, 2002, annulling that return of property to the Monastery is not only contrary to the law and order of the Republic of Serbia and to the Resolution 1244 of the UN General Assembly, but is also opposite to universal principles of fairness and morality, and as such it is void and cannot be applied.

In addition, the decision was obviously made for religious and ethnic discrimination.

Therefore, the Ministry for Religious Affairs is of the opinion that UNMIK must revoke this decision.

The Ministry for Religious Affairs would like to point out that the described attempt of usurping the property of the Monastery is an additional proof of the necessity for enacting a law on the return and compensation of unfairly confiscated property in Serbia.

MINISTRY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

September 24, 2002

COMMUNIQUE OF THE HOLY ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH FROM ITS EXTRAORDINARY SESSION HELD IN PATRIARCHATE ON SEPTEMBER 23 AND 24, 2002

The Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, presided over by His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Pavle, held its extraordinary session in the Patriarchate on September 23 and 24, 2002.

[...]

The Holy Assembly of Bishops expresses its true concern for the continuous depravation and violation of basic human rights—rights to free life and return of the Serbian people and other non-Albanian ethnic communities in Kosovo and Metohija, expecting from the international community, which supervises this southern Serbian region to

make its utmost efforts so that right and justice could finally predominate in this part of our state.

PATRIARCH PAVLE TALKED
TO MICHAEL STEINER
October 16, 2002

His Holiness Patriarch Pavle received today in his Patriarchal Palace together with the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops Mr. Michael Steiner, Special representative of the UN Secretary General in Kosovo and Metohija with his associates.

In an open conversation they discussed the difficult position of the Serbian people and other non-Albanain communities in Kosovo and Metohija, the issue of return of refugees back to ther homes as well as the fate of many missing and killed persons. The special attention was focused on the problem of destroyed churches, the recent attacks and murders of the remaining Serbs.

Mr. Steiner, during the conversation, asked from His Holiness Patriarch Pavle his support for Serb participation in the forthcoming elections in Kosovo and Metohija.

ORTHODOX GRAVEYARD IN DEČANI
DESECRATED ONCE AGAIN

There is Hardly a Gravestone or Cross Left Intact at the Serbian Graveyard in Dečani Gračanica, November 28, 2002

Unknown attackers once again desecrated Serbian Orthodox graveyard near the Monastery of Visoki Dečani. The monastics of Dečani visited today the graveyard escorted by Italian KFOR, and found out that graves were desecrated and trees cut down. The Orthodox graveyard in Dečani is 1km away from the very Monastery and only one hundred metres away from the Italian KFOR check point and headquarters. The graveyard has been devastated and there is hardly a gravestone left intact. With sorrow does the Diocese of Raška-Prizren state that the desecration of Orthodox graveyards in Kosovo and Metohija continues and that, it seems, no one is able to stop these vandal, senseless acts which threaten to erase the last trace of the existence of the Serbian people in this region.

December 2, 2002

COMMUNIQUE FROM THE SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE IN CHARGE OF KOSOVO-METOHIJA ISSUES, ESTABLISHED BY THE HOLY ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Having heard the field reports from the present members of the Committee, the Committee decided that, even three and a half years after the arrival of the international community represented by UNMIK and KFOR, the situation in Kosovo and Metohija was not getting better, but just the opposite—worse. That conclusion is based on the facts that today, just like in the past, the remaining Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija are being attacked, killed, wounded, and robbed every day. In addition, churches are being devastated and, which is a recent trend, graveyards are being destroyed and desecrated.

All these mentioned facts as well as the other ones, known to the public, undoubtedly show not only the true intentions of the Albanian extremists to destroy any trace of the existence of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, but also the obvious failure of the mission of the international community to fulfill its promises and obligations which it undertook by the Resolution 1244—those being to provide peaceful and safe life to everyone, the return of all the exiled into their homes and the respect of the basic human rights of all the residents of Kosovo and Metohija. It is really hard to comprehend the persistent efforts of the responsible people from the international community to give statements about the general betterment of safety in Kosovo and Metohija, thus trying to camouflage the situation which is really hard for the Serbs and to offer some kind of support to the criminals to continue their misdeeds.

The Committee did not just state the difficult situation in Kosovo and Metohija, but it also undertook many concrete activities focused on the Serbian and Yugoslav authorities on one side—expecting from them to engage more and cooperate with the international community so as to protect the rights of all the citizens of Kosovo and Metohija and render greater aid to the Serbs in Kosovo, and on the international community on the other side—requesting and expecting from it to show a full objectiveness in its activities and to engage maximally in the protection of the personal and proprietary safety of all the citizens, regardless of their national affiliation.

The Committee also fraternally and paternally invites the Serbs in Kosovo, and especially the Serbs who are to return to Kosovo and Metohija to persist in staying and existing in this region, and at the same time invites all the people of the good will to help the Serbian community in this holy land.Furthermore, the Committee adopted Bishop Atanasije's proposition that the Memorandum on Kosovo and Metohija should as soon as possible be supplemented with the new data and subsequently publicly broadcast. The proposal that the next session of this Committee be held in one of the monasteries in Kosovo and Metohija was accepted with true joy.

Serbian Patriarchate
December 2, 2002

RESOLUTION
December 25, 2002
8 East 79th Street, New York, NY 10021
Tel.: (212) 570–3593 • Fax: (212) 774-0202
Email: scoba@goarch.org

Of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas On the Destruction of Spiritual and Cultural Property in Kosovo and Metohija.

Whereas the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) is committed to religious freedom, filial love, tolerance, and respect for the religious and cultural heritage and property of all faiths and peoples;

Whereas SCOBA represents over 6 million Orthodox Christians of diverse ethnic backgrounds in the United States of America and Canada;

Whereas SCOBA is grieved by the growing incidence of violence throughout the world against holy sites sacred to Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and other faiths;

Whereas the protection of religious shrines and cultural heritage property against acts of violence, intolerance and eradication is the responsibility of every civilized society, as confirmed by U.N. Resolutions A/RES/56/157 and E/CN4/RES2002/40, et al.

Whereas the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, affirm the right of everyone to manifest their religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance;

Whereas the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, in force since 1956, prohibits theft, pillage, vandalism, or reprisals against cultural property during periods of armed conflict, and requires governing authorities to take measures to protect such property;

Whereas UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor on May 5, 1999 called for those involved in the Kosovo conflict to "respect the museums, archives, libraries, religious and educational institutions, as well as monuments and sites that are evidence of the civilization and history of the Region;"

Whereas SCOBA and all Orthodox Christian faithful throughout the world are deeply grieved over the continuation of acts of vandalism, pillage and violent destruction that have damaged or destroyed over 120 Orthodox Christian churches, monasteries, and shrines, as well as the desecration of numerous Orthodox Christian graves, since the war in Kosovo ended in June 1999;

Whereas the leadership of the World Council of Churches and of the Conference of European Churches on August 16, 2002 expressed "profound concern at the continued violence facing members of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its cultural and spiritual property in Kosovo," and;

Whereas Reno Harnish, Chief of Mission of the US Office in Priština condemned the recent violence in Kosovo on November 18, 2002, stating: "Any attacks on religious sites of any faith are attacks on the very heart and soul of society and should be denounced in the strongest possible terms by all political and religious leaders."

Therefore, be it resolved that the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA):

1. Deeply deplores the most recent violent attacks on the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Raška and Prizren in Kosovo and Metohija on November 16 and 17, 2002, which caused extensive damage to the Church of Serbian Saints in Djurakovac and totally destroyed the Church of Saint Basil of Ostrog the Miracle Worker in Ljubovo;

2. Condemns all acts of vandalism, pillage and violent destruction of religious and cultural heritage sites sacred to Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, Muslims, Jews or any other religious group in Kosovo;

3. Joins with the United Nations, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches, the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the international community in calling for respect, tolerance and reconciliation among all religious and ethnic communities in Kosovo;

4. Urgently requests the United Nations authorities and NATO peacekeeping forces in Kosovo to strengthen measures to protect all vulnerable religious property and shrines in Kosovo, and not only those of historical importance, and;

5. Urges the international community, in consultation with the affected religious communities, to support the restoration and reconstruction of all religious and cultural heritage property in Kosovo deliberately vandalized, pillaged, damaged or destroyed by acts of violence.

December 17, 2002
South Bound Brook, New Jersey
†Archbishop DEMETRIOS, Chairman
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
†Metropolitan PHILIP, Vice Chairman
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
†Metropolitan CHRISTOPHER, Secretary
Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA and Canada
†Metropolitan HERMAN
Orthodox Church in America
†Metropolitan CONSTANTINE
Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA
†Metropolitan JOSEPH
Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church
†Archbishop NICOLAE
Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America and Canada
†Metropolitan NICHOLAS of Amissos
American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA
†Bishop ILIA of Philomelion
Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ON KOSOVO AND METOHIJA, MAY 25, 2007

Kosovo and Metohija have been throughout the centuries populated with Serbs, and up until the great forced migrations of the Serbian people toward the north, in the 17th and 18th centuries, Serbs have always been the majority population in Kosovo and Metohija. It is a generally known historical fact that the medieval center of the Serbian state

was located therein, and remaining to this day the center of national, Christian sacred and secular culture of the Serbian people. There, in the Patriarchate of Peć, beginning in the 13th century and until this present day, is the official seat of the Serbian archbishops and patriarchs. In terms of statehood, according to all recognized international agreements, both old and new, as well as according to all resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council of the United Nations, according to the Paris Accords from 1995, and according to an entire list of legal acts of the European Union, Russia, the United States of America, Great Britain, Germany, France and other countries, Kosovo and Metohija are an indivisible part of the territory of Serbia.

Calling to remembrance these facts we, of course, in no way whatsoever can forget today's multi-ethnic composition of Kosovo and Metohija's population. In like manner we accept, as always up until now, in accordance with our Christian consciousness, all rights and all freedoms of our co-citizens of Albanian nationality and the other ethnic communities in Kosovo and Metohija. Therefore, we pray God to grant all peoples and communities in Kosovo and Metohija historical reconciliation, a peaceful future, a life worthy of human beings and every blessing.

The Serbian Orthodox Church and the Serbian people have preserved Kosovo and Metohija in the most difficult periods of its history. Kosovo and Metohija—that is, in the spiritual and moral sense, the heart of Serbia and soul of the Serbian people. Therefore, the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Serbian people can never denounce their right to remain and enjoy a free life in this most cherished part of the Serbian state. For the Church it is especially important to preserve its numerous Orthodox Christian sanctuaries in Kosovo and Metohija, as well as to insure the repatriation of all those expelled from Kosovo and Metohija. All of this will be possible only if Kosovo and Metohija are preserved as an integral part of Serbia with substantial autonomy, and will not be possible, sadly, if it were to be forcibly torn asunder from Serbia. Not only would the multiethnic character of that region, but also the Christian identity and culture of this part of Europe, be most seriously brought to question. The eventual granting of state independence to Kosovo and Metohija would be the serious trampling upon both Divine and human rights, by stealing a centuries old, internationally recognized and confirmed right of a European Christian people and the creation of a precedent with unforseen consequences, not only for the Balkans and Europe, but for the entire world.

There is still time to undertake serious discussions and, mindful of the full historical responsibility of all, to reach an agreement, an equitable and compromised solution, acceptable to all. No one has the right with historically unthought through politics, to subjugate the rights of one people in the name of the rights of another people and to onesidedly and forcibly change the internationally recognized borders in Europe.

For all of these reasons, the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church appeals to the United Nations, and to all of the influential countries in the world to assist precisely in finding such a solution—equitable, and acceptable for all—a solution that would satisfy both the legitimate interests of Serbia and the legitimate interests of the Albanian ethnic community in Kosovo and Metohija.

The Holy Assembly of Bishops invites alike the highest institutions of Serbia—the National Assembly, the President and the Government of Serbia—that with even greater endurance to defend and safeguard the integrity of Serbia. In defending Serbia, they defend equally right and justice, morals and international order. Serbia is not stealing anything from anyone; however neither can it accept to the forceful taking of fifteen percent of its territory. For us, for all Christians, and for all persons of good will the same rule applies: no on can take away anyone's soul—only a person individually can either sell or loose the same.

Safeguarding the Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage In Kosovo and Metohija (Serbian Proposal, Vienna Status Talks, 2006)

1. A Guiding Principle provided by the Contact Group in November 2005 states that the process of seeking the future status of Kosovo and Metohija must provide "specific safeguards for the protection of the cultural and religious heritage", including "provisions specifying the status of the Serbian Orthodox Church's institutions and sites and other patrimony" in the Province.

2. It is widely acknowledged that comprehensively addressing the special concerns of the Republic of Serbia and the Serbian Orthodox Church (hereafter "SOC") on the question of safeguarding the Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija is a question of civilization that helps to advance both the European perspective of the region as a whole and efforts at reconciliation within the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija—an essential precondition for the rule of law and functional multi-ethnicity to take hold. Comprehensively addressing these special concerns furthers the widely acknowledged proposition that the issue of Kosovo and Metohija for the Republic of Serbia and Serb people as a whole is not simply an issue of sovereignty and territorial integrity, but of identity as well.

3. Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija can be categorized as

a. the network of living monastic communities scattered throughout the Province;
b. the network of parish churches scattered throughout the Province;

c. the network of abandoned, ruined and destroyed monasteries and churches scattered throughout the Province;
d. Patrimonial sites of specific vernacular cultural significance (e.g. the Serbian Quarter in Prizren, the village of Velika Hoča, the Kosovo Battle monument at Gazimestan).

Safeguarding this invaluable network—with an emphasis on the network of living monastic communities—requires that these be given a status of protection that goes beyond a generic level of legal security afforded to cultural monuments or UNESCO World Heritage Sites. An internationally-guaranteed institutional status for the sites and communities that inhabit the most important Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija[1] is therefore judged to be an essential part of the measures proposed to safeguard the Serbian heritage of Kosovo and Metohija.

4. The goal of this proposal is to:

a. protect the physical security of the Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija;
b. institutionalize the existing links between the SOC in Kosovo and Metohija and the Republic of Serbia;
c. establish the institutional framework within which a sustainable environment can take hold to guarantee the preservation and unconstrained development of the Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija, including the Province's network of the SOC's living monastic communities;
d. establish the institutional framework by which the reconstruction and preservation of the Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija can be safely facilitated.

5. These proposals are based on several basic assumptions:

a. The limited competence and jurisdiction of the Priština-based institutions authorities and agents, their laws (present and future), regulations and codes toward the Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija;
b. The recognition by Priština of the special "status of institutions, sites and other heritage of the Serbian Orthodox Church" in Kosovo and Metohija and the permanent need to ensure the protection, survival and sustainability of the SOC in Kosovo and Metohija;
c. The recognition by Priština of the spiritual authority, exclusive canonical jurisdiction and ownership of the SOC over all institutions and sites and properties currently held or claimed by the SOC (the Archdiocese of Peć and the Diocese of Raška and Prizren[2]) in Kosovo and Metohija; the explicit non-recognition of any past, present or future claim by any authority, faith, or church over these sites and properties;
d. The recognition by Priština of the existing canonical and administrative links between the Serbian Orthodox Church's Archdiocese of Peć and the Diocese of Raška and Prizren, with the Serbian Orthodox Church and its patriarchal seat in Belgrade;
e. The recognition by Priština of its obligation to return or provide just compensation for all SOC property confiscated or expropriated from 6 April 1941 to the present on the territory of present-day Kosovo and Metohija;
f. The recognition of specific and direct territorial, legal and administrative links of the SOC's living monastic communities in Kosovo and Metohija with the Serbian Entity in Kosovo and Metohija ("Serbian Entity") and the rest of the REPUBLIC OF SERBIA (through, *inter alia*, the Ministry of Religion, the Ministry of Culture and other state organs of Serbia such as Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments that has for more than 50 years worked on preservation and reconstruction of Serbian Kosovo heritage;
g. The formal enshrinement of these and other recognitions in the body of the international legal instrument that will frame the future status of Kosovo and Metohija and detailed in a separate *Charter* that would be formally appended to it, as well as in all future basic laws (constitutions) of Kosovo and Metohija. The Charter will explicitly affirm that the network of the SOC's living monastic communities in Kosovo and Metohija is an integral part of the Serbian Entity;
h. The Charter's aim is to protect the traditions, way of life, environment and property of the network of the SOC's living monastic communities in Kosovo and Metohija, to protect and limit access to the same, and to further their economic sustainability. It will outline, *inter alia*, the rules, rights and responsibilities of the network of the SOC's living monastic communities in Kosovo and Metohija that the Serbian Entity will administer and of which it is an integral part;
i. The international legal instrument that will frame the future status of Kosovo and Metohija will estab-

[1] See Appendix A for the list of Serbian religious and cultural heritage in Kosovo and Metohija judged to be of exceptional importance.

[2] The Archdiocese[Archbishopric] of Peć holds jurisdiction over the holy patriarchal and stauropegic monastery of Peć and its dependency at Budisavci near Klina. The Diocese [Bishopric] of Raška and Prizren holds jurisdiction over all the other Serbian Orthodox Church churches, monasteries, and dependencies located on the territory of Kosovo and Metohija.

lish a special post of high rank with specific powers that would be granted explicit authority to ensure and enforce compliance, as well as penalize non-compliance, on the part of Priština and municipal (local) governments with the provisions of the Charter and its attendant regulations and practices. The officeholder will report on a regular basis to the United Nations, the European Union, the Republic of Serbia, the Contact Group and NATO. The individual holding this post cannot be a citizen/resident of Kosovo and Metohija, and should preferably belong to one of the canonically-recognized Orthodox Christian Churches. The Republic of Serbia and the Serbian Orthodox Church must consent to the appointment.

Linking Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija with the Serbian Entity within the Province and with Belgrade institutions

6. The October 2005 Kai Eide Report rightly recognized the advantages of establishing "horizontal links" between majority Serbian areas. Building on that firm foundation, the Republic of Serbia has proposed a Serbian Entity—a non-contiguous administrative unit of majority-Kosovo and Metohija areas with defined and transparent links to Belgrade—designed and structured to implement the Contact Group's Guiding Principle on decentralization. This guiding principle states that the process of seeking the future status of Kosovo and Metohija must provide mechanisms to ensure the participation of all communities at the municipal (local) government level. "Effective structures of local self-government established through the decentralization process should facilitate the coexistence of different communities." The Serbian Entity's aim is the provision of a realistic institutional scheme for the protection of the Serbian community of Kosovo and Metohija.

7. An integral part of the territorial, legal and administrative reach of the Republic of Serbia's-proposed Serbian Entity is the network of the SOC's living monastic communities in Kosovo and Metohija, as will be affirmed in the Charter. This geographically-scattered network of living monastic communities logically falls under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Entity. It is neither politically prudent, nor economically advisable, nor morally acceptable, for the Serbian community to be administratively and structurally separated from their religious and cultural heritage. As the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr. Koïchio Matsuura, stated in response to the March 2004 pogrom, the Serbian religious and cultural heritage in Kosovo and Metohija is fundamentally linked to "memory and cultural identity." To sever the Serbian community from its religious and cultural heritage in any way goes against the spirit and letter of the process of seeking the future status of Kosovo and Metohija as defined by the Contact Group's Guiding Principles, which affirm that on the question of ensuring sustainable multi-ethnicity, "effective constitutional guarantees and appropriate mechanisms" must be provided to "ensure the implementation of human rights" for all individuals and communities in Kosovo and Metohija.

8. Additionally, the historical record and recent experience affirm that the mere establishment of "safe zones"[3] around a single living monastic community is an insufficient guarantee of security, preservation and unhindered development of the Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija. The clear and present dangers that continue to affect the monastery of Visoki Dečani from the time of the UNMIK-led initiative to declare the "Dečani canyon area" a "special zoning area" are well documented. The essential problem remains that Visoki Dečani itself and the surrounding area remain under the territorial, legal and administrative jurisdiction of a majority ethnic Albanian municipality and the PISG Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, which together have demonstrated a gross disregard for even the limited protections provided for in the Executive Order. The solution lies in severely limiting the competence and jurisdiction of the Priština-based institutions authorities and agents, their laws (present and future), regulations and codes toward the Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija. Jurisdiction will be granted instead to the Serbian Entity which will establish an Institution for Safeguarding the Serbian Religious and Cultural Heritage in Kosovo and Metohija (ISSRCHKiM).

9. Moreover, as an additional safeguard, the international legal instrument that will frame the future status of Kosovo and Metohija will establish a special post of high rank with specified powers with the explicit authority to ensure and enforce compliance, as well as penalize non-compliance, on the part of Priština and municipal (local) governments, with the provisions of the Charter and its attendant regulations and practices as well as with those of the Serbian Entity. The officeholder will report on a regular basis to the United Nations, the European Union, the Contact Group and NATO. The individual holding this post cannot be a citizen/resident of Kosovo and Metohija, and should preferably belong to one of the canonically-recognized Orthodox Christian Churches. The Republic of Serbia and the SOC must consent to the appointment.

10. In addition to the network of the SOC's living monastic communities in Kosovo and Metohija falling un-

[3] The idea of providing limited protection to a natural preserve that includes a single monastic community was first articulated in April 2005 when SRSG Jessen-Petersen issued an UNMIK Executive Order which declared the "Dečani canyon area" a "special zoning area." Other terms to describe proposals that offer limited protection to a monastic community include the euphemistic "qualified zone" and the less obscure "specially protected zone."

der the territorial, legal and administrative reach of the Serbian Entity as defined by the Charter, there will be direct territorial, legal and administrative links between this network and the rest of the Republic of Serbia. The Ministry of Religion of Serbia would continue its assistance and. administrative functions toward the the Archdiocese of Peć and the Diocese of Raška and Prizren (e.g. financial supplements consistent with their status as disadvantaged dioceses; appropriations to religious schools and seminaries in the form of full or partial payment of salaries for professors, teachers and staff as well as stipends for students; medical insurance contributions; pension fund contributions, allocations for religious-cultural activities such as religious festivals, print publications, maintaining library collections, and TV and radio programmes; and renovation and construction assistance). These would supersede in jurisdiction, authority and competence those of Priština-based ministries and institutions.

Additionally, the Ministry of Culture [of Serbia] and the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments from Belgrade would retain their current administrative functions, and their jurisdiction, authority and competence would supersede those of Priština-based ministries and institutions. Finally, the existing canonical legal and administrative links between the Serbian Orthodox Church's Archdiocese of Peć and the Serbian Diocese of Raška and Prizren with the Serbian Orthodox Church and its patriarchal seat in Belgrade would remain and be explicitly recognized by the Priština-based ministries and institutions. Personnel from these and other Belgrade-based institutions could be seconded to ISSRCHKiM, who would also be permitted to supplement in a transparent fashion the Serbian Entity's budgetary allocations to it.

THE LIST OF MOST IMPORTANT SITES OF SERBIAN RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL HERITAGEIN KOSOVO AND METOHIJA THAT NEEDS ESTABLISHMENT OF PROTECTED ZONES:

Monasteries:

1. Patriarchate of Peć (13th–14th century), monastery, Peć, Municipality of Peć
2. Visoki Dečani (14th century), monastery, Dečani, Municipality of Dečani
3. Holy Archangels (14th century), monastery, Municipality of Prizren
4. Devič, monastery (15th century), Lauša, Municipality of Srbica (destroyed by the Albanian extremists in March 2004)
5. Bogorodica Hvostanska (13th–14th century), Vrelo, Municipality of Istok
6. Gorioč (14th century), monastery, Istok, Municipality of Istok
7. Budisavci (14th century), monastery, Budisavci, Municpality of Klina
8. Zočište (14th century), monastery, Zočište, Municipality of Orahovac (destroyed by the Albanian extremists in 1999)
9. Holy Trinity, (14th century), monastery, Mušutište, Municipality of Suva Reka (destroyed by the Albanian extremists in 1999)
10. Saint Uroš (14th century), monastery, Gornje Nerodimlje, Municipality of Uroševac (destroyed by the Albanian extremists in 1999)
11. Saint Marko of Koriša with the hermitage of St. Peter of Koriša (13th–14th century), monastery, Koriša, Municipality of Prizren (damaged)
12. Dolac (14th century), monastery, Dolac, Municipality of Klina (destroyed by the Albanian extremists in 1999)
13. Sokolica monastery (14th century), Boljetin, Municipality of Kosovska Mitrovica
14. Draganac, monastery (19th century), Draganac, Municipality of Gnjilane
15. Binač monastery (14th century), Vitina, Municipality of Vitina (destroyed by the Albanian extremists)
16. Gračanica, monastery (14th century), Gračanica, Municipality of Priština
17. Banjska (14th century), monastery, Banjska, Municipality of Zvečan
18. Duboki Potok (14th–16th century), monastery, Municipality of Zubin Potok
19. Sočanica (12th century), monastery, Municipality of Leposavić
20. Devine Vode, monastery, Municipality of Leposavić
21. Saint Healers, monastery (19th century), Municipality of Leposavić
22. Saint Petka, monastery, Municipality of Leposavić

Churches:

23. Cathedral Church of Mother of God of Ljeviša, Prizren (14th century), Municipality of Prizren (burned by the Albanian extremists in March 2004)
24. Church of St. John (14th century), Velika Hoča, Municipality of Orahovac
25. Church of Mother of God in Lipljan (14th century), Lipljan, Municipality of Lipljan
26. Church of Holy Savior (14th century), Prizren, Municipality of Prizren (burned by the Albanian extremists in March 2004)
27. Uljarice (13th–14th century), hermitage with church, Klina, Municipality of Klina
28. Church of Mother of God Odegethria (14th century), Mušutište, Municipality of Suva Reka (destroyed by the Albanian extremists)
29. Church of St. Nicholas (14th century), Djurakovac, Municipality of Istok (destroyed by the Albanian extremists)

Incense above the illumined tombs of the vindicators of Kosovo,
Dragutin Inkiostri Medenjak (1866–1942)

30. A group of Churches in Sredačka Župa (16th-18th century): St. Nicholas in Bogoševci, St. George in Gornje Selo, St. Nicholas in Drajčići, Holy Apostles and St. Nicholas in Mušnikovo, St. George and Mother of God church in Sredska.

31. A group of churches in Sirinićka Župa (16th -19th century): St. George and St. Theodore in Gornja and Donja Bitinja, St. Nicholas in Gotovuša, St. Nicholas in Štrpce.

OTHER RELIGIOUS OBJECTS OWNED BY THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

32. Orthodox Theological School of St. Cyril and Methodius (19th century), Prizren, Municipality of Prizren (destroyed on 17 March 2004 by the Albanian extremists)

33. Bishop's court with the church of St. George (19th century), Prizren, Municipality of Prizren (destroyed by the Albanian extremists on 17 March 2004)

SECULAR SITES OF SERBIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE

34. Medieval city of Novo Brdo with fortress (14th century), Novo Brdo, Municipality of Novo Brdo

35. Memorial complex dedicated to the heroes of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo at Gazimestan (20th century), Municipality of Obilić

36. Ulpiana (6th century), Gračanica, Municipality of Priština

37. Serbian quarter and old city centre (14th–19th century), Prizren, Municipality of Prizren

38. Velika Hoča with 13 churches and old urban centre (14th–19th century), Velika Hoča, Municipality of Orahovac

39. Zvečan, medieval fortress (12th–13th century), Zvečan, Municipality of Zvečan

40. The bridge and court of Vojnović family (14th century), Vučitrn, Municipality of Vučitrn

"WE WERE FINDING BODIES OF KILLED SERBS EVERY MORNING IN KOSOVO"—MAURO DEL VECCHIO, FORMER GENERAL OF ITALIAN ARMY IN KIM

Rome—Mauro Del Vecchio, former General of Italian Army who led the unit of 7,000 soldiers that entered Kosovo in June of 1999 after end of NATO air strikes on Serbia, told Italian "Panorama" weekly that during the first three weeks of the mandate "reports on the found bodies of killed Serbs and Romas arrived on his table each morning," but that was a taboo topic they were not allowed to speak about with journalists.

"The killing continued later but not so frequently. Those that have not fled Kosovo were under permanent risk to be killed or raped. Deserted Serbian houses were leveled to the ground or set on fire. Albanians were attacking the churches and monasteries, too. Their goal was erase every trace of the Serbian presence in Kosovo," Del Vecchio said. Today he is representing the Democratic Party in the Italian Senate.

"Nobody was taking Serbian bodies that were left in all possible places. Mothers and wives of abducted Serbs were pleading for their dearest to be found, but the majority of them have never been found, not even those that were dead," Del Vecchio said.

One of massacred Serbs whose mutilated remains were thrown into Radonjićko lake, 1999.

The Italian weekly reports as a "horrifying fact" that 70 percent of the total number of abducted Kosovo Serbs had disappeared after June 1999 when the war was officially over.

Albanians with cut off Serbian heads.

The magazine has also come in possession of photographs that the UNMIK soldiers found in Dečani in 2003 but has not published them because they were "horrific." They show the KLA members smiling with a cut off head of a Serbian reservist. Another photograph shows them putting in a bag at least two cut off heads. It is also said that at the time when the photographs were made that was the zone under command of Ramush Haradinaj.

Source: http://theremustbejustice.wordpress.com The integral story, detailed, including testimonies (Italian lang.) of gen. DEL VECCHIO can be found here: http://www.faustobiloslavo.eu/articolid.php?id=29203

KOSOVO FASCISM, ALBANIANS' SHAME
By Veton Surroi in Priština

The systematic intimidation of Kosovo's Serbs brings shame on the province's Albanians and will have far-reaching and long-term consequences.

In the past month an old woman has been beaten to death in her bath; a two-year-old boy has been wounded and his mother shot dead; two youths have been killed with a grenade launcher; and a woman dares not speak her name in public for fear that those who attempted to rape her will return. All these victims were Serbs.

Sadly, these are not isolated incidents. Many more of Kosovo's remaining Serbs have locked themselves in their homes, terrified by an atmosphere in which every sound seems threatening and every vehicle that stops might take you away to your death.

Then there is the case of the elderly couple with nothing to eat who are afraid to venture out to buy food because they know their poor Albanian language will be noticed. Their Albanian neighbours cannot give them any food because they have been warned not to "feed Serbs".

I know how Kosovo's remaining Serbs, and indeed Roma, feel, because I, along with nearly 2 million Albanians, was in exactly the same situation only two and a half months ago. I recognise their fear. We learned from the radio that Belgrade had given its units the right to kill at will-even women, children and the old. As a result, every car that stopped was a potential danger; every unusual sound appeared to herald inevitable death. Meanwhile, little or no help could be expected from our Serb neighbours.

This is why I cannot hide my shame to discover that, for the first time in our history, we, Kosovo Albanians, are also capable of such monstrous acts. I have to speak out to make it clear that our moral code, by which women, children and elderly should be left unharmed, has been and is being violated.

I know the obvious excuse, namely that we have been through a barbaric war in which Serbs were responsible for the most heinous crimes and in which the intensity of violence has generated a desire for vengeance among many Albanians. This, however, is no justification.

Those Serbs who carried out Belgrade's orders and committed atrocities against Albanians have already fled, as have others fearing reprisals from relatives of the thousands who are buried in mass graves. Today's violence—more than two months after the arrival of NATO forces—is more than simply an emotional reaction. It is the organised and systematic intimidation of all Serbs simply because they are Serbs and therefore are being held collectively responsible for what happened in Kosovo.

Such attitudes are fascist. Moreover, it was against these very same attitudes that the people of Kosovo stood up and fought, at first peacefully and then with arms, during the past 10 years.

Field works: A country woman in Prekale village takes her rifle to defend her children in the fields, September 1988, photo M. Jelisijević

The treatment of Kosovo's Serbs brings shame on all Kosovo Albanians, not just the perpetrators of violence. And it's a burden we will have to bear collectively. It will dishonor us and our own recent suffering which, only a few months ago, was broadcast on television screens throughout the world. And it will dishonor the memory of Kosovo's Albanian victims, those women, children and elderly who were killed simply because of their ethnic origins.

The international community will probably not punish us for failing to defend multi-ethnicity in Kosovo. After all, even before the war, the number of non-Albanians in Kosovo was akin to that of non-Slovenes in Slovenia, yet nobody talks today of a multi-ethnic Slovenia. However, from having been victims of Europe's worst end-of-century persecution, we are ourselves becoming persecutors and have allowed the spectre of fascism to reappear. Anybody who thinks that the violence will end once the last Serb has been driven out is living an illusion. The violence will simply be directed against other Albanians. Is this really what we fought for?

Veton Surroi, "Fashizmi ne Kosove, turpi i Shqiptareve" *Koha Ditore*, 25 August 1999, 1. This editorial was published in English translation as "Victims of the Victims," *New York Review of Books*, 7 October 1999. Veton Surroi is publisher of the Priština Albanian daily *Koha Ditore*.

Calendar, September 7: Holy Martyr Sozon, Holy Apostles Euodus and Onesiphorus, Holy Martyr Eupsychius,
narthex , the Patriarchate of Peć

VIII

CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNTS OF THE RENEWED MARTYRDOM

The Kosovo Question—Past and Present

Dimitrije Bogdanović

Today *Kosovo* has become a general term denoting a complex problem in which history is being faced with our reality. The Serbs and Albanians, two neighboring Balkan peoples, are weighted down with antagonisms which have been accumulating over the past 300 years. The problem cannot simply be reduced to the legal constitutional status of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo, nor to the position of the Yugoslav Albanians. On the contrary, it is far more a question of the survival and position of the entire Serbian nation—in Kosovo, in Yugoslavia, and in the Balkans. In this respect, Kosovo is just a symptom belying deeper processes, in which it is not the fate of the Yugoslav Albanians that is at stake, but that of the Serbs.

It is, therefore, extremely important, indeed essential, that the Kosovo question should be viewed in a historical light. If it is not, the present political situation is incomprehensible, nor can the real meaning and range of Albanian intentions be grasped. Moreover, the position of the Serbs in the Balkans is much too delicate for it to be examined merely in the light of present events. It is being increasingly concealed under a thick veil of mystification. The historic memory of a whole people is being wiped out, the very foundations of its national consciousness are being undermined, while its conscience is being burdened with a mortgage of fictitious or foreign guilt. For this reason, real and complete historical facts have a reviving effect on the Serbian people, returning to them their sense of identity and enabling them to see matters in their true colors and proportions.

The first task is to dispose of some "carefully cultivated" errors. An example is the formula of artificial symmetry, by which relations between nations are relativized to such a degree that all guilt is concealed and any yardstick of historical events goes by the board. Reference to the violence and genocide being exercised on the Serbs in Kosovo is deemed "unacceptable," as it "insults" the feelings of the Yugoslav Albanians. The very history of Serbian-Albanian relations is "taboo." Instead of a real picture of those relations, which for the last three centuries have been characterized by violent treatment of the Serbs by Albanian Muslim converts, we are handed the idea of "reciprocal responsibility," whereby the supposed 20 year period of "Greater-Serbian violence" against the Albanian population is equally balanced with the 200 year period of Albanian abuse of the Serbs.

A historian will note that application of the famous "principle" that not all forms of nationalism are equally negative, that the difference should be made between the nationalism of the oppressed and that of the oppressor, leads in practice to a calculated tolerance of megalomanic myths on the part of those Yugoslav nations of national minorities which were declared "oppressed" in the period 1918–1941. Greater-Albanian mythomania and a marked tolerance of this concept are very symptomatic here.

The questions of ethnogenesis or national origin, for example, offer another case of political mystification. Today, they are of no importance. What does it matter whether the Albanians are descended from the Illyrians, the Thracians, or the Pelasgians? Yet, much insistence is placed on the Illyrian origin of the Albanian people, which only goes to illustrate political aggressiveness. Kosovo has been a Serbian land since the migrations of the 7th century. This historical fact, which is based on a great and obvious number of sources' historical, archaeological, linguistic and anthropo-geographic—is now being opposed by what is basically a racist theory of the Illyrian origin of the Albanians in order to prove the claim that the Albanians have a greater right to the territories inhabited by the Serbian people. Scientifically speaking, however, the ethnogenesis of the Albanians is one of the least illuminated aspects of European prehistory, hence categorical claims of this kind are decidedly inappropriate. If we follow the logic of linguistic analysis, the Albanians could equally have descended from the Thracians as from the Illyrians, but in that case the first Albanians also moved around the Balkans settling the territory of Illyrian "Albania" during the great period of migrations. Therefore, their "earliest inhabitant" status is relative. Albanian prehistory definitely goes back to the 11th century, when they are mentioned for the first time. Up to the 13th century, they do not represent a sufficiently clear historical entity, being nomadic shepherds, highlanders far from the sea, small in number, and with an ethnically vague identity. Finally, what European nation can lay claim to rights dating from that historical maelstrom preceding the

migrations? Claiming historical, and especially territorial, rights on the ethnic map of premigration Europe is simply impossible—for in this period there was no France and no Frenchmen, no Germany and no Germans, no Russia and no Russians, and no Serbia and no Albania. What is important to remember is that the Slavs, when settling in the Balkans, came as crop farmers and mainly stayed in the plains and river valleys of present-day Albania, leaving the mountains to the early Balkan shepherds, who included Vlachs and the ancestors of present-day Albanians. The first contact between the Serbian and Albanian peoples was not a conflict, and relations were to remain peaceable right up to the conversion of the Albanians to Islam in the 16th century. There was no grabbing of Albanian land, nor were the Albanian people oppressed, driven out, or destroyed. Serbo-Albanian relations in the Middle Ages can be regarded rather as a symbiosis. In the medieval state of Serbia, from the late 12th century onward, the Arbanasi (Albanians) were completely integrated, legally and socially, both landowners and citizens and, also, the peasant shepherds who enjoyed the same status as the Vlachs. There was certainly no discrimination or feuding based on nationality. The Serbian Emperor Dušan (1331–1355), in keeping with medieval ideas on the state, which were never national in the modern sense of the word, bore the title "Emperor of the Serbs, Greeks, Bulgars, and Arbanasi (Albanians)."

The region of Kosovo and Metohija has been settled since the early Middle Ages by a homogeneous Serb population. The first Serbian states of the 10th and 11th centuries leaned toward Kosovo. Under Byzantine rule, right up to its final incorporation into the Serbian Nemanjić state in the late 12th and early 13th centuries, Kosovo was, ethnically speaking, a Serbian land when political integration began. This is borne out by historical documents (the charters of Serbian rulers), particularly by a study of the anthroponyms (first names) they contain, and the original toponyms (place names)—for in Kosovo and Metohija these are all mainly of Slav origin. Nomadic groups of Albanian shepherds, mostly of the Roman Catholic faith, made up a negligible two percent of the overall population and were concentrated in the mountainous west, around what is today the Yugoslav-Albanian border. There were also a few Albanian craftsmen, miners, and merchants in the towns.

It was the ethnic homogeneity of this densely populated medieval territory that led to its rapidly becoming the state, political, economic, and cultural center of the Serbian nation. The Serbian Orthodox Church, the national religious organization since the birth of the state in 1219, played its part in maintaining Kosovo as a Serbian territory. The leading monasteries founded by the Nemanjić dynasty (Gračanica, The Mother of God of Ljeviša, Banjska, Dečani, and Holy Archangels) with their icon paintings showing the sovereignty of the state and continuity of Serbian rule, relics of canonized rulers, and its Great Church (the Peć Patriarchate)—whose relics of canonized leaders of the national Church, together with many other monasteries and a dense network of small parish churches all over Kosovo and neighboring regions, represent the basis on which the Serbs formed and consolidated their national consciousness and built up a national and cultural identity. These monuments, then, concentrated and deployed over one territory, are national boundary-stones. The only intact survivors of the Turkish-Albanian Muslim devastation of these parts, they are still active centers of Serbian spiritual and national consciousness. Serbia's architectural and art monuments in Kosovo rank among the finest achievements of medieval Europe, while the literary creations from this region represent the very foundations of the Serbian written word, which helped form a national consciousness during this period. It was rightly said (in the Serbian Memorandum to the ambassadors of the European Powers in London in 1913) that this territory is a kind of "Holy Land" for the Serbian people for it was here in the Middle Ages that they attained a high degree of civilization and it is on the achievements of this period that their European identity rests.

The situation in Kosovo did not essentially change even in the course of the Ottoman invasions in the last two decades of the 14th century—that is to say, ethnic relations were unaltered and the region retained its Serbian character. Unlike Albania, where Djordje Kastriot Skanderbeg, relying on the Albanian people, tried to unite the Albanian feudal landowners to resist the Turks in the mid-15th century, Kosovo remained Serbian, sharing the political fate of the other Serbian regions in the despotic domains of the Lazarević and Branković families. The areas in which there existed a Serbo-Albanian ethnic symbiosis at that time lay far to the west of Kosovo, in lower Zeta, the Scutari Plain, and the northern Albanian mountains. Anthroponymic study of original Ottoman defteri (censuses) in the 15th century shows that the line of the present-day state border between Yugoslavia and Albania, in its northern sector, chiefly coincides with today's ethnic boundary between the Serbs and Albanians.

The loss of independence and freedom suffered after the Ottoman invasions caused a radical change in the living conditions of the Serbian people. Marking the transition from Serbian freedom to Ottoman oppression stands an event which was to become the very symbol of Serbian history—the Battle of Kosovo fought on June 15/28, 1389. In terms of historical significance and the place it assumed in the national memory, the battle is one of the greatest armed confrontations in Europe and can be compared to the Battle of Kulikov (1380), the Battle of Poitiers (732), or, even farther back in history, to the Battle of Thermopylae (480 B.C.). The strong resistance offered by the Serbs in the face of the Ottoman hordes was put down in the physical military sense, but the deaths of Prince Lazar and his soldiers were in the minds of the people martyrs' deaths for "the Kingdom of Heaven" and thus a spiritual triumph,

a heroic sacrifice for the ideals of Christian civilization. For the Serbian people Kosovo put the seal on its identity, became the key to its history, and the banner of national freedom. We are not dealing here with a myth, but a historical idea, which helps a nation to forge a link with its real historical past. The lively memory of its own medieval state was an active factor in the Serbian struggle for liberty and unity centuries later, and an inseparable part of the awareness is that Kosovo is the home of the Serbian nation. However, the Serbs' attitude to Kosovo is not merely based on memories of the past, nor is the mythical factor important in that attitude. The same can be said of our historiographic or political reflections on the problem. Kosovo is not some imaginary legend of the past, but a real historical destiny that continues today.

The Ottoman invasions set in motion great ethnic masses in the Balkans and caused upheavals with lasting, frequently tragic results. Yet, where Kosovo is involved, the first Serbian migrations in the 15th century did not affect this region to any great degree, nor did they bring the Albanian shepherds down from the Prokletije Mountains. In the 16th century official Ottoman records put Christians in a continuing absolute majority over Muslims (Turks and converted Albanians). Together with the other Christian peoples, who still survived as small groups of town-dwellers and shepherds (Orthodox Greeks and Vlachs and Roman Catholic Arbanasi/Albanians), the Serbs made up 97 percent of the total population.

Consequently, the territory of Old Serbia (the historical name for the region of Kosovo, Metohija, and neighboring areas) existed as a Serbian land in the 15th and 16th centuries. The restored Peć Patriarchate (1557) not only played an enormous part in linking up the Serbs scattered over the Balkans and even the Pannonian Plain, it was also instrumental in organizing Serbian resistance and the struggle against the Turks, especially in Kosovo. By the end of the 17th century this region had reopened its former religious centers, and Serbian power to resist grew apace. The Serbs were in a desperate position under the Turks. The effect of Turkish government and forced conversions to Islam, as Ivo Andrić wrote in his doctoral thesis, was "absolutely negative." All historical sources support him. Ottoman rule reposed on the law of discrimination and the absolute authority of Islam, with legal permission to commit acts of individual or mass violence up to total annihilation of people or whole areas.

These reasons governed the continued resistance and struggle of the Serbian people for national freedom and a return to European civilization, but at the same time were also at the root of those significant demographic changes which occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries and which gave rise to the problems we face in Kosovo today. From the end of the 16th century onward the Serbs' fight for liberation grew into a form of continued resistance by a whole people determined not to accept Turco-Islamic overlordship. At the head of the people stood the Church. In the great Austro-Turkish wars of 1683–1690 and 1717–1737, Serbs took part in fighting all over the Balkans, joining in a common struggle against the Turks and the north Albanian Roman Catholic tribes. The victims of ruthless reprisals at the hands of Turks and Tartars after the defeat of Austria, the Serbs migrated northward in waves to areas reaching from the wide spaces of central Macedonia to the Danube. The two "great migrations" of the Serbian people into Austria, led by Patriarchs Arsenije III Crnojević (1690) and Arsenije IV Jovanović-Šakabenta (1737), are indisputable historical facts. It is not possible to calculate exactly how many Serbs moved out altogether—but it is known that in the first migration of 1690, 185,000 Serbs migrated to Austria. Certainly, these mass moves weakened the Serbian ethnic element in various regions, not only Kosovo. Yet, later events, rebellions, and uprisings show that those Serbs who remained in these regions and were constantly reinforced by Serbs migrating from other parts of the Ottoman Empire were still sufficiently strong to offer armed resistance. In fact, up to the middle of the 18th century, Kosovo was an ethnically homogeneous and densely populated Serbian territory, just as it had been before the Turkish invasion. It was only at the beginning of the 18th century that the Albanians started penetrating into the lands of the South Slavs, singly or in groups, on a wide front stretching from Polimlje to Ohrid.

The reason for this penetration derived from the past. In the 16th century at least 50 percent of the total Albanian population in Albania had been converted to Islam, a process that was followed by the forced conversion of the Serbs. The result for the Serbs was a loss of national identity and Albanization. The course taken by this colonization, which can be called anything but "natural," is described in all historical records of the time, especially, "on the spot" reports by Roman Catholic bishops and archbishops and other missionaries, including Albanians, from the 17th to early 19th centuries. These reports, most of them published and preserved in the Vatican archives, were the result of the great interest shown in Balkan affairs by the Holy See, and more particularly the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Congregatio de propaganda fide), given the bright prospects afforded the Roman Catholic missions in regions where Turkish violence had weakened or destroyed the organized structure of the Eastern Orthodox Churches. Likewise, anthropo-geographical exploration of the settlements and origins of the population, started by Jovan Cvijić in 1900, and carried on by a large team of scientists up to the present day, gives strong support to these historical documents. The overall result is a convincing picture of the time, place, manner, and causes of invasion by the Albanians and their colonization and oppression of the Serbs.

In the late 18th century the Albanians made their deepest inroads—to Niš and Sofia (coming within 50 kilometers of the second town) in the northeast, Skoplje and Veles

in the west, and northward toward Bosnia via the Sanjak of Novi Pazar, thus revealing the Balkan dimension of this specific form of Ottoman expansion. Poor economic conditions in the rocky, infertile mountains of central and northern Albania merely provided the initial impetus for this great migration, but combined with Islam and Turkish policies it came to mean the mass colonization of Kosovo and Macedonia and genocide for the Slav population. It was precisely political, and not economic, reasons which brought the Albanians to the new territory, but also to the position of a ruling, privileged class in relation to the deprived Christian masses. Therefore, the subsequent migration of the Serbs and other Balkan Slavs from their lands was not a natural process, as is so often insisted in a certain biased quarter today, but the consequence of the violence to which they were subjected.

Despite the conflict with the Albanian Muslims, which grew stronger as their numbers in Old Serbia increased, insurrectionist and revolutionary Serbia (after 1804) did not forget the former Arbanasi and made room in its Balkan program for a free and independent Albania as part of a planned confederation of Balkan states. This idea, formulated already in Ilija Garašanin's *Načertanije* (Plan) (1844), and particularly later in the 1860s, was given precedence over other plans to divide up Albania with Greece. Of course, what was meant here was Albania itself with its Albanian population, while Kosovo was the objective of the Serbian liberation movement and part of the program of national unity and there could be no talk of conditions or bargaining in relation to the liberation of this territory and its return to Serbian rule.

This problem was underlined in the First Serbian Uprising of 1804–1813, as well as a series of rebellions, insurrections and outlaw raids in Old Serbia itself. As the chief and cruelest weapon of Turkish repression were Albanian Muslim settlers, all liberation movements by Serbs in Kosovo automatically became a struggle against Albanians. At the time of the Serbian uprisings terror already reigned in the Belgrade pashaluk clearly aimed at exterminating the Serbs or else driving them out of Old Serbia altogether. Another, new, factor was at work, too. Reform of the Turkish administration and the first attempts at introducing a European influence into the empire (Tanzimat, 1839) aroused resistance among Albanian Muslims who, with the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, turned against the reform to protect their old privileges, religious, and national discrimination, and, as they said, the "true faith."

Thus, the Christian masses became the chief victims of an Albanian anti-reformist, conservative, and financial movement in a series of local rebellions and pogroms. The genocide committed on the Serbian population in the '50s and '60s of the 19th century is recorded in a large number of documents, complaints to the Turkish administration about Albanian atrocities, and reports by European consuls (in Bitola, Skoplje, Prizren, and Priština).This reign of terror by Albanian Muslims extended over the entire territory from the Sanjak to Macedonia and from Metohija to the South Morava River.

The two liberation wars fought by the Serbs and Montenegrins against the Turks in 1876–1877 and 1877–1878 signaled the first serious head-on conflict between Serbs and Albanians. The Muslim Albanians of Old Serbia fought Serbian troops to defend the integrity of the empire and the lands they had usurped. The ensuing defeat of Turkey in the wars meant a loss of these possessions: about 30,000 Albanians left liberated areas like Toplica, Leskovac, and Vranje. Under the Russo-Turkish armistice of 1878, the Serbian army was forced to retreat from those parts of Kosovo it had just liberated. In the fight over the new borders and Russian claims at Serbian expense in the Treaty of San Stefano, Serbia managed to hold on to only some of its war acquisitions at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. The Serbs in Old Serbia were then put to terrible and bloody revenge, organized by the Albanian League, founded the same year, and sanctioned and supported by the Sublime Porte.

The Albanian League was an important factor in building up an Albanian national ideology. The obvious inability of Turkey to defend its empire led not only to an eruption of ideas about an independent struggle by the Albanians against Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece, but also a search for new ways of protecting Turkish interests against the new Balkan states. For the first time we meet the notion of "Greater Albania," in the name of which League members sought to sanction former ethnic changes and conquests at the expense of the Balkan Christians, to return the regions they had lost, and extend the areas under Albanian domination far beyond the borders Albanian migrations had already reached. The League's program was directed against the Balkan states, and indirectly against those European states which had in any way at all approved the aspirations to freedom of Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece, and also against Turkey if its weakness threatened the imagined integrity of "Greater Albania." Aggressive, greedy, revenge-seeking, conservative, and nationalist, the League managed to bring together Albanians of all three religions despite internal differences. The League's anti-Serbian and, indeed, anti-Slav tendencies had a lasting negative effect on relations between Serbs and Albanians.

The 30 years after the Congress of Berlin, 1878 to 1912, were colored by the deliberate persecution and physical extermination of Serbs and their forced migration from Turkey. It was not until this period that the ethnic balance in Old Serbia—that is, Kosovo and Metohija and northwest Macedonia—was finally destroyed. In those 30 years about 400,000 people left this region for Serbia, at least 150,000 of them from the area north of Mt. Šara—Kosovo and Metohija. This pogrom took on tragic proportions after the war in Crete between Turkey and Greece in 1897. Diplomatic measures taken by the Serbian government to protect Serbs from Albanian terror bore no fruit, but at

least authentic documents remain to testify to crimes committed against the Serbian population in the then Kosovo Province. These crimes included murder, the plunder and desecration of churches and graves, the rape and kidnapping of Serbian women and girls, even children, attacks, and robbery and looting, all aimed at destroying the Serbs or driving them from their land and all with the tacit permission of the Turkish authorities—from the Sublime Porte to local governors and police.

Albanian movements directed against Turkey, especially after their failure to agree with the Young Turkish revolution of 1908–1912, came to involve the vital interests of the Serbian people, even its very survival, revealing the long-term plans and effectiveness of these movements. Even Skoplje fell into the hands of the Albanian rebels in 1912, a town in which the Albanians represented a very small minority. So it transpired that at its southern borders Serbia finally faced a new, young, actively anti-Serbian state, which was to prove a convenient tool for Italian and Austrian aspirations in the Balkans.

The Balkan war of 1912 was fought by Serbia along with Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Greece for the liberation of its own people and to secure such conditions as would ensure that this people could maintain its political, economic, and cultural life as a whole. True, one of the main drawbacks of Serbian policy, which was to prove fatal, was that it lacked clear ideas as to how to find a lasting and just solution to the Albanian question. The vague notion that "some combination will be found for the coexistence of Serbs and Albanians as it was before Turkish rule" (Milanović, 1906) was no substitute for a well-thought out policy toward the Albanian people based upon reality. Ideas of peaceful integration, including assimilation, of the Albanians were completely illusory, even if they did not oppose the existing or later views and practical experience of European states in international and national relations. All such hopes were bound to founder in the end, which they did during operations by the Serbian and Montenegrin armies on the Scutari battlefield in 1912, where, instead of the naively expected cooperation, they met the open enmity of the Albanian tribes and armed resistance. On the other hand, an autonomous Albania was supposed to be created at the insistence of Austria-Hungary and Italy, but also with the agreement of England, France, and Russia. In the complex events of 1912–1913, Serbia was forced into a determined struggle to hold on to the liberated territory of Kosovo and Metohija, where Austrian pretensions were particularly noticeable.

Thus, a second Battle of Kosovo had to be fought and won on the diplomatic plane. The London Conference of European Powers (1912–1913) created a political and legal basis for the demarcation and future of relations between the Albanian and Serbian peoples, between Albania and Serbia, and later Yugoslavia as the successor to the Serbian state. The Serbian government was not prepared to make concessions over Kosovo and Metohija: "No Montenegrin or Serbian government would want to or be able to hand over this "Holy Land" of the Serbian people to the Albanians or anyone else." This was stressed in the Memorandum to the European powers of 8/12 January, 1913. On this point, it said, "the Serbian people will not and cannot make any concessions, transactions or compromises, and no Serbian government would want to do this either."

Pressure on the Serbian people was renewed immediately after the retreat of the Serbian and Montenegrin armies and Austro-German and Bulgarian occupation of Kosovo in 1915. This pressure was maintained right up to liberation in 1918. Albanian units also took part in the bloody suppression of the Serbian uprising in Toplice in 1916–1917. The first few years after liberation and the creation of the state of Yugoslavia saw a continuation of armed struggle in Kosovo and Metohija and in Macedonia, for Albanian, "kacaci" (terrorist saboteurs), relying on the Albanian masses, tried to keep up an atmosphere of permanent rebellion. Their activities were more or less suppressed by 1924, but an underground, semi-illegal political struggle went on—via party organizations like the Muslim "Dzemijet" or those of illegal groups, such as the student "Besa" in Belgrade. The status of the Albanian national minority, like other minorities—German, Hungarian, Italian, and Rumanian, was regulated by the St. Germain Treaty of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Yugoslavia), signed with the Great Powers (the United States, England, France, Italy, and Japan) on 10 September, 1919. Contrary to some interpretations, the Albanians were not excepted from this internationally approved system of defense. Slogans about a special legally-approved lack of protection and discrimination against the Albanian minority in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, regardless of real political circumstances and relations in that state, have absolutely no legal or historical foundation.

Attempts by the then government to establish an ethnic and national balance in Kosovo and Macedonia through agrarian reforms and colonization only created bad blood. The results of this ill-advised action, which was badly organized and clearly infringed the law at times, were worst in precisely that sphere they were designed to improve. During the entire period when the agrarian reforms and colonization were carried out, in the '20s and '30s, about 600,000 Serbs and other Yugoslavs arrived in Kosovo and Metohija, but they mainly took over uncultivated, vacant, and, often, infertile land, obtained through the dissolution of feudal estates, and only a small number moved into Albanian settlements—onto Albanian farm estates (mainly the holdings of outlaws). The agrarian reforms in Kosovo, as in the other liberated territories in Yugoslavia, did, indeed, do away with feudal relations, but this colonization had a "springback" effect, on a small scale at least, and was very unpopular even among the Serbs, especially those native to the region. The policy of moving out the Albanian population, again, right up to the end of the Kingdom of Yugo-

slavia did not manage to become a systematic campaign like that carried out after World War II in Poland, Czechoslovakia, or Yugoslavia in relation to the German national minority. There is no accurate record of how many Albanians were moved out, but it is estimated that this figure is less than 45,000, including other Kosovo Muslims (Turks, Romanies). The initiative for resettling the Muslims, including the Albanian Muslims, came from Turkey, which had already organized an evacuation of Muslims from the Balkan states (Rumania, Bulgaria, and Serbia) in 1914. An agreement between Yugoslavia and Turkey in 1938, like other resettlement plans, laid down measures of economic stimulation and security in the land of immigration, instead of administrative coercion, although these were sometimes also used in practice.

The collapse of Yugoslavia in April 1941 heralded a new era of Albanian terror and genocide against the Serbs. Most territory having an Albanian national minority was annexed by the Italian vassals in Tirana, leading to the creation of "Greater Albania" under the auspices of Italian Fascism. Members of the Albanian minority (which numbered no more than 500,000 in the whole of pre-war Yugoslavia) looked on the occupation of Yugoslavia as their liberation. The "2nd Albanian League" (1943) took advantage of the German occupation after the Italian capitulation to carry out a systematic reign of terror over the Serbs, with mass and single killings (Peć, Uroševac, Priština, etc.), deportations, and forcible resettlement. It has never been exactly determined how many Serbs were driven out of Kosovo and Metohija at that time, but estimates put the number of Serbian colonists and indigenous Serbs who left the territory between 1941 and 1944 at around 100,000. It is well-known that even the Germans tried to halt and return this great stream of refugees, as they blocked the roads. Armed resistance to the Italian, German, and Bulgarian occupiers was rather specific in regions of Yugoslavia inhabited by Albanians. Attempts to organize a national liberation movement in such regions met with great obstacles, chiefly large-scale anti-Serb and anti-Yugoslav feeling.

This situation only started to improve in the second half of 1944, when it was clear that Nazism would be defeated. Moreover, partisan detachments in Kosovo and Metohija up to autumn 1944 tended to operate outside this territory, in Macedonia, since they could not survive on home ground. Documents dealing with the national liberation war in Kosovo and Metohija testify to this without exception.

Yet, despite the hostile, or at least passive, behavior of the Albanian national minority during the war, Kosovo and Metohija entered new Yugoslavia in 1945 as an autonomous region, with prospects of complete national, constitutional, economic, and cultural independence.

If we want to seek the origin of this solution, we must go back to the policy of the Serbian Social Democrat Party on the eve of World War I and, through this, to the views held by Austrian Socialists and Marxists. The Albanian question was considered in this light by Serbia's leading socialist, Dimitrije Tucović. In his pamphlet Srbija i Arbanija (Serbia and Albania) (1914) he presented the general condemnation of Serbia's national and liberation policy in the Balkan wars as reflecting ideas of Greater Serbia, hegemony, and conquest. Disregarding the genuinely tragic position of the Serbian people under Turkish rule, the victim of Albanian terror in Kosovo, Tucović paved the way for the slogan about "the aggressive annexation of Albanian territory" and the right of the Albanian population to secede and join their national state. His judgment of "Greater-Serbian hegemony" at no time took account of the crucial difference existing between national consciousness, national identity, and the vital needs of the Serbian people, on one hand, and the attitudes and actions of certain Serbian politicians and political parties, on the other. Generalization and idea-twisting of this sort resulted in an unjust and unfounded burden being placed upon the entire Serbian nation, where behind the Austro-Marxist truisms of the Serbian Social Democrat Party we cannot help seeing the Austro-Hungarian basis for an argument against Serbian national policy. In fact, this judgment would throw doubt upon the entire program of national liberation and unity which began to be implemented in 1804 and which was finally formulated in 1915, as well as the achievements of the Serbian revolution and the liberation wars. The idea of small, weak Serbia, consisting of the "Belgrade pashaluk and 6 districts," which the Treaty of Berlin (1878) barely granted the right to its own borders, meant identifying a dismembered Serbian state territory, in which every step taken over the state-lines toward freedom and unity was pronounced aggression. In 1914, the hypothesis of this concept was that the Serbian people who lived outside the Serbia of the Berlin Congress—that is, more than half the existing number of Serbs at the time—no matter how ethnically compact or spiritually integrated, could not and must not be regarded as anything else than a national minority in diaspora, with no right to self-determination, to secession and unity with its national state.

The policy of the Yugoslav Communist Party on the ethnic question was partly inherited from the heterogeneous socialist movement of Yugoslavia's nations and partly based, at least up to 1935, on the views and decisions of the Communist International (Comintern). A "section of the Comintern," as the YCP was once officially called, it was duty-bound to follow the line adopted by this international organization which was exclusively controlled by the USSR. The Yugoslav Communist Party was in a position, however, in the relatively short inter-war period, to make important changes in its policy on the ethnic question in Yugoslavia. At its second congress, in Vukovar, in 1920, the YCP proclaimed as its main objective the creation of the Soviet Balkans, i.e. the Soviet Republic of Yugoslavia as part of a Soviet federation of Balkan and Danube states, which itself would be one element in an international federation of So-

viet republics. The notion of a "3-tribe nation," of the unity of the Yugoslav "tribes," and their aspiration toward unity, had already been changed by 1923 to the idea of Yugoslavia as the fruit of the "imperialist war" and the "Versailles system" according to the views of the Comintern and the Balkan Federation, a branch of the Comintern, in which the Bulgarians played a leading role. Not five years after the creation of Yugoslavia, the Third National Conference of the YCP formulated a definite thesis on "Serbian hegemony" as the internal imperialist basis and essence of the Yugoslav state, where all non-Serbian nationalities (Albanian was mentioned as one) were being oppressed and destroyed. Emphasizing the right to self-determination, in principle the right to "uniting with one's national state," was also recognized. The 5th Congress of the Comintern in 1924 passed a decision dissolving Yugoslavia as a state and opposing its future constitutional revision or reorganization, considering that Yugoslavia was one of the spearheads of anti-Sovietism and counter-revolution. Under the Comintern decision, the solution lay in secession by Croatia, Slovenia, and Macedonia, and their formation as independent states. True, on the intra-Party level, the YCP did oppose this, but never once did it, or any faction within it, dispute the initial premise, especially where it touched on Serbia as an "oppressor." The Comintern decisions contain calls for tactical differentiation between the nationalism of "oppressed nations" and that of "oppressor nations" with the result that the fight against "Serbian nationalism" becomes the main task of the Yugoslav Communist Party, and particularly the Serbian Communists in Serbia. At the same time, help should be given to every separatist, anti-Yugoslav and anti-Serbian nationalist movement in Yugoslavia (5th Expanded Plenum of the Comintern International Committee, 1925).

The idea of dissolving Yugoslavia was worked out in fine detail in decisions of the YCP's 4th Congress (Dresden, 1928). According to these decisions, Yugoslavia was to dissolve into individual separate states—Croatia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Slovenia, (Serbia was not mentioned), while the Hungarian and Albanian national minorities were to break away, because their lands had supposedly been "annexed" by the Serbian bourgeoisie. Cooperation was sought with the Greater-Albanian Kosovo Committee (just as support was offered to the Croatian Ustashas in Lika, 1932). Thereafter, combinations of the number of "independent" states and the manner and consequences of the dissolution of Yugoslavia constantly altered, but even in 1934 the Serbs in Yugoslavia outside Serbia (and explicitly in Kosovo) were still looked upon as "occupiers" who must be "driven out."

The turnabout in Comintern, or rather Soviet policy, in favor of a "Popular Front" in 1935, when the danger from Fascism became all too apparent, also led to changes in YLC policy toward the Yugoslav state in order to reach a coalition of anti-Fascist forces: the integrity of Yugoslavia had to be protected, future relations between the Yugoslav nations were to be put on a federal basis, and the Fascist separatism of the Ustashas and pro-Bulgarian VMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) was now condemned. This change of tactics (as this turnabout was defined in the YLC of the time) still did not mean any revision of the basic tenet that the chief enemy was "Greater-Serbian hegemony." In distancing itself from the Comintern, the Yugoslav Communist Party was slow to abandon the cornerstone of its views on relations between the Yugoslav nations. This was evident at the 5th National Conference of the YCP in Zagreb (1940). Achievement of the right to self-determination, with the right to secession, was reserved for the future, yet the Albanians of Kosovo and Metohija and even those of the Sanjak continued to be considered an "oppressed minority," a people tyrannized by the Serbian bourgeoisie.

In the course of the National Liberation War the whole complexity of the League's political inheritance, including the Albanian question, was thrown into relief. Since 1939 the YCP had been trying to help the Communists of Albania to organize their own party—which came into being in 1941. However, in late 1943 there was already a visible penetration of ideas on a Greater Albania in the Albanian Communist Party leadership and the country's National Liberation Army, but also in the movement led by the Yugoslav Communist Party in Kosovo. The attitude of Albanian Communists toward the nationalist and quisling organization Balli Combetar, which was founded on the idea of gathering together all Albania's national forces under German occupation and on such slogans as "an ethnic Albania," was echoed in the conclusions of the Conference of the Provincial National Liberation Committee for Kosovo and "Dukadjin" (the Albanian term for a territory wider than Metohija). This meeting was held outside Yugoslavia in the town of Bujan in northern Albania over New Year, 1944. Threading its way through these conclusions was the old formulation about the desire of Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija for secession, or, more precisely, for union with their national state Albania.

The conclusions from this Conference were opposed to the decisions of the 2nd Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation (AVNOJ) held in Jajce on 29 November, 1943. Criticized by the YCP's Central Committee in March 1944, they were, nonetheless, at no time explicitly revoked. At the time the YCP pursued a policy based on the constitutional and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia as an international subject. Between the 1st (1942) and 2nd (1943) Sessions of AVNOJ, we learn from sources available today that there was already a clear prospect of disagreement with Stalin's policy. Consequently, the Yugoslav line followed by the YCP during the war was not an implementation of a new Soviet tactic, but the expression of its own emancipation. Both legally and politically, the decisions of AVNOJ, refusing to recognize the occupiers' partition of Yugoslavia, while making no mention of the future autonomy of

"minority" regions, ought to have put an end to speculations as to the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia in the future. For this reason, in correspondence with the Albanian Communist Party at the end of 1943 the Yugoslav Communist Party treats the question of the Albanian minority as Yugoslavia's internal affair.

For the moment it is still not sufficiently known whether or not ideas of state integration, that is, the incorporation of Albania into a Yugoslav federation, as a united Schipetar-Albanian republic (with Kosovo), were present at the time in Yugoslav-Albanian relations. Enver Hoxha's account of his talks with Tito (Avec Staline, Souvenirs, 1979) comes down, in the end, to an indirect rejection of Hodzha's territorial demand under the pretext that "the Serbs would not understand it." Yet, it must be admitted that even this elusive and unproven circumstance, along with the old promises'at least the one from 1935—could have encouraged Albanian pretensions to Kosovo and Metohija and Albanian nationalists in what was now known as the Yugoslav League of Communists and outside it in Kosovo itself to demand that the national rights of the Albanian majority should be legalized constitutionally, if not by secession from Yugoslavia and union with Albania, at least as the foundation of a separate statehood, first in the form of an autonomous region, which would progress to a province, and ultimately to a republic. It is precisely this path which was followed by Albanian nationalism, overcoming the first obstacle after 1966 (the Plenary Session of the YLC's Central Committee on Brioni) only to show its true colors in the 1968 demonstrations (a republic for Kosovo). In the period of constitutional reforms from 1971–1974, the province was established as "a constituent element of the Federation," with no mediacy, whereby membership of the Socialist Republic of Serbia appeared as a kind of ambiguous constitutional link."

No lessons were drawn from the mass organized demonstrations in Kosovo and the Socialist Republic of Macedonia in November 1968, in spite of previous warnings about the escalation of Albanian nationalist feeling and the serious consequences which could ensue (for example, Dobrica Ćosić and Jovan Marjanović at the 14th Session of the Central Committee of the Serbian League of Communists in May 1968). Events in Kosovo in 1981, with much larger demonstrations and an eruption of illegal activities involving a large section of Kosovo's Albanian youth, as well as young Albanians in some parts of southern Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro, underlined the danger of shutting one's eyes to real political events and movements. However, it is important to point out here that all these events were accompanied and marked by increasing persecution of the Serbs living in Kosovo and Metohija. The same methods were applied as were recorded in 19th century documents and spoken tradition: murder, rape, beatings, psychological and moral pressure, illegal possessions, land-stealing, destruction of crops, livestock and forests, social and legal discrimination, outvoting and abuse of privilege, attacks on churches, and desecration of graves, monuments and any other symbol of the national identity of the Serbian people. Organized Albanian terror produced an unbearable atmosphere of vulnerability and fear and compelled growing numbers of Serbs and Montenegrins to leave. Thus in one part of its own republic the Serbian people was reduced to the status of a minority (but without minority rights), while its percentage in the ethnic structure of Kosovo rapidly dwindled—from 27.4 percent in the 1948 population census to 14.9 percent in 1981, the greatest fall occurring between 1961 (still 27.4 percent) and 1981 (14.9 percent). During this period, Albanian population rose at a great pace, due firstly to a very high birthrate, but also artificially—through uncontrolled mass immigration from Albania and juggling with statistics. For example, in the last census in 1981, Romanies, Muslims and Turks, and even Macedonians living in Macedonia, were still listed as being Albanians.

The policy of "ethnic purity," if we take a look at history, is always racist in character. Nothing can justify it or "explain" it, no matter who pursues it. Least of all can it be justified by pseudo-historical mystification. On the other hand, it cannot be hushed up by a simple tale of peaceful, harmonious, and idyllic relations between nations and nationalities in the region. There again, the logic which says that the status of a region depends on the current situation and demographic ratio, regardless of how, when, and in what circumstances that situation arose and those relations were established, is absolutely untenable in human, moral, and historical terms. The right of the Serbian people to live in its own country was first disputed through the many years of terror under the Turkish yoke, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries, terror whose methods, proportions, and consequences bore all the marks of genocide. To stress the present demographic picture in Kosovo and maintain that these regions are Albanian simply because a large number of Albanians lives there today is to overlook the fact that this land is inhabited primarily by the Serbian people, as its heartland and, historically speaking, its motherland, so there has never been any break in Serbia's attitude toward Kosovo as a Serbian national territory, no interruption in the struggle to liberate Kosovo's Serbs and make them part of the Serbian community in the whole country. Failure to observe real historical facts could result in the legalization of the consequences of genocide. And this, of course, would mean attacking an ethical principle at its very roots. It would mean sanctioning the use of violence against the Yugoslav nations and trampling on their right to self-determination in their own state and to live as free and sovereign citizens in their own country—and all this in the name of the right of Yugoslavia's Albanian national minority to "self-determination, with the right to "secession."

Kosovo, Ed. ed. B. W. R. Jenkins,
Serbian Western American Diocese 1992, pp. 145–153.

Serbian Patriarch Paul (Pavle)
A Seeker for a dignified solution to the tragic fate of Kosovo and Metohija

The following excerpts are a testimony of Patriarch Pavle's struggle, lasting several decades, to find a dignified solution to the tragic conflicts in Kosovo and Metohija.

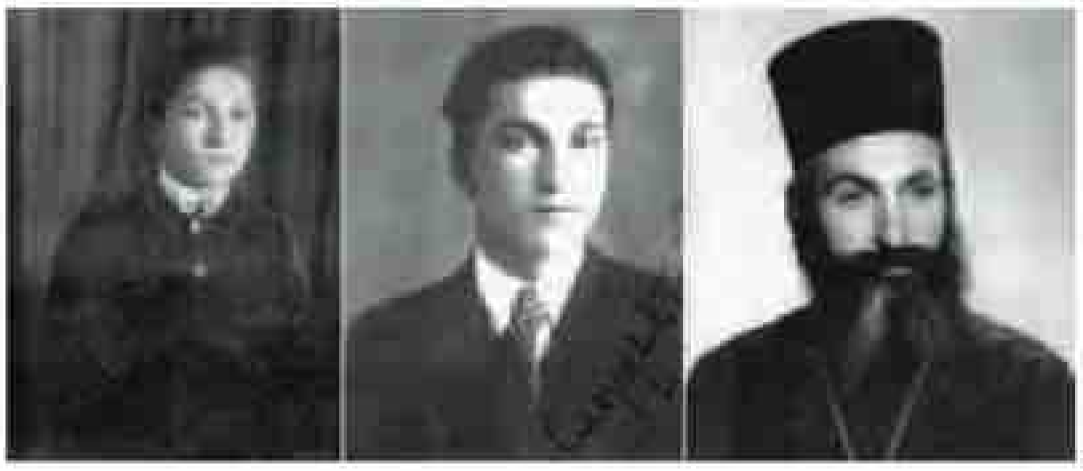
When I came to Kosovo as the Bishop of Raška and Prizren (1957) I saw another aspect of the ordeal of the Serbian people. When Old Serbia was turned into the Autonomous Region of Kosovo and Metohija, the Serbs were suddenly reduced to a minority in their country, as they had been in the Turkish times. Already in my first episcopal reports I pointed out repeatedly that, although the Serbs were in authority, Kosovo was in fact controlled by the Albanians. In World War II most of their people welcomed the Italian occupation as their liberation, for the Albanians from Albania were then united with those in Kosovo, Metohija and western Macedonia for the first time. Great Shipnia was created, but, in spite of the fact that it lasted, as an Italian protectorate, only as long as the occupation lasted, it has continued to live in the consciousness of the masses, enticed by their leaders, as an achieved national goal that ought to be preserved. Led to believe that the circumstances were only temporarily changed, they only waited, and to a large extent lived to see, the recovery of what had been lost. Warnings were reaching me to take care what I write in my regular reports to the Holy Synod, for they also came into the hands of the secular authorities, but it was becoming increasingly apparent that somewhere, in some place it had been decreed that Kosovo and Metohija should be no longer Serbian. It was becoming obvious in various ways that the behavior of the ordinary people was concordant with that, although the elderly ones condemned the violence and greed of those seeking to seize their neighbors' houses and lands. There were among these some who were conscious of their Serbian origin and who sensed that something leading to no good was being hatched...

Patriarch Pavle serves Liturgy in Prizren as the Bishop of the Diocese of Raška and Prizren

Enthronement of Bishop Pavle, 1957; group photo in front of Church in Prizren

It is well known that numerous Albanians used to visit, sometimes even in greater number than Serbs, the relics of St Stefan Dečanski seeking relief for their troubles. Once, standing in the monastic yard, I happened to overhear the conversation between an Albanian, who was coming out of the church with his mother, wife and sick child, and a young man who had come from Montenegro and happend-

Patriarch Pavle visiting Los Angeles, 1994



Pavle as a boy, a student, and a bishop

ed to be there. He asked the unfortunate father: "What do you want from our saint?"—"I have come neither to your saint nor to our saint," replied the Albanian, "but to God's saint. And as he is God's saint, he is both yours and ours. For if the saint thought the way I and you think, neither you nor I would come to him." The youth remained silent, and the Albanian came up to me to ask blessing for the child...

It is evident that not only Albanians are to blame for this situation in Kosovo. They were supported and incited not only by the republics of the former joint state, Yugoslavia, but also by the outside world. But what I found the most regrettable was the complicity of the politicians from our people.

Orthodox Church always appeals for peace and justice among men, reminding its member that we were not asked before our birth whether we wanted to be born in this or that nation, in this or that religion, in this or that religion. But it does depend on us whether we shall act as righteous men or not, and we are responsible before God for all our deeds."

Procession around the Dečani Monastery, 1964

I shall tell you the true story of an event which happened in Kosovo eighty years ago.

In 1979 I ordained a young priest in Uroševac in Kosovo. When the laying on of hands and the Liturgy were over, we met in the church hall for a moment of rest and talk. Someone mentioned the words of Christ: "He that endureth to the end will be saved." An old man said in connection with that: "I remember the Turkish rule. Ours was a large joint family household with more than sixty members. The times were grim. The Albanians abducted a girl, we overtook them and retrieved the girl. They killed first one and then another member of our family. We avenged the murders. But hardly a week passed when an oppressor and his suite quartered themselves on us. We had to treat them as guests and to feed and tend their horses. What we prepared for our family was eaten by others. Our family elders went to the priest and said: *Father, we are on the verge of killing all the people in the house, including ourselves, to stop once for all these torments. Or shall we flee to some place in Serbia? But, then, how are we going to feed sixty*

Procession around the Dečani Monastery on the occasion of changing the vestments of the Holy King, 1964, with Bishop Pavle of Raška and Prizren.

Patriarch Pavle in public transportation

Patriarch Pavle walking on a street in Belgrade

mouths on the journey? Or shall we turn Turks, like so many around us? The priest replied: *Brothers, I am a little above you, and the pressure I have to bear is even greater. But I beg you to endure. A year or two, and freedom will come.* They said: *But, father, that is what we have been listening to for more than five hundred years, and yet nothing has come out of it! If we knew that it would come even in fifty years, we would muster our last strength and endure!* And the priest said: *That is what I, too, beg you!*

And then the old man ended his story: "That was in 1910, and freedom came in 1912. If we had given in then, we would have lost in two years all that we had been holding on to for five hundred years."

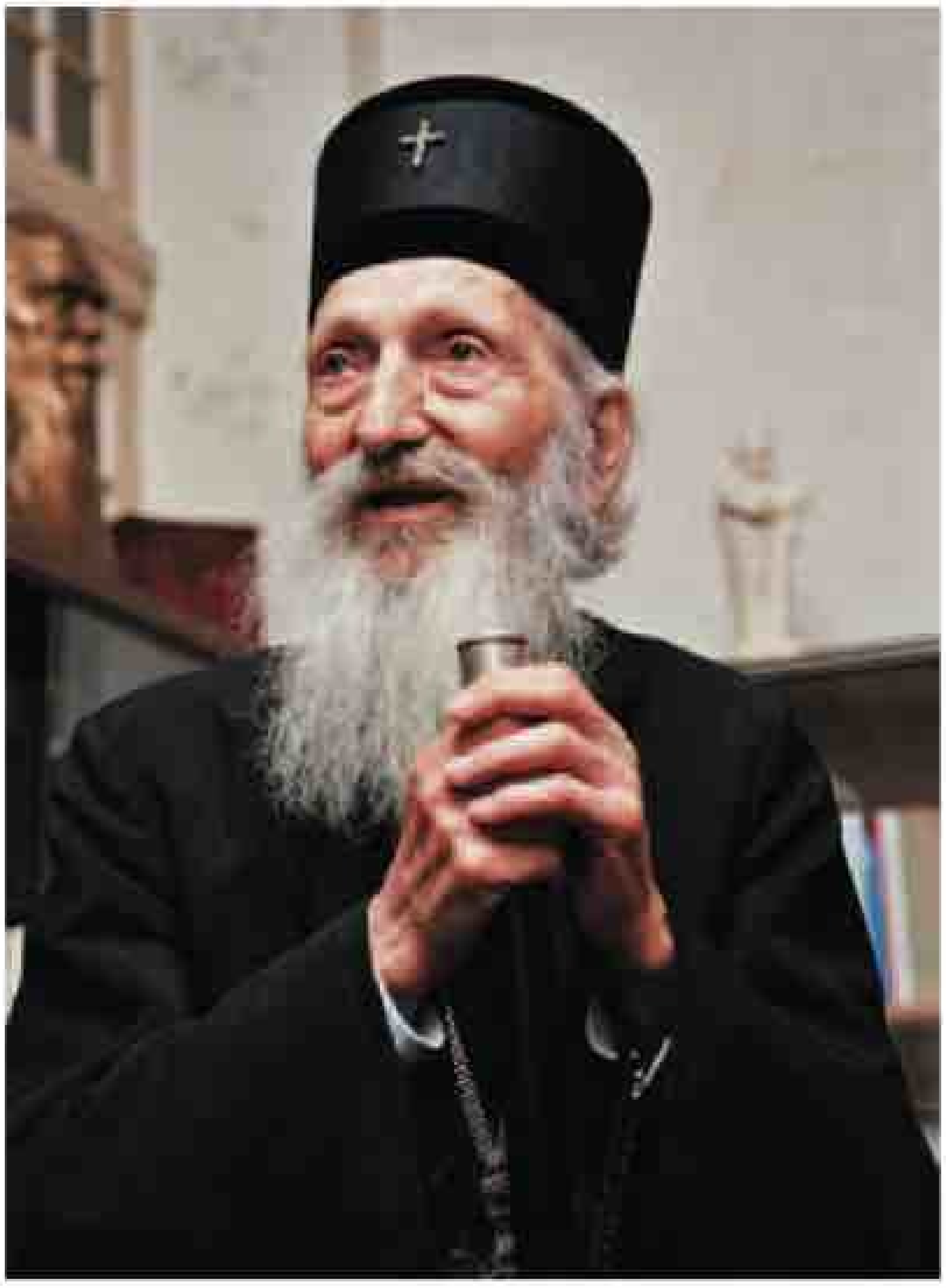
The essence of the story is this: There would have been no trace of Serbs in Kosovo if they had not cherished the hope that they would remain on their fathers' land and if they had not summoned up, week by week, the tenacity and resolution to endure and survive. At present, too, you can hear speculations on the loss of Kosovo, but the modest Serbian houses and the Serbian shrines are still standing there. This shows how many difficult years has weathered the most valuable contribution which the Serbs were able to make, and which they did make, to the common treasury of man's achievements.

Each war is a disaster, and the civil war as it was in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo is the worst disaster of all. In the civil war, the enemy is the neighbor, fellow-citizen, even a relative in the case of mixed marriages. There is much we have to repent for, both we and Albanians, there have been great disaster and atrocities. Forgiveness comes after repentance.

The future of the Serbian nation—not only in Kosovo and Metohija, but wherever it dwells—will depend on whether it acts in full accordance with what is holy and honest, righteous and evangelical. Both the present and the future can be built on Truth alone.

Truth must be hampered, and it cannot be replaced by ingenuity in the affair of national and state importance, or, for that matter, in any other affairs.

It has been alleged that I am subverting, together with some others, the unity of Yugoslavia with the aim of establishing a Greater Serbia. But I am saying today again: if the setting up of our independent state and its preservation and progress were possible only at the cost of crime, I would rather wish that not only Greater Serbia, but also small Serbia and all the Serbs including myself may vanish than accede to anything unrighteous and inhuman. That is what the Covenant of Kosovo and the commitment to the Kingdom of God means to me.



Patriarch Pavle, 2005

The Chronicles of the Renewed Crucifixion of Kosovo

Diary and Other Records: March 1999—June 1999

Metropolitan Amfilohije (Radović)

A certain man, an old sergeant called Dimitrije, a Serb from Vojvodina, visited the Bishop Peter II Petrović Njegoš during his visit to Italy. Having first made sure that the Bishop was not sleeping, having lunch or being busy and that he was by himself, Dimitrije checked in and entered the Bishop's room saying: "I've heard, Your Grace, that you're here. So I came to see you out of my pure yearning for Serbia and venerate the hand of such a renowned lord of the renowned Montenegro. This is all we have left!" The tears started flowing down his heroic, serious face. The Bishop was very moved by these words and tears. He extended his hand for Dimitrije to venerate, something he would usually never do, telling him in a very moving and sad voice: "Oh, my poor people! You're scattered around serving and working for foreigners while the fire in your own hearth is dying down...!" "Forgive me, my lord," Dimitrije said, "I'm very sad. I haven't been home for eight years!"

"Our home is nowhere to find," the Bishop replied, "It burned down in Kosovo!"

Ljuba Nenadović, *The Letters from Italy*

Introduction

The Kosovo drama and tragedy are not from yesterday. They have lasted for more than six centuries.[1] Their culprits and participants are various and miscellaneous. Kosovo and Metohija are a centuries' old stage of a Jerusalem / Golgotha type on which there has always been and always will be waged a warfare between good and evil, God's justice and human injustice, until the end of the world and time." The crazy wind" of *this world that lies in evil* has tried through the centuries to blow out "the holy lamp" of the New and Old Testaments in the earthly Jerusalem. It has also raged during the centuries through the historical countries and the Catholic soul of the people of St. Sava. It blows in order to wrest and remove without a trace the fruit-bearing sprout of their Kosovo covenant born out of the votive Jerusalem lights. It hearkens to cause the Serbs to forget and estrange them from their centuries-old Catholic consent to Christ the Savior and His Heavenly Kingdom. The consent which was revealed and sealed on St. Vitus Day by the martyring of the Holy Prince Lazar and his champions in 1389 at Kosovo Field, the place sown with the bones of thousands of witnesses to Christ who have been cut down by the foreign hand during the long Cross-Resurrection history of Serbia to this very day.

The New Testament is the Covenant with God through the Blood of the Lamb "slaughtered for the life of the world." The Kosovo pledge,[2] which grew out of it, is a covenant with Christ and a Christ-yearning choice of the whole people for "His Kingdom which is not of this world." This choice, like living evangelic pith of our Saint Sava tradition as well as of the historical church being, was witnessed by the great suffering of St. Emperor Lazar and his army "in flat Kosovo." The battlefield of a centuries' long slaying of God's faithful Serbian heads, it was later on witnessed and sealed by posthumous martyrdom of St. Sava's[3] holy relics at the other renowned Serbian field, the plateau of Belgrade's Tašmajdan—the Old Vračar. Being for that reason named "Vračar field," the Old Vračar is an earthly Serbian memorial pledge of healing. "Vrach" in the Church language always means "physician", a servant of God, such as the Holy Healers Cosmas and Damian, but never a "fortune-teller."[4] Our

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[1] Kosovo was the scene of the famous battle held on St. Vitus Day (June 15) in 1389, when Serbian Prince Lazar and the Ottoman emir Murad both lost their lives. The Ottoman's breakthrough into the heart of Southeast Europe also marked the beginning of the five centuries long clash of two civilizations: European (Christian) and Near Eastern (Islamic). The conflict, alive to this day, is generated in the visible layer also in the clash of the two nations: the Serbs, mainly Orthodox Christians, and the ethnic Albanians, mainly Muslims—*transl. note.*

[2] On Vidovdan (St. Vitus Day), June 15, 1389, on the Kosovo Field, the Serbs led by Prince Lazar chose once and for all their religious, cultural, ethical, and national identity. Their choice, in the form of an unwritten pledge, the choice of freedom in the kingdom of heaven instead of humiliation and slavery in the temporal world was handed down to all post-Kosovo Serbian generations—*transl. note*

[3] Saint Sava (1174–1236), enlightener and the first Archbishop of the autocephalous Serbian Church, the son of the Serbian ruler and founder of the medieval Serbian state, Stefan Nemanja. In the time of the Ottoman occupation, the Serbian people gathered together round St. Sava's relics in Mileševa Monastery, to seek support and healing. Fearing that a rebellion against the Ottomans might be stirred up in that place, Sinan Pasha of Belgrade commanded that St. Sava's relics be brought to Belgrade and burned there on April 27, 1594—*transl. note.*

[4] In the contemporary Serbian language, the word "vrach" is obsolete and is mainly used as a synonym for "fortune-teller"—*transl. note.*

The Throne of the Serbian Patriarchs, Church of the Holy Apostles, the Patriarchate of Peć

people's choice for Kosovo was confirmed on St. Vitus Day by the martyring of all its believing champions from whose blood the peonies of the Serbian Christian covenant spring and bloom even today. They will be sprouting and blooming unto the end of the world and time.

This book [here only partly presented] is the first part of the new Kosovo *Chronicles* written in the months and years of the heaviest sufferings from 1999–2004. It has been verified and updated with subsequent findings, which had to be divided into two parts due to the vast amount of the material. It represents only one of the pages of the Holy Kosovo book on which a dramatic, Golgotha like history of the Serbian people and their Church in the territories of Old Serbia, the present day Kosovo and Metohija, is written. The living and true testimonies of the Kosovo and Metohija crucifixion gathered in this book in the year of aggression by NATO. The actions of the military alliance and the occupation of Old Serbia are new attempts to tear out the living heart of our people. But the truth is even stronger than the sun and will show and reveal first the real spiritual and then the earthly causes of all that has happened and is happening in Kosovo and Metohija today.

From these records it can be seen that today's ethnic and other inequalities in these fateful European regions isn't the consequence of natural processes or a healthy historical development. It is not independent from spiritual flows, but is rather a product of an uninterrupted chain of violence. Expulsion, abduction and destruction of the Serbian Orthodox Christian people, their holy places and their property through centuries. The extent and duration of this suppression has always stood juxtaposed in a mysterious relationship with the spirit and deeds of the faith in God and the denial of God of our own people as is the case in any other Christian nation on Earth.

The basic rule of God's as well as that of the human justice is: the crime never grows old. The bombardment of Serbia and Kosovo and Metohija, the very heart of the Serbian lands, in the year 1999 of our Lord was carried out with the intentions and inclinations of the world's centers of power to ruthlessly and at the cost of each and every crime, advocate and extort the granting of independent status to the quasi-state of "Kosova." A region almost entirely ethnically cleansed of Serbs. This very bombardment represents the very legalization of both old and new crimes and violence. With the difference that, these crimes were not committed in the name of jihad, Nazi-fascism or Bolshevism but, alas, in the name of so called human rights and democracy which have become the only benchmark and criteria of justice and righteousness in today's post-Christian world. These crimes were carried out with the help of bombs and missiles and the deceivingly and cynically called "Kosova Liberation Army," "UÇK" ("Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës" in Albanian)!

The goal of the testimonies presented in this book is to serve as an alarm clock for the consciences of this world's strongmen which have been obscured by recalcitrance and violence, so that they finally start judging and passing judgments on Kosovo and Metohija not by "bearing false witness to please either the father or the uncles, but according to the judgment of the true God!" as mother Jevrosima tells her son Marko in the Serbian epic poem.[5] And this means: according to the incorruptible justice of God and genuine humanity.

The writer of these *Chronicles* is aware of all its numerous limitations, first of all of the inevitable incompleteness of the list of the victims of pogroms and expulsions in Kosovo and Metohija from 1998/1999. The limitations of these records partly come from the conditions in which *The Chronicles* stemmed from. In the peak of the Albanian pogrom and the dodging of all the pillars the Serbian state provided for the protection, connection, sustenance, and care of her people in Kosovo and Metohija as their guardian and defender. They come partly from the conditions in which the chronicles grew after checking and updating the data that was recorded first hand during the months and years that followed. Limitations caused in part by the absance of a comprehensive and thoroughly proven and certified list of victims by the state. Limitations caused by the weakening and even broken connections with the scattered exiles whose sad everyday life we all somehow less actively worry about and whose memories we less and less care for, record and make public.

This is why the writer warmly asks for forgiveness of all those who cannot find in these records the names of their children, parents, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends who were killed. Therefore, praying for the repose of the souls of the new Kosovo sufferers, known and unknown, recorded and unrecorded here, and of those known only to God, reminds us all of David's words of God's Holy Scripture: *When I cry unto Thee, then shall mine enemies turn back* [...] *Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?... In the Book of the eternal life of the living pre-eternal God.*

ON NATO-AGGRESSION AGAINST SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO (FRY)

Records from the Period of NATO-Agression March-May, in the Year of the Lord 1999

In early February 1999, with the blessing of the Holy Archierarchical Synod, we leave for Paris together with the Bishop of Raška and Prizren and others, so that the voice of the Serbian Orthodox Church may also be heard in the negotiations and decision making on the destiny of Koso-

[5] An excerpt from the Serbian epic poem "Uroš and the Mrnjavčevići." Jevrosima is the mother of the Jugović brothers (heroes of the Battle of Kosovo), a symbol of justice, morality and Christian virtues. See the *Ballads of Marko Kraljević*, transl. by D. H. Low, Cambridge 1922: 16—*transl. note.*

vo and Metohija. The negotiations are taking place in the castle of Rambouillet known for being the place where a certain French king, Charles X, signed his abdication.

The platform approach of the Serbian Orthodox Church delegation is outlined by the Statement issued at our bishops' Conference on January 23/February 5, 1999[6] in the spirit of panhuman love of justice and our Kosovo votiveness:

a) To support and wish success to every *honest effort, both in our country and the international community for the earliest possible overcoming of ethnic conflicts in Kosovo and Metohija as an inalienable part of the Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia,* and to support the Rambouillet negotiations *hoping that God's and human justice will be administered there for all, with no difference.*

b) To ask for *the same right for all to life, the sun, bread, property, language, faith, customs, universal and creative freedom and development,* in Kosovo and Metohija, adhering to the principle of Christ "whatsoever you wouldn't want that men do to you, do not do to them either" and expecting it to be respected by everyone.

c) To ask for the respect of not just present day but also the centuries-old rights of all those who live in Kosovo and Metohija, with the special emphasis on the fact that Kosovo and Metohija is "the centuries old living center of the Serbian state and Church, the source of Serbian spirituality, culture, state-building and ecclesiastical-national self-knowledge. What Jerusalem is for the Jewish people, London for the English, Notre Dame for the French, Moscow for the Russians, that is what Peć and Prizren represent for the Serbs..."

In the Church of the Holy Apostles in the Patriarchate near Peć, in Pećko Ždrelo area, *the patriarch of Serbia is* solemnly *enthroned even today* on a humble stone throne, under the auspices of Christ the bless giver from the fresco known as "The Ancient of Days" and the icon-painted Equal-to-the-Apostles St. Sava of Serbia, the first Serbian Archbishop who is depicted standing with a big cross in his hand. Likewise, *the relics of the Serbian King Stefan Dečanski reign* miraculously even today *in the Monastery of Visoki Dečani.*

d) To emphasize the fact that it was in Kosovo *that the entire Serbian nation came into being, was and remained what it is among the other honorable nations on earth* and that without Kosovo and "the land of Serbian metochions," smaller "branch offices" and properties of that time our larger and more numerous monasteries called Metohija, *the Serbian people are turning into a faceless biological mass with no past and real future. That is why their justice and rights in Kosovo and Metohija are more complex and deeper than the rights guaranteed by constitution in today's time and space.*

To ask the world's strongmen—*what earthly power and force would give itself the right to take the memory, state, spiritual being away from the Serbian people and to endanger their destiny and the place under the sun?* And to tell them that *taking Kosovo and Metohija away from the Serbian people does not mean just depriving them of living space. It also means removing them from the book of old earthly people in which they have been inscribed by their historical presence and God's providence. This would surely happen upon separation of Kosovo and Metohija from the Serbian state and if the Patriarchate of Peć, Gračanica and Visoki Dečani, the center of their Church, was handed to the authority and management of another nation.*

e) To remind everyone that *it was under such injustice and oppression that the Serbian people and their Church lived during the Ottoman occupation for five hundred years (until 1912), which left deep wounds in their spiritual and biological organism, especially referring to their numerical presence in Kosovo and Metohija. The Nazi-fascist occupation of Kosovo and Metohija during World War II deepened these wounds. During this occupation 200 000 Serbs were expelled from Kosovo. The immigration of Albanians into the Serbian homes and the invasive violence disrupted the ethnic population. The post-war communist government legalized this violence by forbidding the expelled Serbs to return to their homes... Having been fortified by occupation, the Albanian separatism has continued its public and covert actions throughout the post-war times to the present. Thus, during this period of time, the new tens of thousands of Serbs were squeezed out of Kosovo and Metohija. It is a public secret but also an astonishing fact that it was only during the past twenty years that more than 800 settlements have been ethnically "cleansed" without a single Serbian family left in them.*

f) To tell that while the hierarchs of the Serbian Church *welcome everything that is good and well-intentioned regarding the London Contact Group conclusions, they at the same time feel it is their moral duty to express deepest worry about the fact that the Contact Group conclusions, for their main part, represent an ultimatum to Serbia and Yugoslavia, almost identical with the ultimatum of the Axis Powers from 1914. Among the sacrosanct principles of the January 29, 1999 conclusions on which the discussion in Rambouillet should be taking place, there are some that fundamentally separate Kosovo from Serbia, depriving her of her centuries-old heart and brain. These principles, in which Serbia is practically not mentioned, inevitably lead to the conclusion that it is not about a truly democratic, just and humane proposal for the solution of the Kosovo problem, but rather the partisan dictates of the powerful countries of the world... Such principles, if finally accepted, would on the international level automatically lead to a predominance of a superpower in the world and its military executor.*

Kosovo is not just the soul and destiny of the Serbian people, but it is also the name for the most important con-

[6] The author uses the dates according to the Orthodox Church (Julian) Calendar alongside the civil (Gregorian) calendar—*transl. note.*

tribution the Serbian Christian people made to Christianity and the treasure-house of the world cultural heritage and civilization. Are the Christian and other countries, on the eve of the 2000th anniversary of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ going to sacrifice the land on which these people built the biggest number of temples in the Christian East, the land to which one people and one Church have centuries-old deeds? Are they going to give away the land sealed with human bones and the blood of martyrs in exchange for the foundation of another state?...

...

In an official letter written in the name of the Serbian Orthodox Church and sent on the eve of the conference in Rambouillet by His Holiness the Serbian Patriarch Pavle to Hubert Vedrine, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, one of the plenipotentiaries of the international Contact Group and the dispensers of justice in Rambouillet, it remains written:

Your Excellency, having found out recently that on February 6, 1999, a meeting of representatives of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia , the Serbian government and Albanian representatives is going to take place in Rambouillet under the co-chairmanship of Your Excellency and Mr Robin Cook, with the purpose of overcoming the crisis in Kosovo, the southern province of Serbia, the Serbian Orthodox Church expresses her readiness to contribute to finding a lasting and just solution for all those who for centuries have been living in this area.

*It is in the vital interest of the Serbian Orthodox Church to take part in the Rambouillet meeting through her representatives, Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and Hinterland, Bishop Artemije of Raška and Prizren and their associates: hieromonk Sava from the Visoki Dečani Monastery, Momčilo Trajković (*Serbian politician from Kosovo and Metohija—*Ed.) and Dr Dušan Bataković* [renowned Serbian historian and a diplomat—*Ed.*], *since there are more than 1,300 Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries. Some of them are worldwide known: the Patriarchate of Peć (centuries-old seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church), the Monastery of Visoki Dečani, Gračanica, the Mother of God of Ljeviša, the Holy Archangels near Prizren and many others. The Orthodox Christian Serbs, members and believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church, have been living in Kosovo and Metohija for more than thousand years and would like to live there in the future, too.*

For the sake of the faithful and proper representation of these vital interests of the Serbian Church, when the Kosovo issue is being resolved, we ask and demand that the presence of our delegation be allowed at the conference in Rambouillet, in whatever status you consider feasible (even as an observer) with the right to express their views on controversial issues...

...

Sadly enough, even the government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia itself refuses to allow the Church to participate in the negotiations, and neither the strongmen of the West feel any different.

While in Kosovo and Metohija the crimes over the most unprotected ones are rapidly increasing and the blood and tears of unfortunate people do not stop shedding, Europe and America have arisen inhuman clamor enforcing the justice of their new imperialism on all the nations of the world respectively. Now it is poor Serbs' turn. They have to make them agree to this justice, not according to the judgment of the true God but the most selfish, vicious human passions, by blatantly using their tyrannical diplomacy and puppet media as their mouthpieces, with the overall satanization of the entire Serbian people. It is obvious that they consider their judgments and decisions final in advance and that they are ready to defend them by all means, with all available means of their political and economical enforcements, and if necessary, with their most sophisticated military force maces of which have long been swirling on Earth and the sky under the guise of concern for peace and human rights.

On the same occasion, His Holiness, the Serbian Patriarch Paul (Pavle) has recently received the ambassadors to Great Britain and France.

The European ambassadors indeed strive to appear oily and they emphasize: Europe and the International community would like the bloodshed in Kosovo to stop; they do not want to impose their solutions, but they do advocate that everyone gets the same rights. This applies to the Serbian people and the Serbian Church, too and everything concerning the Serbian history and the Church presence in Kosovo. They claim that their aim is to protect the Patriarchate of Peć, the monasteries and temples. The British ambassador refers to the text of the final conclusions of the Contact Group and the text of the Fundamental Human Rights Principals. They say that both of them would be satisfied, if the Church gave her statement asking both parties to make an effort to achieve and apply all this. By saying that, they add, they transmit the position of all countries striving for peace. They claim that they would especially like to protect the "religious institutions" in Kosovo. They seek the support for their efforts...

We also hear the same beautiful words in the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs in France where we are received together with Bishop Luka of Western Europe, Mr. Kosta Christitch, and Fr. Jovan Georgijevski. "The Churches are silent," notices Mr. Rouillard, one of the secretaries in the Ministry in charge of the Balkans. "It would be better for the pope or for you to speak, and not the NATO commander. It's high time the Churches started speaking..." he says explicitly.

So, everyone is seeking the word of Church, but the question is—who really listens and hears our Church? If they really do listen, wouldn't they have heard all those official statements regarding the Kosovo events the Church has been worriedly giving all this time, especially for the

past few years? Or it seems, as I think with sadness, that the Western gentlemen are not going to recognize any of this, up until the point the Serbian Church starts speaking, too from the position and using the vocabulary of NATO commanders, and by herself begins to "proactively promote new projected reality" of the Balkans, on the recognizable trace of the old conquerors...

...

Upon His Holiness return from America where he goes in the meantime, he needs to visit Paris and that would be the first historical visit of the Serbian patriarch to this city. Having arrived on the eve of St. Simeon the Myrrhbearer, the Patriarch Pavle visited St. Sava's Temple and was welcomed by the Serbs from Paris and the surrounding areas. In one of the Parisian hotels, a reception attended by many guests was held in the name of the Patriarch.

Despite all promises, the Serbian Patriarch's reception with the French president Jacque Chirac was cancelled. However, the Parisian Cardinal Lustiger did receive His Holiness. Two spiritual worlds in the personalities of the Serbian Patriarch and the Roman Catholic prelate met on the shores of the Seine. However, the Cardinal felt that the Patriarch was a true man of God, so he told him as they were departing: "You are not just a spiritual father of a nation, but also the Christ's witness in front of all people!" During the conversation, the Cardinal added one more deep thought: "Everything that gets divided becomes smaller, it's only when love is divided that there is more of it!"

Having felt the sincerity and truthfulness in these words, I think how much detrimental hatred there was through the centuries in the interference of the Roman Curia in entangling and further binding of the spiritual and political knots on the Balkans and the Russian grounds in the spirit of proselytism, on the canonical territories of the local Orthodox Christian Churches—the Serbian, Greek, Bulgarian, Romanian and Russian...

...

The reception organized by the Patriarch was held on the eve of St. Simeon the Myrrhbearer, January 31/February 13. Besides other guests and Orthodox Christian bishops, the old French general Gallois also attended the reception. The old man greets the Patriarch, saying among other things this, too: "The Serbs are fighting in Kosovo not just for themselves but also for the dignity and morality of Europe, for the dignity and morality of the real France!" We understood the old general very well: he meant *the* Europe and *the* France which do not exist anymore neither in everyday life, nor on the international scene and which, thanks to the literary giants Lamartine and Victor Hugo, knew what it meant "when the Albanian whirlwind swoops down from the mountains" and barge into the Serbian forests and homes—then "the screams come out of there"... It was for this kind of Europe that the libertarian history of the Serbian people was the object of admiration being a centuries-old "poem in creation" which is not written, but sung. Thus, "it was pleasant for their best sons to dwell at the foot of this oak which, lake France, sings about its freedom" and it was for this reason that their heart was moved by the wounds of the Serbian martyrs...

...

All conversations and greetings revolve around Rambouillet and Kosovo. The Patriarch gives an exclusive interview with *Le Figaro*: "If the Serbs disappear from Kosovo, the holy places will disappear, too," someone would say. Indeed, the abandoned holy places are going to dilapidate on their own. De-divinized Albanians are not going to take care neither of their own sanctuaries, let alone someone else's...In this way, all those "multi-culti" stories about multiethnic, multicultural and multi-confessional Kosovo would prove to be empty phrases and phantasms of the Euro-Atlantic illusionists."

...

In Paris, these days of February and Rambouillet, there are also some Serbian political leaders: President Milan Milutinović and other official representatives of the Serbian state, as well as some opposition politicians such as Vuk Drašković, Milan Komnenić... It can be felt in the air that these are crucial days for the Serbian people, especially for Kosovo and Metohija. By observing all these people participating in the "negotiations," who the negotiators and the intermediaries are, everything that is being asked from the Serbs and all that is being stated publicly and confidentially, especially by some arrogant European diplomats, such as the statement on behalf of the United Kingdom Minister of Foreign Affairs, Robin Cook: "The Albanians have to sign the imposed agreement, otherwise *the NATO alliance won't be able to bomb the Serbs* , or the one by a high-ranking OSCE official whose name I cannot recall—"All this in Kosovo is not the conflict between the Serbs and Albanians but that between Wall Street and Byzantium," the following postwar quotation by professor Radoslav Grujić inevitably comes to mind: "There have neither existed bigger times nor smaller people than these!"

...

On February 10/23, on St. Haralambos Day, after the partial Rambouillet agreement between the Serbian government and the Kosovo Albanians, I gave a statement for the Radio Svetigora in Cetinje. As to the question: "Is it the same to lose in Kosovo or to lose Kosovo?" Among other things I said:

I do not know on what basis some people believe that Montenegro is not interested in Kosovo, that it does not belong to her. However, if we renounce Kosovo, we will also have to renounce all those Obilić medals[7] *of our ancestors as the highest award in the Kingdom of Montenegro, as well as*

[7] Medal for bravery with the figure of Miloš Obilić, the Serbian medieval knight who is considered a symbol of courage and honor, killed by Ottomans during the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 after having previously cut open the Ottoman Sultan Murad I—*transl. note.*

Holy Prince Lazar (1329–1389),
an icon painted after 1667 in the monastery of Hilandar

Miloš and King Nikola, his politics and everything that ever happened in Montenegro, without going further in the past, to name but the last and the first half of this century. We mustn't forget that a lot of blood of the Montenegrin champions was shed for the liberation of Kosovo and Metohija in the beginning of the century.

We must not forget that Metohija belonged to Montenegro up until 1945 according to the Bucharest Treaty from 1913 which is still valid, not to mention that many people who live there are originally from—here. It would be shameful for Montenegro to forget her historical choices, to forget Kosovo as a covenant, as her cosmic and historical choice, to forget her blood spilled for the liberation of Kosovo, to forget her people living together with our natives in Kosovo, and to do all this either out of fear of some strongmen of this world, or out of some trivial interests, opportunism or any other reason.

We always have to fight for Kosovo within ourselves. We have to acquire Kosovo, gain it, embrace it and defend it within ourselves. Any neutrality regarding Kosovo has never been a trait of either Montenegro or Montenegrins. It is crystal clear to anyone who has even remotely dealt with the history of Montenegro. Therefore, Montenegro mustn't renounce Kosovo today, either.

After all, one thing is important: Montenegro has never betrayed her brother. Betraying, leaving Serbia in the lurch today and washing hands in the blood being shed there like Pilate in order to protect ourselves, does neither suit these people nor the Montenegrin hills.

The Beginning of the NATO Aggression on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

The Rambouillet agreement was created by the Euro-Atlantic dictate which the Albanians signed while the Serbs rejected because it asked for the absolute power of NATO on the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as well as the free and unlimited provision of all types of services to the NATO troops. It also asked for attending all kinds of NATO's needs including the changing of the existing infrastructure, granting the immunity to any NATO staff member from arrest, investigation and trial for eventual misdeeds in the courts of the FRY and giving NATO the authority to arrest individuals in its sole discretion. What the Rambouillet agreement was for was seen on St. Sophronius of Jerusalem's Day, March 11/24.

Was it just a coincidence that the vicious bombardment of Serbia and Montenegro, especially of Kosovo and Metohija started on the very day when the United Kingdom imposed direct rule over Northern Ireland in 1972 and on the World Tuberculosis Day? For the umpteenth time in the 20th century, the bombs started falling again from the same West European direction on the country and people from whose side, never ever not even a single bomb flew to the opposite direction.

It happened on the eve of the 50th anniversary of NATO which celebrated the 50th year of its existence working, so to say—with the aggression on the sovereign country the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) under the pretext of "preventing a humanitarian disaster" of the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija, violating the UN Charter, but also their own Act of Creation, which half a century earlier defined UN as a *Defensive* Alliance. As it is emphasized in the official statements, "the attack was carried out without the permission of the UN Security Council, contrary to the Helsinki Document on European Security and the constitutions of some NATO member states."

It also happened in the year in which on July 15/28, 900 years since the liberation of the Holy City of Jerusalem from the Muslim hands in the First Crusade of the united Western noble armies with the blessing of the Roman Pope Urban II, the launcher of the Crusades, "Holy Wars," would fall.

It happened, above all, in the eve of the year 2000 since the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

…

On March 10/23, the feast day of the Holy Martyr Quadratus of Corinth, the Holy Archierarchical Synod of the Serbian Church, issues the following press release after the assembly held in the Patriarchate of Belgrade:

Human experience, both old and new and most recently in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, shows that war and violence, particularly inter-ethnic, leaves in its wake only chaos and general misery, with long-lasting spiritual, moral and social consequences and unhealed wounds. Aware of this, in the name of God we demand and beseech that all conflict in Kosovo and Metohija immediately cease, and that the problems there be resolved exclusively by peaceful and political means. The way of non-violence and cooperation is the only way blessed by God in agreement with human and divine moral law and experience.

Deeply concerned about the threatened Serbian cradle of Kosovo and Metohija and for all those who live there, and especially by the terrible threats of the world's armed forces to bomb our Homeland, we would remind the responsible leaders of the international organizations that evil in Kosovo or anywhere else cannot be uprooted by even greater and more immoral evil; the bombing of one small but honorable European people. We cannot believe that the international organizations have become so incapable of devising ways for negotiation and human agreement that they must resort to ways which are dark and demeaning to human and national honor, ways which employ great violence in order to prevent a lesser evil and violence.

We pray the Lord of peace, the living and true God, in whose hands are judgment and justice, to give to all in Kosovo and Metohija, and throughout our Homeland and throughout the world, peace, justice, security in freedom, and to the powerful of the world understanding and wisdom.

…

On the first night of bombing, on March 11/24, the Bishop of Raška and Prizren gives the following statement to the Radio Svetigora:

May the Lord help all those who are threatened in these difficult times. I've visited many places in the world everywhere saying that the problem of Kosovo and Metohija cannot be solved by the use of force but by peaceful means, negotiations and dialogues. Unfortunately, I was able to speak anywhere, but in Belgrade, the place where it was most necessary for me to speak. This has been expected for a long time now considering the politics coming from Belgrade and the situation developments here in Kosovo and Metohija.

Since common sense hasn't prevailed, we came to the point of expecting to be showered by bombs.

May God protect all of us and divert the evil intentions of those who govern and those who threaten these people. Our only hope is the hope in God that this is not going to last long and that the consequences of this attack will have limited effects on both people and the army.

…

On March 25, the feast day of Sts. Procopius the Decapolite and Theodore of Komogovo, His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia, sent the following letter to the Serbian Patriarch and his people:

Your Holiness, beloved in the Lord brother and concelebrant at the altar of God!

It was with a deep pain of heart that the whole Russian Orthodox Church received the news on the bombing of the territory of the Republic of Yugoslavia fraternal to the Russian Orthodox people. The blood of peaceful people is being shed on the much-suffered Serbian land again, and the most unprotected, old people, women and children are perishing. The brutal military force is destroying dwelling houses, industrial objects and monuments of culture which have been carefully preserved by the Serbian people. In spite of the protests of many sensible people, the rude pragmatism of the NATO military politicians prevailed over the responsible good sense and patient and painstaking diplomatic work for the peaceful solution of the Kosovo problem. Yet the believing heart knows that the blood of the innocent victims cries to God and that God is never mocked. No good objectives can be achieved through evil means!

Kosovo for the Orthodox Serbs is not only a geographical object on the map, but the sacred place of their forefathers and the land of old churches and monasteries which have intransient spiritual and cultural importance. The Russian Orthodox Church is in profound sympathy with the position of the fraternal Serbian Orthodox Church's authorities on the inadmissibility of solving the problem of Kosovo through NATO military means, as this conflict is not just a territorial one. A significant role in the just solution of the conflict must be played by a thoughtful evaluation of the national, religious, ethnic, psychological and spiritual factors of the confrontation in Kosovo. We are saddened by the fact that these circumstances are not always taken into consideration in the process of negotiations and that immediate political objectives sometimes have priority over justice and adherence to the truth of God.

Your Holiness! On behalf of the whole Russian Orthodox Church I state our fraternal support and our love to you and to the whole Serbian Orthodox Church. Our archpastors and pastors, the monastics and laymen, all Orthodox Christians of the Russian Church join in their prayers to the Lord for the suffering Serbian brothers and sisters and for all innocent sufferers in the Serbian land. We offer up our prayers for the intercession to the Protectress of Christendom, our Most Holy Lady and the Mother of God and to all saints, so that the Almighty God in his righteous judgement and ineffable mercy takes away sorrow from the Serbian land and we can 'walk before the Lord in the land of the living' (Ps.116:9).

It is with all my heart that I ask Your Holiness to convey to the suffering flock of the Serbian Orthodox Church our support, love and the firm faith in that the long-awaited peace will reign in your Fatherland through the efforts of all

sensible people and we can jubilantly say the words of the Prophet Isaiah: 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation' (Is. 25:9).

…

May it be remembered—on Saint Sava's Day, the U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright (who grew up in Belgrade, near Tasmaidan Park, as a child of a Jew, a Czech diplomat) issues from Saudi Arabia a "plan for a quick solution to the Kosovo crisis," assessing it soon after as "the best way to end the humanitarian catastrophe" in Kosovo. The American president, Bill Clinton calls "the Serbian offensive on the Kosovo Albanians" a "moral imperative" and adds: "We act to prevent a wider war, to diffuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results!…"

Bill Clinton in his addressing the nation on TV announces that the launched NATO attacks have three goals: "First to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's opposition to the Serbian "aggression" in Kosovo (!?) and its support for peace. Second, to deter president Milošević from attacking helpless civilians, and third—to damage Serbia's capacity to wage war in the future!"

…

The Euro-Atlantic act of dismembering the Serbian state and the attempt of uprooting the Serbian people from their own spiritual and historical heritage, experience and their own very territory at the end of the 20th century are called: "The Roots."

The joint bombing campaign of the Euro-Atlantic aggressors on the Serbian people and their civilian and military objects, started on March 11/24, 1999, under the codename "Operation Allied Force," in the minds of the American Pentagon symbolically called "Merciful Angel," with a reserved variation "Noble Anvil" (Angel Anvil!) by which its planners and executors would gradually change the actual war name, writing their "politically correct" history, in order to cover the cynicism of their hunger for conquest, read in the name of this offensive NATO operation. Instead of the devastating operation of the "merciful or noble angel" whose real nature can be seen according to the fruits of its destruction, the European children will certainly be learning about the humane Euro-Atlantic "anvil," on which at the end of the 20th century the nobility and sublimity of the new world order were tempered and in whose foundation even more than 2500 Serbian heads were inbuilt, these being mainly civilian victims, sacrificed on the altar of the new (and up to now most sophisticated) Euro-Atlantic idolatry.

As someone accurately counted, in 1999 Serbia was attacked by the united Euro-American NATO member states—USA, Britain, France, Germany, Canada, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Turkey, Norway, Portugal, Iceland, Greece, Luxemburg, Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary. These state-aggressors were helped by the associate NATO members, countries-accomplices: Romania, Bulgaria, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovakia. The countries that directly attacked Serbia were 228 times larger than her. They had 67 times more numerous population and were 518 times richer then her (their national income was as many times higher). It was, according to some, the most unequal armed conflict ever seen in the history of Europe, and perhaps the world since the Persian attack on ancient Greece! More than 2,500 men, women and children lost their lives in it from the bombs of the NATO aggressors in Serbia and Montenegro.

…

It is also worth remembering that this total war was prepared by multi-year mass media campaign of satanization of Serbian people, unseen in Europe since the Hitler times, which was only intensified in the months prior to the NATO aggression. Both Europe and America buzzed from the most incredible chauvinistic and racist statements coming from their officials:

"The Serbs, are two-dimensional people with a craving for simplicity… Animals make use of their resources with far greater felicity than these retorted creatures, whose subscription to the human race is well in arrears" (Peter Ustinov, actor, UNESCO ambassador, *the European,* June 10, 1993).

"The Serbs are people with no laws and without faith. They are bandits and terrorists. (President of France, Jacques Chirac's statement at lunch on the occasion of the meeting of EU member states' heads of state and government).

"I suggest that they forbid the learning of Serbian epic poetry to the Serbian children in their schools" (Prof. Dr. Rolf-Dieter Kluge, director of the Slavic Seminar, University Tübingen, at a roundtable at the University of Tübingen, 1997).

"Let us bomb the Serbs and remain calm, as they will soon forget all about it" (Jamie Shea, NATO spokesman, March 1999).

"It was high time to attack Yugoslavia. I hope it's not too late" (Günter Grass, German Nobel prize winner, two days after the beginning of the bombardment, at the Opening of the Book Fair in Leipzig, March 26, 1999).

"The Serbs will be down on their knees begging for mercy… They will back down after two, three slaps like any other schoolyard bully" (Madeleine Albright, American Secretary of State, during the first days of bombardment).

"NATO-Deserbizator" (discriminatory anti-Serbian commercial for an anti vermin spray, Canal Plus, French TV, program "The Horizons," April 1999).

"Serbia is the heart of European darkness, a region of bombed mosques, killed men and children of raped girls… The Serbs carry out terrorist attacks and rape Albanian children… The Serbs will pay a high price for this" (Bill Clinton's speech at the 50th NATO Anniversary in Washington, April 23–25, 1999 and before that).

"The war against Serbia isn't just a military conflict anymore. It is a battle between good and evil; between civiliza-

tion and barbarity" *(Tony Blair, British Prime Minister, during the NATO aggression against Serbia, 1999).*

...

Despite the general propagandist uproar there were also the statements of others, those brave sons of still living Christian Europe, even of heterodox Asia, which powerfully and clearly echoed the world and which all of us remember well:

"In the Balkan tragedy there is already a loser—Europe. It's impossible for an alliance created to defend, to start an undisclosed war, bomb for the sake of bombing and all this in front of the helpless European politicians and indifferent Europeans who even lack the ability to be disgusted" (José Saramago, Portuguese author).

"US foreign policy could be best defined as follows: kiss my arse or I'll kick your head in. Milošević refused to do it, so Clinton is kicking in the head of the Serbian people (not Milošević himself) with catastrophic con-sequences for everyone in Kosovo. The justification for the action—"humanitarian considerations"—is clearly a very bad joke. It also demonstrates a profound hypocrisy on the part of the US and UK... When the bomb went off in Old Compton Street, Mr Blair described it as a barbaric act. When cluster bombs go off in Serbian marketplaces, cutting children into pieces, we are told that such an act is being taken on behalf of 'civilization against barbarism'. I'd certainly say I consider Clinton and Blair mass murders. The true danger to world peace is not former Yugoslavia, but the United States" (*Harold Pinter, British playwright).*

"Mars, the Roman god of war, is attacking as of March 24th Serbia and Montenegro... Yugoslavia is the fatherland of all those who have not become Martians or green butchers... There is not a people in Europe in this century which has had to endure what the Serbs have had to put up with for five, or more, eight, years. There are no categories for this. There are categories and concepts for the Jews.You can talk about that. But this with the Serbs is a tragedy for no reason, a scandal (Peter Handke).[8]

*By this war the signal is being sent out that none may dare bring into doubt the apparent view the Americans are the only planetary force. In reality of the unleashed war America only confirms the credibility of her notions on the future: it has to belong to America. In the war against Serbs not only does America test the weapons using live targets and checks out the promptness of their command headquarters, but also examines the psyche of the people, what exactly is necessary so that their behavior, feelings and thoughts mold to such an extent that many are ready to accept the invitation of the English tabloid newspaper,"the Sun": "Shoot them [*the Serbs*] like dogs!" American war against Serbs is an obvious and clearly revealed indication of what an everyday life and normality in the 21st century will be like: "Madness," says Shakespeare, "commands the reason: You are going to serve me!"* (Karel Kosik, Czech philosopher).

...

Throughout the aggression there came a prayerful and any other support from the sister Orthodox Churches through Peter the Patriarch of Alexandria, Alexei the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Bartholomew the Patriarch of Constantinople, Christodoulos the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, Archbishop Spyridon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America, Orthodox bishops of Germany, Metropolitan Jeremy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in his capacity as chairman of the Conference of European Churches and some bishops of other Churches.

On St. Apostle Aristovoulos' Day, March 16/29, the Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Church, under the chairmanship of Archbishop Christodoulos, expressed in a special address *"a sorrow because of the military attacks on the Serbs, a heroic and glorious Christian people, on Yugoslavia, a sovereign European state, as well as a condemnation of the tragic consequences of the bombing in terms of loss of human lives and great destruction of material assets."* The Greek Synod *"decided to express astonishment for the great and powerful world forces, despite many tragic experiences during this century, haven't understood yet that justice cannot be imposed by force and selectively... History has its own laws and those who violate them get punished by God..."*

The Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew *"in the name of God who loves mankind, in the name of the humankind, in the name of civilization, in the period of religious feast days... (the Christian Easter and Jewish Passover) on his knees, from the wounded depths of his heart"* fervently urged *"the whole world—heads of states, military commanders and armed forces throughout the world to immediately and permanently cease the fire"* asking them to *"resort to mutual understanding and mutual concessions for peaceful resolutions of their regional, international and worldwide sowed debates, so that God's peace and mercy take over."*

The Patriarch of Russia Alexei and Archbishop Spyridon personally address President Bill Clinton in separate letters asking him to stop the bloodshed, because *"suppressing the will of a nation will not lead to true peace, but will instead create a risk of the multiple expansion and extension of the conflict"* (Patriarch Alexei). During Patriarch Alexei's visit to Belgrade on Bright Monday, April 6/19, 1999 while

[8] During the Rambouillet negotiations, right before the attack, this highly respected European author promised that "his place would be in Serbia, if the NATO criminals bomb" and he did fulfill his promise by coming many times to Serbia afterwards. He is going to stay remembered for these and many other brave words and deeds by which he witnessed his respect and love for the suffering Serbian people in former Yugoslavia, despite the official pan-European animosity. Among others, we remember Peter Padke's following statement from 2007 regarding Europe's recognition as a second Albanian state of "Kosova," the brutally abducted and separated land: *"Having recognized the Albanian state in Kosovo, the western rogues, who previously bombed the Serbian lands, accepted a typical rogue state into their camp. With a single lethal blow the West abducted the Serbian own fatherland from the Serbs transforming them into prisoners and refugees in their own country. By recognizing the Albanian state our honorable Europe has lost her heart!..."*

giving an icon of St. Seraphim of Sarov with a particle from the saint's relics to His Holiness Patriarch Paul of Serbia, in his address to the suffering Serbian Church and people in St. Sava's Temple in VBelgrade, he most openly said:"

Pascha has come again to the holy land of Serbia. Recently we have heard again in churches the much-repeated words of St. John Chrysostom: "Let no one fear death, for the Savior's death has set us free." Indelible is our joy in the Risen Christ Who, by defeating death and sin, has granted us eternal life. Nothing can cloud this joy, even the suffering and destruction raging around, even the orgy of sin started by the ill will on the eve of the holy days and continued up to the present.

Yes, we have become witnesses to an action of glaring lawlessness as a handful of powerful and rich countries, who dare consider themselves the measure of good and evil, is trampling upon the will of the people who wish to live differently. Bomb and missile are pouring down on this land not because they seek to defend anyone. The NATO military action has a different goal—the goal to destroy the post-war order which was paid for by a severe bloodshed and to impose upon people an order alien to them and based on the dictate of brute force.

Injustice and hypocrisy, however, will never win. Indeed, according to an old saying, "God is not in power, but in truth." The power of the adversary may exceed yours, but on your side, my dear ones, is God's help and the meaning of all the historical lessons. Let us remember the most vivid of them—the lessons of World War II.

Let us also remember the words of the Lord: "When I am week, then I am strong"!…"You will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy". St. Seraphim said: "Seek the spirit of peace, and many thousands around you will be saved." By his holy prayers, may God grant peace and accord to these much-suffering people!…

It was true and beautiful what the main hero said in Ljubomir Simović's play "The Battle of Kosovo," written in the eve of the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo:

"I do not decide whether I'll go into the battle based on the power of the force that threatens me, but depending on the holiness of the sanctuary I defend."

For the defense of the greatest God's sanctuary, the Christians wage a martyric fight even against the most powerful opponents, but only if they have faith and the Christian humanity, even if it was as big as a grain of mustard seed.

The Capitulation—After the Most Merciless Bombardment

May 19–21/June 1–3, 1999, Holy Priest-martyr Patricius, Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Emperor Constantine and Helen, St. Demetrius of the Don, St. Helena of Dečani

These are the days of the most merciless bombardment of Kosovo and Metohija alone and the actual capitulation of the president Slobodan Milošević and his state, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), under the pressure of America and the European Union, whose dictate is transmitted to him by a well known Albanian lobbyist, former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, and a Russian, Viktor Chernomyrdin who is said to be more inclined to pursue Western interests rather than those of Russia, let alone the interests of Serbia. Under the threat of a ground invasion and even more brutal destruction, the helpless president agrees to everything… He accepts the outline of the Euro-American Peace Plan which needs to be transformed into a document of the UN Security Council.

Kosovo Falls in Kumanovo in the Year of the Lord 1999

May 27/June 9, 1999, Holy Hieromartyr Therapontes of Sardis, St. John the Russian, the Confessor of Prokopi

On October 23–24/November 6–7, 1912 Kosovo and Metohija were liberated in the Battle of Kumanovo. On the eve of the 87th anniversary since the liberation and in the spirit of revanchist annullation of the Serbian history, the authorized generals of the Yugoslav Army sign the Military Technical Agreement with NATO on the complete withdrawal of the Yugoslav army and police from Kosovo and Metohija in the Hotel Europe in this very Kumanovo. The 79 days of bombardment, thousands of innocent victims, killed, crippled or made homeless, and all the hell produced by it, will remain written in the Serbian soul with indelible letters of nationwide suffering, but also in the historic memory of Europe. Sometime ago, since Kosovo was revenged in the Battle of Kumanovo, people used to say: "For Kosovo-Kumanovo!" After the June 1999 Kumanovo agreement with the Western Military Alliance, they started saying: "In Kumanovo—Kosovo!"

Desperate Processions Move to the North

May 28/June 10, 1999, St. Nicetas the Confessor, All Venerable and Godbearing Anthonite Fathers

It is the end of the bombardment and the eleven—month—long Euro-American aggression on the Serbian people. As of June 10, 1999, our army and police already start their withdrawal according to the agreement, followed by beheaded [Serbian] people from all over Kosovo. In the dawn, the joint Euro-American army under the name KFOR entered Kosovo and Metohija from Macedonia and arrived in Priština in no time. The Americans, Germans, English and French stepped first into the Kosovo and Metohija's land.

Having ravaged and poisoned the holy land of Kosovo and Metohija for months and having devastated the whole Serbia, now the furious black NATO birds storm to snatch up and seize Kosovo and Metohija with their iron feast and sweep away the Serbian heads and traces from it together with the pogrom blows of "UÇK-kidnappers," the Albanian terrorist organization members, the butchers and slaugh-

His Holiness the Archbishop of Peć, Metropolitan of Belgrade and Karlovci, Serbian Patriarch, Pavle (Paul) with the Bishops serving the Divine Liturgy in Gračanica on Vidovdan 15/28 June 1999 and holding memorial services at Gazimestan

ters known as UÇK. Desperate processions of the Serbian homeless people are moving north again.

…

Clinton triumphantly announces to the American nation: "My fellow Americans, tonight for the first time in 79 days, the skies over Yugoslavia are silent. The one million men, women, and children driven from their land[9] are preparing to return home… We have achieved a victory for a safer world, for our democratic values, and for a stronger America!… America still faces great challenges in this world, but we look forward to meeting them. So, tonight I ask you to be proud of your country and very proud of the men and women who serve it in uniform. For in Kosovo, we did the right thing; we did it the right way; and we will finish the job. Good night, and may God bless our wonderful United States of America."

Endless Refugee Processions and Damjan's New Zelenko[10]

May 31/June 13, 1999, Holy Apostle Hermas and Martyr Hermias

I arrive with the patriarch's blessing in Kosovo via Kosovska Mitrovica. In Mitrovica—havoc and ruins. The French KFOR already got hold of the city and settled there. Many Western journalists go around the city. As if they already forgot the recent bombing campaigns of their governments, they ask questions: "Who's ruined all this? Whence is this much havoc?" "The war" I say, "is brother to no one," being stunned by the chaos I encounter…

We continue our trip to Priština. We pass by the columns of tanks and our army which leaves Kosovo. In the Ibar valley we encounter many men, women, children, cars but also ox carts and wagons of sad, poor people loaded with necessities. These are terrified people from Kosovo and Metohija who leave their centuries-old homes. It is unknown whether they are ever going to return. By the road there is a herd of abandoned cows with milk-engorged udders: there are no more homemaker to milk them…

Four years before this, back in 1995, I happened to see the same endless procession on its way from Serbian Krajina, via Martin Brod, Drvar, Banja Luka and Derventa to Serbia. I asked one peasant who left with his flock of sheep over the hills past by Martin Brod: "Where are you going, old man?" As he was gathering the sheep, he peacefully replied: "To Serbia, father!" As if Serbia was somewhere there, behind the first grove. I have never found out whatever happened to him and his treasure. Did he arrive at least to Mrkonjić Grad? Did the army buy his sheep in exchange for food as I once asked an officer to do? Not even the old man alone could have reached far, let alone his sheep…

There is a horse trotting by the road we are driving to Priština. He has obviously lost its owner, and frightened by all this that is happening, he is going to an unknown direction following the carriage-road. His mane is waiving in the wind. His trot is solemn and dignified. I wonder: how long will he be able to follow the car wheels? I keep looking back as the car moves away… Zelenko fades in the distance with no intention of giving up… Even today this horse stands before my eyes as something I rarely had a chance to see in my life.

We passed Priština where the British troops already stationed. Steel predators of the new conquistadors of the new post-Christian millennium tear up the wide Kosovo sky and its silence with their propellers and thunder. We arrive in Gračanica and spend the night there, only to return to Mitrovica the next morning and from there to leave for the Patriarchate of Peć.

I constantly peer alongside the road, hoping to spot *Zelenko* somewhere. While the tanks keep coming and the army and people are in great haste toward the Ibar valley, just a little bit further away from the place where I spotted *Zelenko* yesterday, I see him laying down, scared and already dead, his limbs stiff and outstretched, tilted to the sky, already the prey to worms and ravens… I wonder: "Didn't a

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[9] To a great extent by an elaborate foreign propagandist scenario!—*Ed.*

[10] Zelenko – legendary horse of Damjan Jugović, one of the Serbian heros from the Battle of Kosovo in 1389—*transl. note.*

Peć, July 19, 1999. **In the village of Opraška, Radisav-Raka Milovanović was found decapitated**, with his chest decomposed, while his waist and legs were in a state of decay. Hieromonk David Perović buried him in the vineyard.

new Damjan's Zelenko show up in Kosovo, like the one from the poem on Mother Jugović, into whose lap the ravens cast her dead son's hand plucked away in Kosovo..."

...

A famous Priština journalist and publicist, Mirko Čupić, has a poem called "The Poplars" which exudes the similar sorrow a man cannot help but feel in his very bones amid this Serbian disorder and defeat:

Stojanović Sveto from Ljubište,
a beautiful village near Vitina,
sowed sixty poplars,
to decorate his property.

At every dawn and when the sun sets,
He would water them with fresh water,
talking to them all day long,
caressing them with his hand.

He protected them from frost and fire,
Fostering them as if they were children,
So that they become high and slim.
There were no such beautiful poplars anywhere else!

Slim, white, high and vivid,
They were truly impeccable.
They were more beautiful each day.
At dawn they would wash their faces with the dew.

One morning, just before sunrise,
Svetozar came to his property.
His poplars were chopped down.
A pain and horror froze his veins!

And he died from sorrow and pain,
Because of the slaughter of his sixty poplars.
The next day they buried him amid mourning
making a cross for him from one of his poplar trees!

NATO Occupation of Old Serbia June 1999

IN PEĆ, AT THE FOOT OF PROKLETIJE MOUNTAINS, A PRAYER BEFORE THE ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD OF PEĆ

June 1/14, 1999, Martyr Justin the Philosopher et al., venerable John of Kronstadt, and venerable Justin the New of Ćelije

I arrive in the Patriarchate of Peć. There is fear above the city of Peć and the surroundings, at the foot of Prokletije Mountains. There is chaos and havoc in the city. The Albanians are just arriving; the remaining Serbs are trying to find protection at the Italians whose command is located in the former beer factory. The people huddle outside the gates, no one speaks Italian. I arrive asking the soldiers to take me to their commander, General Del Vecchio. The General receives me kindly, obligingly. He does not know anything about the city himself. I explain to him that it is the Patriarchate of Peć that needs to be protected first, as well as the Metropolitanate and the Parochial house in the very city. I know there is a museum somewhere there, too but where exactly—that I don't know. I mention the Budisavci and Gorioč Monasteries.

"We came for peace and conciliation," the General says. "We'll do everything to protect the people!..." I have met him several times before in the Hotel Metohija in the city of Peć and in the Patriarchate near by. That day we already heard about kidnappings and murders [of the Serbs].

...

Having arrived in the Patriarchate, I find it in the state of emergency. The Serbs already started fleeing. Djakovica is feverishly becoming empty, as well as her surrounding villages, the very city of Peć and her suburbs. Belo Polje is empty. Goraždevac still hangs in, but a certain number of people started running away even from there, as well as from other villages from this side of the Bistrica of Peć—Ljevoša, Siga, Brestovik... Near Uroševac, the local Albanians shoot refugees in retreat. They attack the village of Slovinje near Priština...

The nuns themselves being frightened already loaded a truck with the necessities in the monastery backyard of the Patriarchate of Peć. Mother Abbess Fevronija was against it, but she could not resist the younger nuns. To her joy, all this was stopped by Patriarch Pavle who gave me the blessing to come to this centuries-old seat of the Serbian patriarchs and by my arrival. Not only that such Patriarch's blessing turned out to be beneficial for the monastery, but also, as it happened many other times in the past, for many people who would find refuge here especially till St. Vitus Day. In the last quarter of the 14th century, during the time of the Holy King Milutin and before the invasion of the Asiatic hordes, the seat of the Serbian archbishops was moved here as this monastery used to be a *metochion* of the Monastery of Žiča. Being an endowment of the Serbian archbishops and patriarchs, the Patriarchate stands under a wondrous

protection of the Mother of God of Peć, *most-glorious hope of Orthodox Christians, protectress and deliveress of the Cross-bearing Serbian people by Whom the entire world gets saved*, and under her wonderworking icon which St. Sava, the first Serbian archbishop, brought as a blessing to his Church and his people from the Holy Land and the Holy City of Jerusalem, as it says in the Akathist hymn to the Most Holy Mother of God of Peć, which has been continuously read here for centuries. Today, as before, being in the new national troubles we, too, pray to the Mother of God of Peć under the arches of her Monastery:

O, All-pure Virgin, All-blessed Lady, Most Holy Theotokos, Queen of Heaven and Earth, Mother of God Most High, falling down before Thy honorable icon with fear and faith we pray to Thee as our protectress and patroness: accept, o merciful-one, our supplications and cover us with Thy honorable omophorion, as Thou art a helper of all Christians. Entreat Thy Son, our Lord God Jesus Christ, to protect Thy monastery and all Thy faithful children who venerate Thy most pure icon and cry unto Thee: O, All-merciful Lady Theotokos, deliver all those who praying to Thee with faith and love from sinful falls, all temptations, dangers and a sudden death! Grant all of us a humble spirit, contrite heart, chastity of soul and body, correction from sins, repentance, humble-mindedness and release us from all our sins, so that we may celebrate Thy coming in joy, become worthy of Kingdom of Heaven, and with all the Saints praise the honorable and majestic Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O, Most-dear Queen, our hope, accept this hymn of praise from us, Thy unworthy servants, and help us the helpless ones, as we do not have any other help or protection except for Thee, Most-merciful Mother of the King and Lord of all creation, Virgin Mary: enlighten us, protect and save rightbelieving Orthodox emperors, kings and princes! O, Lady, save and have mercy on Orthodox patriarchs, most reverend metropolitans, archbishops and bishops, and all the priestly and monastic order and all Orthodox Christians! Establish the true faith, deliver all of us from falls and sins, and protect from the cunning attacks of the evil one. O, Most-gentle Lady, Virgin, Queen, Theotokos, hear our prayers and entreat Thy Son and our God to save Thy servants who come to venerate Thy wonderworking icon and offer gifts to Thy Holy icon and the Divine Child Whom Thee hold in Thy hands. This icon was painted by Luke the Evangelist so that we may joyously and thankfully glorify the Holy Trinity, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen. O, Most-blessed and full of God's grace, Mother, protectress and interceder, Virgin Mary, accept our fervent prayers we offer to Thee and hear the prayers of the Serbian Saints who pleased Thy son and our God, Lord Savior Jesus Christ who stand before the throne of Most High and are an ornament of this Monastery of the Serbian Patriarchate and a glory of the right-believing Serbs in front of God. And these are: St. Sava, Arsenius, Sava the Second, Nicodemus, Ephraim, Danilo, Eustathius, Gregory, Maxim, Spiridon, Jakov, Joanikius, Sava the Third, Nikon and Cyril the Merciful… Take a merciful look at the prayers of St. Simeon the Myrrhbearer, Steven the First-crowned, Vladislav, Teoctist, Milutin, Stefan Dečanski, Uroš the Young, Lazar the Great Martyr, and Vladimir; all-laudable queens, princesses and despotesses: Ana, Anastasia, Hellen and Angelina; Sts. Gregory, Stefan, Maxim, Jovan of Ryla, Gabriel of Lesnovo, Ilarion of Osogovo, Hilarion of Meglina, Euthimius, Nestor, Basil of Zahumlje and Peter of Cetinje…

O, all-graceful Mother, beseech Thy Son to save our people from every evil harm! Save all of us in the Orthodox faith faithfully kept by our forefathers! Save us from infectious decay of good minds, deliver us from every danger and persecutors who pounce on us ! Grant all of us peace, unity, love and hope which protects us from despondency and despair!… Do not deprive us of hope, preserve love and faith which save our souls in all storms of life! Have mercy on all of us who pray to Thee before Thy wonderworking icon and save our souls. Amen!

…

The news on the killed and kidnapped:

28/9th of May—10/11th of June—*Krunoslav Jovanović* from Priština was kidnapeed in the water supply company called "Batlava." In Kosovo Polje, *an eleven year old girl, Danijela Stanojević*, the daughter of a "Yumko" employee , Dušanka, was kidnapped from home as well as *Dane Svilar* (48 y.o.), the son of Teodor. Dušanka Stanojević left for work and as usual left her children locked at home. When she returned, Danijela was not there any longer and her younger brothers could not say anything about their sister. Then, an Albanian neighbor came and threatened Dušanka she would stay without her sons, too, unless she moved to Serbia.

In Gnjilane, *Velimir Arsić* and *Branko Aksić* were killed, in Brnjaca—*Nikola Bjegović* (49), the son of Jovan, in Staro Rujce—*Vojimir Zivić* (72), the son of Ljuba, in Kačanik—*Stojmen Dimitrijevski* (68). A Serbian soldier *Ilija Ilić* (48), the son of Stanislav, was found murdered in Manastirica, in Miljaj—a soldier *Radovan Stefanović* (22), the son of Milorad. It has been reported that the following persons are missing: *Krunoslav Josanović* (62) from Orlan, *Stanislav Marković* (72) from Mušutište, *Krstana Stefanović* (62), *Ljubiša Nedeljković* (43) and *Leposava Nedeljković* (47) from 3 Devet Jugovića Street in Suva Reka. In Osek Hilja, *Milorad Radovanović* (60) and his wife *Zorka* (54) were killed. In Dvorane, *the Ristić family* was killed as well as *Lazar Nišić* (73). In Kosovo's Trstenik a soldier *Bojan Baltić* (23) was killed. In Peć, *Milorad Novićević* (59) was murdered.

May 30/June 12—In Živinjane, *Cvetko Simić* was killed, in Berkovac the sisters *Milica* and *Milka Slavković* were kidnapped. *Živko Stajić* (68) was killed in Donje Petrice. In the village of Boštane, *a twelve year old boy Jovica Petrović*, the son of Vlastimir and Vera, workers from Novo Brdo,

was killed in the forest where he went while playing. In Lipljane, *Nikola Ristić* (64), the son of Aksentije, and in Mušutište, *Božidar Jovanović* were kidnapped. In Junik or in Dečani, *Vlastimir Vukanić* (80) was kidnapped and probably murdered as the tyrants burned down his house in Junik the same afternoon. In Istok, *Miodrag (*40), *Stanica* (59) and *Radoje* (71) Vulić were kidnapped.

May 31/June 13—In Priština, a policeman *Zoran Rajčić* (30), the son of Vujica, was killed. In the settlement of Vranjevac, *Milutin Dimitrijević* was kidnapped and killed in front of the school, which was the headquarter of what is known as "UCK" Somewhere in Priština, a driver of TV Priština *Branko Marković* was kidnapped as well as soldiers *Slaviša Izderić* (25), the son of Miroslav, *Dragan Dimitrijević* (29), the son of Milutin, and *Jovan Djurica* (20), the son of Sanko.

Two brothers *Srećko* (68) and *Tomislav* (62) *Pirković*, the sons of Todor, were kidnapped in Ljubižda, in Djakovica—*Borisav Spasić* (46), in Suva Reka—*Dejan Trajković* (29) and on the road from Djakovica to Nis, the soldiers: *Predrag Ivković* (40), the son of Budimir, *Dragoljub Bojić* (44), the son of Milorad from Djakovica, and *Todor Stanković* (52), the son of Aleksandar. A youngster *Milan Vuković* (17) was kidnapped without a trace on the road to Peć, on his way to buy medications for his mother. In Prizren—*Dragan Bulić* and *Marica* Stamenković (44).

Here in Peć, *Dušanka* (47) and *Milosavka* (75) *Dragović* were killed by Albanians, in Crnoljevo—*Bora Stefanović*, a policeman, in Priština—a solider *Nebojša Stamenković* (44), in Kosovo Polje—*Jovica Dimić*. *Dragan B. Petković* (39) a Hotel Metohija employee, and his brother *Zoran Petković* (43), a Peć beer factory employee, were kidnapped without a trace by Albanian crowd. They were pushed into a car and driven to an unknown destination, their house was robbed.

Today, June 1/14—In the village of Stupelj, *Zorka Martinović* and *Cenka Ljušić* were kidnapped. In Priština—*Miomir Milenković*, the son of Stanoje, in the settlement of Sunčani Breg 22/22, an engineer *Ivan Celić* (37), employed at "The Electric Power Industry of Serbia" by the coal mine "Belaćevac" was most likely kidnapped in front of the Hotel Grand on his way to buy milk for his children. He did not return home. In Podujevo—*Miroslav Milačić* was kidnapped. In Priština, *Ilija Sukić*, a Priština's Radio Station employee, was shot in his backyard.

A group of six armed Albanians with red and black bands around their arms, among whom was Eljez Krasnići with his three sons, Faton, Murten and Elez, stopped a refugee convoy leaving the village of Kojlovica near Priština and cut off *Dragan Jovanović* (30) and two brothers—*Slavisa* (30) and *Boban* (20) *Krstić* with fellow travelers from the rest of the convoy killing them on the spot, right in front of Slaviša's wife and his three small children while wounding Jovanović's mother Maria in their attempt to shoot her, too, according to the witness, the Krstić brothers' mother, Živka. In the village of Slivovo, *Jovo Grković* from Uroševac was kidnapped.

...

Djordjije Šćepanović, Comissioner for Refugees in Montenegro, told the reports that today, on June 14 alone, 11,000 refugees have arrived in Montenegro, and that the new waves are being expected in the following few days. In Serbia, in the past few days, more then 100,000 refugees from the occupied Old Serbia have joined the present refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina which number more then 700,000.

The Monuments of Emperor Dušan and Ivan Stepanović Jastrebov Have Been Destroyed

June 2/15, 1999, St. Nicephorus the Confessor, Patriarch of Constantinople, Holy hieromartyr Erasmo of Ohrid

From the Prizren Diocese we find out that the Albanians are taking over the city under the auspices of the German KFOR. Two days ago, on Sunday May 31/June 13, the miners of their hordes which swarm out of widespread mantles of the "peacekeeping" forces and rampage streets and roads, spectacularly blew out a monument of Emperor Dušan next to St. George Church built in 1995, on Shedrvan, close to Papaz, Priest's downtown, that is. We were not there on the spot, of course, we did not see the event itself, but we did see a photo which says a lot about it. In the photo taken after this act of vandalism by a "France-Presse" photographer, it can be seen that the explosion only tore up the monument from its base and knocked it down on the pavement and by the passers-by in the distance who go their own way without looking back, it can be concluded that the statue lay for some time on the street after being mocked.[11]

The photo in the foreground at an angle of the head zoomed monument is symbolic: lying supine knocked on the main promenade of Prizren, mute and motionless on his land which hangs above him with dismembered remains of a nearby treetop touching him with a small green branch fallen or left on his throat, the Serbian Emperor, once again killed by his enemy's hand, remains in uninterrupted peace, with an untouched stone crown on his head, looking intently at the sky. The scoffers can be seen behind him, already saturated with their own violence, without paying any attention to him anymore, assured that they finally killed him...

They inform us from the diocese that due to the force of the explosion which blew up the monument, all window glasses of the Church of St. George the Victorious, the centuries-old patron of the Serbian imperial city, broke.

[11] Later on we found out that the Albanian rampagers dragged it to the Bistrica riverbed. They blew it up with plastic explosives and took the metal debris to a waste.

Shaken by the vicious crashing and the smell of burning from the fires that already swallow the houses in the Serbian district of Potkljaja, the hearts of frail children and feeble old Serbian people, those who did not want or could not ran away from the city with the military convoys, speechless old men and women, women with children and thinned ranks of men scattered around the city, imprisoned and detained in their homes without any defense, listen to the breath of destruction which gets closer to them, crying desolately over the dying city in Cviljen.[12]

The Albanian rabble also destroys the monument of the Russian consul Ivan Stepanovich Jastrebov, a great Serbian friend, from the middle of the 19th century who was a witness of the then Serbian suffering and who indebted the Serbs most during his duties in the very city of Prizren.

As an eyewitness to their slavish suffering in the Albanian rim and national extinction in the Islamic and Roman Catholic proselytizing floods, which ended in complete Albanization, in one case or in another, due to rejection of the Serbian and transition to the Albanian language, Jastrebov most deeply felt the tragedy of this phenomenon, noting that "women resist longer, remaining in the old faith, and better preserve their faith and language."

Having got to know the Turks and the Albanians well, from whom he would save kidnapped Serbian girls, defend the Prizren Seminary and the people on the street attacked by Albanian mobs using both his gun and means of his diplomatic immunity, as a diplomat Jastrebov penetrated and managed to get there where it was impossible for any Serb to arrive and in his valuable books he carefully wrote down many things he was the last witness of.

He also wrote down his anticipation of the Serbian future in his almost prophetic inspiration: "In Kosovo, the Serbs lost their empire, in Kosovo the decisive battle will resolve the future of the Balkan Peninsula and the future of the Serbian people."

Now the monument of our gratitude to this benefactor of our people, who was glorified during his life for his credits for the survival of the Serbian nation and was ceremonially welcomed by Serbian masses at all stations from Thessaloniki to Belgrade, also lies knocked down by a dynamite on the Prizren asphalt and is going to end up on a Albanians' waste, without any doubt.

So did the grandfathers of now-a-day Albanian destroyers demolish the monuments of the King Alexander the Unifier and the renowned Kosovo benefactor Sima A. Igumanov at the beginning of World War Two and Neo-Fascist occupation, and so did the grandfathers of these grandfathers at one time killed most prominent representatives of the Serbian and Russian state in Kosovo—the first Serbian consul Luka Marinković, at the entrance to the Consulate in Priština in 1890 and the first Russian consul in the newly opened Consulate in Mitrovica, Grigori Stepanovich Stcherbin, on the street in 1903, just because they sought to protect the Serbian citizens from the pogroms and unbearable Albanian lawlessness.

…

The black "troikas" and street rabbles start with kidnapping, murdering, beating up and expelling helpless Serbs and systematic burning of their homes both in the town and in the surrounding areas…

They rob and burn down the Monastery of St. Mark's with the 15th century church in the nearby village of Koriša. On a street in Prizren, they stop and kidnap *a monk Hariton Lukić* (38) from the car he is driving and he goes missing without a trace. In Gnjilane they kidnap: *Vlasta Cvetković*, the owner of a hardware store, from Bojana Street, *Slobodan Stojković*, from the settlement of Komnik, *Dragan Furunović*, *Božidar* (69) and his spouse *Dušica* (69) *Lazić* from the village of Žegra.

Today the Holy Archierarchical Synod of the Serbian Church has addressed the international forces in an official statement from Belgrade:

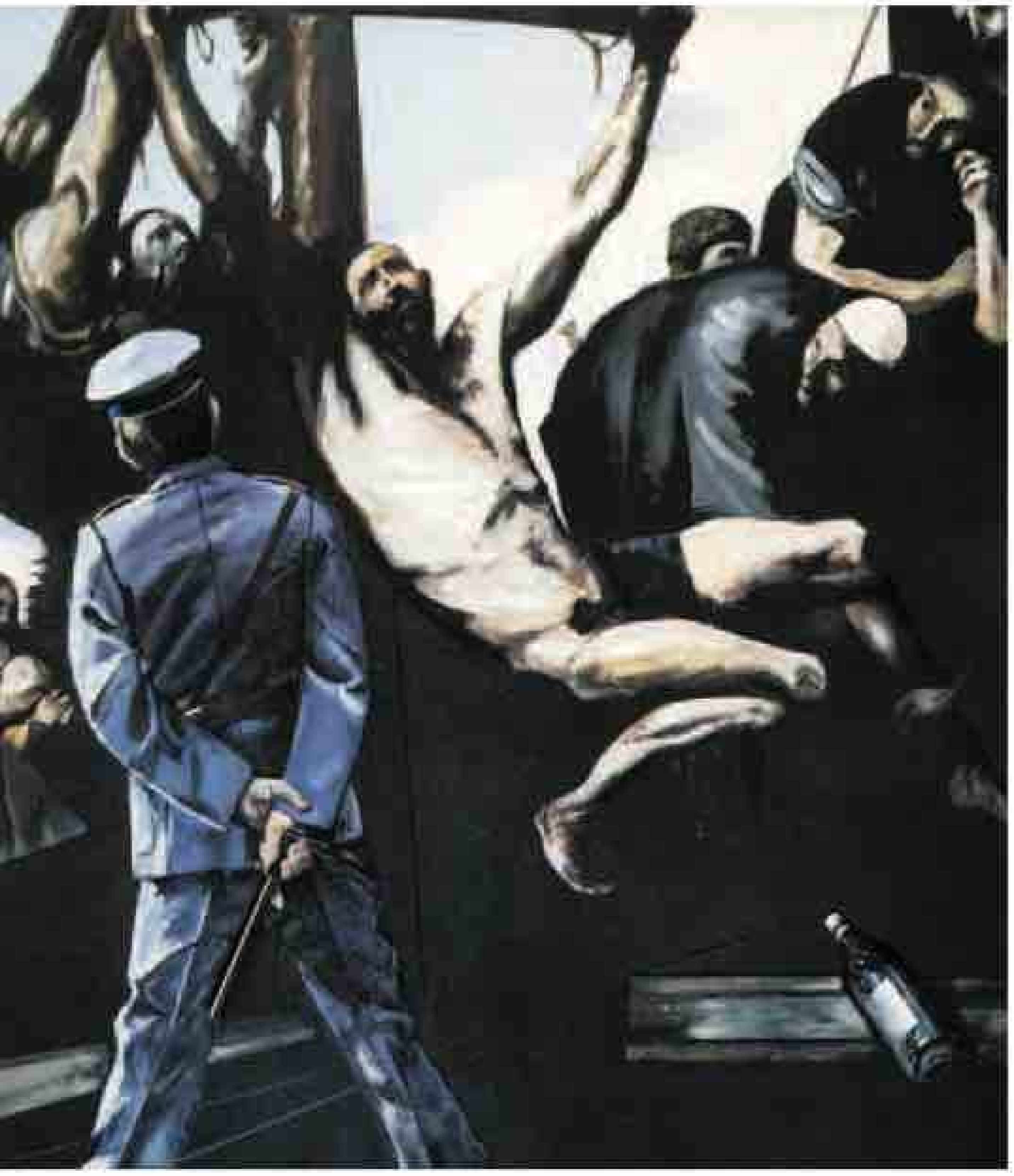
The Holy Synod is deeply concerned about the events in Kosovo and Metohija and the latest exodus of our people there. On this occasion, the Holy Synod is appealing to the international forces which now occupy Kosovo and Metohija to protect the rights of Albanians and safeguard their return hone, to also equally protect the Serbian people and other ethnic groups living in Kosovo and Metohija. At the same time, we are claiming an immediate protection for the Monasteries in Peć, Visoki Dečani and Gračanica as well as other great holy sites of the Serbian people.

We are also appealing to our brothers in Kosovo and Metohija to stay at their centuries-old homes and not to desert their holy places, firmly believing in Christ's words: "He who endures until the end, will be saved." Face with the tragic position of our entire people and the federal state, convinced that the final judgment and justice are in God's name and not in the instrumentalized Hague Tribunal, we are simultaneously demanding that the current President and his Government resign for the sake of people and their salvation, so that new persons, eligible to the national and international public, could take over the responsibility for their people and their future, as a National Salvation Government. Every reasonable person must find it perfectly clear that numerous interior problems and contradictions, as well as the isolation of our state in the international environment, cannot be resolved and surpassed under such a Government and such circumstances.

…

From the Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral, from Cetinje, Podgorica and Nikšić, here arrives a group of clerics, journalists and faithful people—a priest and professor of Cetinje Seminary, Cetinje parish priest and editor-in-chief of "Svetigora," Radomir Nikčević, a hieromonk Jovan Ćulibrk and a monk Pavle Kondić from

[12] Part of Prizren which means Bereaved if literally translated—*transl. note.*



May 1, 1985, painting by Mića Popović, 1986

Cetinje Monastery, a journalist from "The Montenegrin Voice," Slavko Živković, at that time a lay person and today a parish priest in Podgorica, Miladin Knežević, a Metropolitanate employee from Nikšić, Pedja Vukićević, as well as a monk David Perović, a photo reporter Života Ćirić and a journalist Mišo Vujović from Belgrade.

In the morning we serve the Divine Liturgy. During the day devastating news arrive from all over and we receive more frequent calls from the very city of Peć from the surrounded Serbs who are being attacked from the armed rabbles.

They inform us that twenty five armed Albanians broke into the Devič Monastery. As witnessed by Mother Abbess Anastasia, they shouted at the sisters: "You are still here? What are you waiting for? Do you think you are going to stay in a foreign land?"

They beat the elderly nuns who defended and managed to defend the youngest among them, a nun novice Maja, almost a child, whom they wanted to kidnap. Then they locked them in their cells and went to desecrate the church and the tomb of St. Joanikije of Devič. They smashed the marble grave slab with a pickaxe, turned over the things and scattered them around firing at the icons...

...

A family from Peć whose last name I do not remember cries for help. If we do not get there, they will kill them all. Without wasting any time, I look for Fr. Radomir Nikčević in the monastery courtyard who is, alas, somewhere in the monastic quarters. I call him out loud being impatient to leave. He runs out and the two of us take the jeep and are already on the way to the city.

Peć is eerie silent. The silence is occasionally interrupted by machine gun bursts, rare cars, dog barks and cries of Albanian chasers in the remaining Serbian houses and apartments which they systematically burn down and loot. On the almost deserted streets there is a smell of fire, ashes, and smoke from fire debris. There is fear and uncertainty.

On the crossroads, we occasionally encounter hate-filled glances of "UÇCK" members who pass by us in the crowds. These new—time— Albanian Nazis, the grandchildren of former kaçaks[13] and ballists,[14] the protégés of military instructors, labs and funds of Western powers, notorious for bloody abductions, murders and terrorist attacks on Serbian police and civilians since 1998, became NATO's fist strike on Earth during the aggression on Yugoslavia. Now, after Kumanovo, they have become its extended "recovery" hand on the ground, "the cleaners" and "the forces of order," who are obviously getting transformed into the new Albanian police and army.

We drive silently focused like soldiers. At some point, Fr. Radomir says: "Here, bishop, one can only die..." "Where else is it nicer to lose your head but here, in our beloved Kosovo!?," I tell him. Somewhere close to the railway station, a group of Albanians in military uniforms shows up right in front of us.

[13] The kaçak (kachak) action : Following World War I, the Albanian population of Kosovo-Metohija resisted the reincorporation of Serbia into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians and sought union or annexation of Kosovo and Metohija with Albania, creating a Greater Albania or Ethnic Albania. This armed resistance resulted in the kaçak actiont (from the Turkish kachmak, meaning to run away or to hide). During the Ottoman period kaçak meant outlaw, as was the case within Serbia and the kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The kaçaks were coordinated by the Albanian Kosovo Committee led by Bajram Curri and aided by Italy whose key objective was to persuade the international community to agree to Kosovo being annexed to Albania. The Albanian and Italian propaganda termed the kaçak outlaw action—as "national-liberation movement". The Serbian regime termed the Greater Albania movement one conducted by outlaws and bandits, what would be termed terrorists in the contemporary political lexicon. After 1918 Italy was supporting the Greater Albania Movement to gain control of Albania, which it saw as a puppet and colony state. The Greater Albania ideology would give Italy entrée as a colonial/imperial power in the Balkans. The Kachack guerrillas attacked and murdered government officials, police, and Serbian Orthodox civilians. The fascist regime of Benito Mussolini directly sponsored kaçak action for the the Greater Albania, supporting their terrorist activities and donating 200,000 lira to Kroja and Priština, the leaders of the movement.—*transl. note*

[14] Balli Kombetar, Albanian nationalists, allies of the Nazis during World War II—*transl. note*

They are all beardless young people, but ready for everything. They look at us feverishly, without saying anything, neither shouting or threatening. Suddenly, as we start leaving, one of them pulls out a bomb throwing it under our car and starts running away from the explosion with his fellow fighters.

We also wait for it silently in the car.

"Most Holy Mother of God of Peć, pray to God for us. May it be to us according to God's will!..."

A second, two, three... elapse and—nothing. The bomb does not explode.

We continue the drive, without saying a word. We get to the Hotel Metohija where the protruding point of the Italian command is stationed. We beg the Italians to hurry to the aid of the besieged family threatened by lynching. They go out to help saving a few Serbian heads from the ring.

The terrorists take over the city and already "cleanse" it from the Serbs, breaking "in threes" into their apartments and houses. They kill and kidnap some of them, robbing and making homeless all of them...

"The entire world has risen against the Cross!" are the words echoing in my mind I heard in the Dečani Monastery from an old man from Kosovo and Scutari, uncle Stane Basanović. "If no one betrays us, we'll endure till the end. The saddest thing of all for me is that I got so old that I can't go out in Kosovo to fight against these scoundrels... In 1974 Tito gave Kosovo to the Turks... The slaughter and torturing for the Serbs, and for these—Kosovo...I was born during the war in 1914. I would like to die in war in 1999. Clinton fights, but he can't do anything to us. Innocent people... We didn't do anything to anybody. The Americans are smart: no one of them will come to war, but they'll foist someone else to lose both their money and heads..."

At the end of the day, we visit Budisavci Monastery. Father Stefan and two nuns remained there, as well a family of ours. The rest are the Roman Catholic Albanians.

The Bishop Atanasije Jevtić of Zahumlje and Herzegovina is in Kosovo, too, in order to save what can be saved.

...

Having returned home from church in Djakovica, the sons of *Nedeljko*, the son of Djordje, and *Darinka*, the daughter of Miloš, *Šutaković*: *Radovan* (10), *Djordje* (15) and *Aleksandar* (17) were abducted together with their parents by kidnappers with hoods on their heads and guns in their hands who tore down the door of their apartment. Alexandar was the best student in his generation in the School of Economics. Djordje had all "A"s except for a "B" in mathematics. Their father Nedeljko was a worker in "The Metallic" while mother Darinka worked at "Emin Durak." Nedeljko's grandfather and uncles were all slaughtered by the ballists in 1941.

...

The brothers *Vojin Peković* (55) and *Spasoje Peković* (58), the sons of Savić, originally from Montenegro (Podgorica), the former worked and lived in Djakovica as a driver, the latter in the village of Šeremet close to Djakovica as a forest ranger, were abducted: Vojin—on June 10 on the road from the village of Račaj to Djakovica, Spasoje—on June 9 on his way to scythe. Spasoje was kidnapped by a group of Albanian young men.

The Crucifixions of Those Who Leave and Those Who Stay Faithful until Death

June 3/16, 1999, Holy Martyr Loukillianos and others with him

As this benevolent American reporter said, what is happening in Kosovo now is a "combination of Serb 'ethnic cleansing' and a shooting gallery with live Serbs being used as targets."

...

As we find out, after the voices spread around the city that the Orthodox Cathedral of St. George is going to be burned down, the German troops in Prizren have come to the aid of Bishop Artemije of Raška and Prizren and his monks who are already being kept under siege by Albanians in the Episcopate. An officer broke by force into the Bishop's office in the Episcopate which is, according to the foreigners, "the pillar of the Serbian presence in the area mainly inhabited by Albanians." Then he asked Bishop Artemije to take the books down from the shelves, because "if someone throws a Molotov cocktail, everything will flare up easily!" Even so, the bishop didn't take the books away.

The next day, the Germans told the Serbian Bishop that they could not guarantee safety neither of him nor of the remaining Serbs, nor even of more than two hundred of those who found refuge in the Prizren Seminary. Likewise, they said it would be better for all of them to move to a safer region since the majority of the Serbian people, about tens of thousands of them, fled with the army and since it was only a few hundred of scattered old men and women and others who decided to stay in the city. "The Serbian Orthodox Church has been present in Prizren for more then a 1000 years," the Bishop said, "and this Serbian exodus and ascending to the throne of the terrorist UCK is the worst thing that could have been recorded in her memoirs here. We survived the 500 years of the Ottoman rule here, we survived both world wars, but the people have never left their villages and cities like they do nowadays, under the so called protection of the United Nations and NATO." In his knowledge, on Tuesday alone, *five* Serbs were abducted in the city, including *monk Hariton* from the Holy Archangels, and many of them were disarmed, bitten up and arrested. Visoki Dečani Monastery is under siege. Besides 22 monks, there are 17 Serbian lay people there. The twelve monks from Mušutište left their monastery, after it was burnt down and leveled to the ground by Albanians. The monks withdrew from the Holy Archangels, although it was not burnt down. In Devič Monastery it has been two days already since the ballists started abusing the nuns and

desecrating this sacred place. The monastery is still without KFOR protection, but the sisters do not want to leave the endowment, neither the desecrated church nor St. Janicije's tomb.

Bishop Atanasije Jevtić has also arrived in Prizren today. Under the KFOR protection, Bishop Artemije has left Prizren together with the priesthood, monastics and 250 faithful people who were for days under the Albanian siege, and has moved to Gračanica Monastery.

...

In Novo Selo, *Stanojko Mihajlović* (55) has been killed by a firearm. He was not buried, because it was dangerous to go take his body of which nothing is known yet. Milorad Radević built a church in Pećka Banja. Just as it was consecrated, it had to be left behind. The donor mourned over it and left on Sunday. Except for the church, he also left a new parochial house, a hall, just commenced frescography...

What is this I meet in Metohija burning in flames: a suicidal tendency, nihilism, spirit of destruction? These days everything in her is along these lines: the destruction of a national being, disappearance of a state, everything...

At my request to General Del Vecchio and to his amazement that I ask for something like this, he hosted us a meeting at his office, in a former beer factory with one of the Albanian commanders in chief, Ethem Çeku. I explained the Italian general the reason as to why I asked for this encounter: there are more and more murdered and kidnapped Serbs in Peć and the surroundings, the looting and plunder are at their full swing, and if it is possible, the Church wants in this way, too, to save at least someone and contribute to ending of violence. Ceku arrives late with a shaved head and bald scalp, under arms and with a dozen companions. I find out he used to be a steel merchant. He says a greeting without looking at me, full of himself and his power. He speaks Albanian, addressing me through an interpreter, who translates his words in Italian, although Çeku speaks Serbian well. While opening the meeting, the Italian general speaks about his peacemaking role. I mention "bessa"[15] and respect for the Albanians. "We aren't Shqiptars, we are Albanians!" all of a sudden Çeku angrily speaks out. "I know that your homeland is called Shqipnia," I reply wondering at his anger, "and her inhabitants—Shqiptars. I learned this from Marko Miljanov..." I certainly do not tell him of what even science knows very well: that us Serbs most often called them the *Arbanas* or *Arnauts* (ethnic Albanians, in Serbian and Turkish language respectivly) for centuries, and as of the 20th century more and more often—the Shqiptars, and more and more rarely the way they most often called themselves, according to a Russian scientist Selischov—the Ghegs. In some Caucasian languages even today the word "gheg" means "warrior, fighter" especially on horseback.[16]

Neither do I tell Ethem Çeku and his like-minded companions that we used to have this kind of naming of his compatriots up until the time of the communist dictatorship when we were forced by the communists of our blood but of their brains to stop calling our own Old Serbia—Old Serbia and to begin calling her more neutrally—Kosovo and Metohija, or *Kosmet* for short.

And in this dictatorship we were weaned from this and from everything else what we are and what we were in the past by all possible means of autocratic compulsion, which gave a measure and place to everything in accordance with their views, especially over the prominent politically eligible, as they would say today "politically correct" individuals, who acted on its behalf: from now on the *Arnauts* must be called Albanians and under no circumstances and never different than that! So it was in politics, so it was in the media, so it was in science, education, sport but surprisingly by the time in Church, too. For this or that reason, Church stopped calling the most numerous Serbian neighbors in Old Serbia the way she did in the time of St. Basil of Ostrog, the Deacon Avacum and the renowned Sima Igumanov—the *Arbanas* or *Arnauts* (ethnic Albanians), calling them more often only—Albanians.

It is only today that we can see the ultimate goal of this joint effort the initial trigger of which were the positions of the German and Austro-Hungarian philological schools on turning old Caucasian tribes, similar to the Circassians, who initially called themselves "Ghegers"—which means "warriors," and Toskers, and only later Arbers, Shqiptars, into a new European nation with a newly designed identity of "European ancients" who will be called Albanians, and their country neither Ghegeria, Toskeria or Arberia anymore but Albania, the country of Albans that is. The Germans and the Austro-Hungarians worked very hard on this during the 19th century, although the educated Europe used the name Albans to call most various "newcomers, immigrants," generally strangers from non-European mainland, starting with the Scots, and never solely the tribes which emigrated in the waves from the Caucasus, in the service of powerful armies, into the countries of Orthodox Greeks and Serbs, from Epirus and Thessalia, from Zeta and Old Serbia (Kosovo and Metohija and Slavic Macedonia), as it has become common today.

Hence, in the late 19th century Austro-Hungarian science gave a decisive contribution to turning Albanians into new allies of the German political and state expansionism

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15 Albanian cultural precept meaning "word of honor," "to keep the promise"—*transl. note.*

16 Hence, starting from the original name Gheg of the newly migrated Albanian-worriors on their horses who were also distinguished by a specific walking style of professional riders, bow-legged and staggered, supported by the habit of squatting and talking while sitting on one's hunkers, just as it can be seen to this very dayamong elderlz Albanians and their Caucasian kinsmen the Chechens, the Serbs used to call such walking style "gheg" (waddle), and the harshness of the character and customs it was coupled with "crudity, provincialism." As a social phenomenon, its carriers were named "ghegs, gedzas, gegovans, gedzovans" (boors, barbarians)—*Ed.*

at the expense of the Serbian people in the Balkans, on the old Vatican missionaries trail, especially from the 17th century onwards. Under the pressure of the political parties and the intellectual elite, whose consciousness was in many ways instructed by a kind of "the Austro-Hungarian Internationale" (formerly Communist, now democratic, but embracing Austro-Hungarian views and always equally antagonistic to the vital interests of the Serbs), the ultimate goal, of course, was first of all to gradually and unnoticeably build awareness in the Serbs alone that wherever the Albanians live and as far as they spread to, that naturally is—their country, "Natural" Albania, naturally and justifiably "Great Albania," and growing, built on the blood and tears of the Serbian people and ever-ready to plot against her life. Having conceived such awareness in one generation, it was necessary to impose it on the Serbs for good by the upbringing and education in the spirit of ideological self-censorship until some day they themselves also get used to the idea and reality of Great Albania!? Someone smartly thought of attempting to erase, even in such a roundabout way, but so radically, the historical memories of the living Kosovo thought and covenant in our hearts! And they have largely succeeded in it, although, mostly thanks to our warmness which is always an expression of deeper spiritual falls.

I ask Ethem Çeku now that he has power in his hands, to stop the kidnapping, murders, burnings through his people. It is only when people are given power that you can tell who and what they are like. Still looking at the ground, Çeku starts his Albanian tirade about democracy which his interpreter translates into Italian. He says: they are creating a new, democratic state, in which everyone is protected and has equal rights… I remind him again of what is happening in Peć now and the whole of Metohija and Kosovo. He suddenly lifts his head speaking up in Serbian: "In this war, 17 members of my Çeku family have been killed, and in the "Dubrava" Prison near Istok, you have killed 500 of our people, you owe us 500 heads!" "I don't know anything about it reliably, I am going to ask the authorities in Belgrade and then I'll be able to tell…"

Later on I find out from the official sources that 95 people were killed and 196 prisoners were wounded in "Dubrava" but from the NATO bombardment, while those who survived were moved to others prisons. However, they also say that many have disappeared without a trace since then and that a number of them may have been murdered in "Dubrava" itself afterwards. I do not translate any of these Çeku's words and do not comment to the Italian general. Is it because not to give cover for the obvious tendency of the people under his command to perform their peacekeeping mission on the ground with as few risks as possible?

Even if all of Çeku's allegations and figures were correct, or at least partially correct, it is still beyond comprehension that at the end of the second millennium the "more humane" part of the European proxies in Kosovo and Metohija (the Italians, the Spaniards…) still prefer to close their eyes to these vandalisms in the spirit of blood revenge laws, thus invalidating all new European stories on establishing peace and the rule of law, while the other part occasionally even joins the terrorists in their acts of violence against the Serbs (the Germans, the British, the Danes, the Americans…)?

…

I think that tough days are obviously coming for Kosovo and Metohija. Humanly speaking, they are lost, at least for now. Not only thanks to non-humans on the other side, but largely, to non-humans among us, the Serbs themselves, not so much among these ones from Kosovo and Metohija, as among those who have always stood away from Kosovo and Metohija far enough that the harsh Kosovo reality does not disturb their pleasant life and a peaceful dream, but who have pretty much shaped the destiny of Kosovo and the entire Serbia with their plans. I have in mind, first of all, the political and intellectual national leaders and champions, and their apparatchiks, both former and present, and the future ones, too who, despite all the differences in their rhetoric, proclamations and the age they belong to, are being connected by astonishing sameness of mentality: trapped in hungry hedonism, alienation, statelessness, all of them alike were and are willing to renounce any heritage of the ancestral Christian Orthodox spirit and run over any ancestral victim, to squander the vast spiritual and material heritage of their own people and spread themselves as a carpet under the feet of every silver-tongued enemy of theirs for a handful of pleasures, honors and power.[17]

We are losing Kosovo, first of all, thanks to those who have been leading these once Christian people for decades,

[17] It is only by such concordance in mentality that the great fondness and understanding among the "Anti-Fascists" of Josip Broz Tito and the self-styled "Anti-Fascists" from some of our Euro-Unionist parties can be explained despite a big generational distance among them. The "Anti-Fascists" of Josip Broz Tito such was the one of the biggest slaughterers of Tito's security service, the notorious manager of the most notorious Communist concentration camp in the Balkans, the Bare Island (in which 46% of all offenders were Serbs). Therefore, those who drew the bloody borders of Albanian r autonomy in Kosovo and Metohija and those who welcomed the dispossession of the southern Serbian province and the secession of the Shqiptar Kosovë along these lines—the plumes of the old and new Serbian self-destruction on the votive Serbian land. All, connected by the same hatred toward the betrayed Kosovo Covenant, each one in their own time spoke and keep saying what a renowned sports journalist has recently said for the "The Pravda (Justice)" (01/23/2011): "We cannot repeat forever like parrots: we are not giving Kosovo away! What do we need Kosovo for when Serbia is getting empty each day…" In his statement to "The Kurir (Courier)" (02/01/2011), a hardened Titoist from the Bare Island said that Serbia deserved to be bombed by NATO, "because she destroyed Yugoslavia. We gave three hundred thousand dead for Tito's Yugoslavia which small Milošević and his colleagues from the neighboring republics broke for petty interests!" And how many millions of victims did the Serbian people give during all these centuries for their Old Serbia which has been left at the mercy of the Albanian gangs by the Titoist communists and Euro-Unionists today!?

Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and Littoral with displaced Metohija Serbs

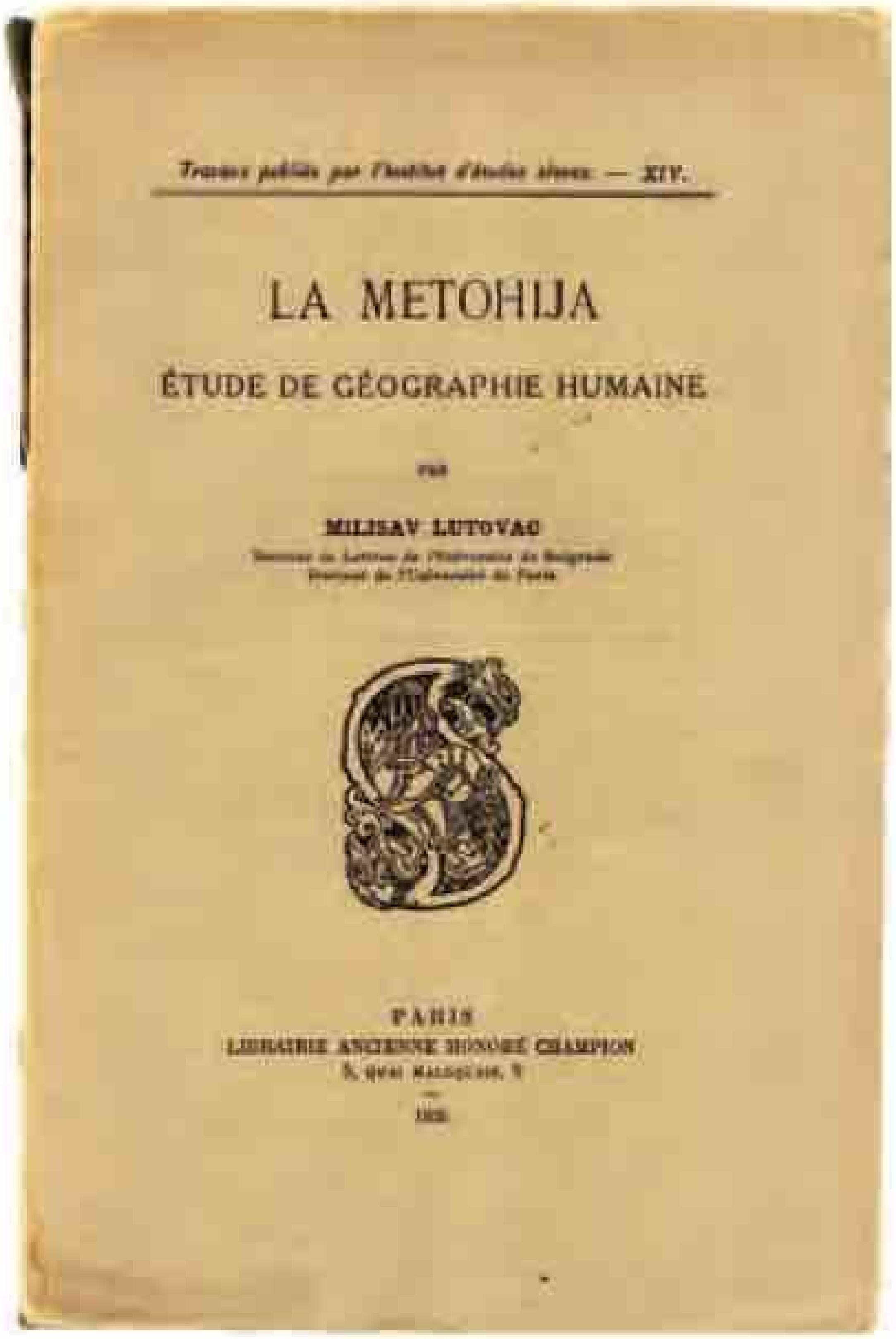
guided by the blindness of old and new ideologies of this world, which eradicate them from their Church and forefathers' heritage and systematically mutilate and destroy their church-historic self-consciousness, but also thanks to all others, in hierarchical sequence, who mimic the blind leaders even more blindly, shaping themselves in their own greed with the spirit of their "demonic messiahs" and becoming similar to them by renouncing votive values and favoring the lucrative political and social fad.

However, it can be said that in our time, before the final pogrom, during the last decade, the partly restored house of Kosovo was first set on fire here by the most flighty and greediest among us, in a fiver of their small and large "businesses." As a friend from Kosovo said, they set it on fire by cigarettes, alcohol, maybe even narcotics, white slavery and weapons, the evil smuggled by secret channels and tycoon transactions, collaborating and sharing the profits soaked with the blood of their own people, together with their own butchers, without reluctance. Nevertheless, it was also, in one way or another, set on fire by forgetfulness and indifference of all others who have let their worries of this world choke the seed of Kosovo in their own blood and bones, all those who have craved for the "better" life and have rejected God-man's cross of Kosovo and the harsh and narrow path to Heaven. Having turned their head away from the Holy Prince Lazar's covenant of their nation, from Prince Lazar's Kingdom of God, not only did they turn it away from the celestial horizon of Old Serbia, but also, for a long time now, from her terrestrial space over which the rivers of our blood and tears are pouring again; they turned their head away from the gold and fragrance of poor churches, ancestral houses and tombs scattered by Old Serbia's rivers, the Bistrica, the Lužnica, the Topluh, the Lednica, the Ribnik, the Nerodimka, the Mirus, the Klokot, the Banjića, the Sitnica..., amidst the fields and hills of Kosovo and Metohija, mounts and rocks, Ponorac, Pešter, Prevalac..., washed with the dew and the sun of mountain eyes that gaze at the blue sky where they derive their hope from...

Yet, seeing these days the sad Serbian refugees in the Patriarchate of Peć and remembering so many lives who have been laid for this country as a "conscious victim," just in these recent months and days, the lives of soldiers who died out of love for their fatherland, lifted above all petty politics, but also the youth, men and women, children and elderly who have decided to stay on Prince Lazar's land even after the withdrawal of the army, so that they, being faithful to the end to their first and only Christian homeland and her holy places, defend her these days with their bare hands and bare lives, "enduring to the end" according to the Evangelic words, I am assured that what I have thought above is not the whole truth about us. For, it is true that majority and the most vocal part of our people did replace the incense and Holy Communion with earthly trifles, but here, before the cross of suffering, the incense and Holy Communion as well as the trust in the Living God are still the main consolation and food to the people I meet under the vaults of churches of the Serbian archbishops and patriarchs, as well as in the churchyard and residences of the Patriarchate. The people who up until the last minute, until the very beginning of the rampage of the Albanian gangs, remained faithful to their Kosovo- Metohian hearth. The hearth that is now being left behind out of fear and horror of the bloodshed. Lord have mercy and save us!

Today, in Peć, *Radojica Šćepanović* (38), the son of Radoje, and a certain man with the last name *Pešić* have been kidnapped. In Priština, *Ružica Šiljić* (63) and a boy *Nenad Živić* (15) have also been abducted. In Uroševac, a retired police officer, *Stanko Čungurović* (50), the son of Radomir, has been kidnapped and possibly killed. It can be heard how: yesterday on June 15, he was walking on his Emperor Uroš Street in Uroševac when he was ambushed and surrounded by some Albanians, in the crowd that was getting bigger and bigger. The Albanians shouted and attacked the man, dragging, punching and kicking him. a woman tried to appease them in vain. In vain the second witness tried to telephone KFOR whose seat was not far from the scene—no one responded. When this witness got there, he summoned KFOR soldiers and returned to the spot, but neither Stanko nor the Albanian crowd was there anymore. Stanko never returned home again.

Momčilo Dimić (32), the son of Ljubomir, a civilian, has been killed in the village of Mazgit next to Obilić. In Novo Selo, *Stojanče* (67) and *Zorica* (68) *Mladenović*, in Djakovica—*Tomislav Petrović* (65), the son of Uroš, have been killed... In Orahovac, *Tihomir Miljković* (70), in Istok, *Zlata Perišić* have been kidnapped. The first names of the civilian victims on the eve of the Kumanovo capitulation: On June 2, a young police officer *Žarko Krstić* (29) was killed. In Lipovica, *Stojanka Aksić* (61), was killed in Donja Budriga on June 6. A young man, *Dejan Rajičić* (19), from the village of Kruševo, Klina Municipality, was killed on June 8 in the village of Trbuhovac, near Istok, when the ethnic Albanian vandals attacked the car he was driving. *Danijela*



Milisav Lutovac, *La Metohija*, Paris, 1935,
the most comprehensive study on geographic, social and economic and inter-ethnic relations in interwar Metohija

Pavlović (25), was killed in Peć on June 8, *Tomo Aleksić* from Gornje Obrinje, near Glogovac, was kidnapped on June 8, *Dojčin Kapetanović*, a "Kosmet-Tours" bus driver, was killed in the village of Lebane when he was driving on June 8…

On June 5, in Prizren, *Stojan Andjelković* (47) was kidnapped without a trace. Somewhere near Prizren, toward the border with Albania, a forest ranger *Jordan Ničić* (58) from Čaglavica near Priština was also kidnapped. In Rudnik, *Dragutin Todorović* (39) was kidnapped. In Peć, *Zoran Zuvić* was kidnapped on June 8.

Foreign journalists have flooded the southern Serbian province, mainly with the intention to contribute with their reports to the creation of a triumphant image of achieved Euro-Atlantic goals and placing Kosovo under the international protectorate with the help of NATO armies. They, however, gloss over the violence being perpetrated against non-Albanian population and all its victims.

However, there are those, too who write without embellishment. In his Article from June 15 titled "We will execute Serb troops, says the so called "KLA," a correspondent of the London "Daily Telegraph," writes: "With every hour that passes, the arbitrary power of the KLA is growing in Kosovo" , the power to judge people not by written laws, but by arbitrary personal judgment and opinion, "and NATO seems momentarily clueless how to deal with it." Sali Mustafa, KLA commander praised himself to the 'Telegraph' that he personally killed *the head of the Serbian police* in Priština. "Looking at this young man, it was hard to believe that he had cold-bloodedly killed Priština's *top policeman*; but, so he confessed. 'I was in charge of a unit and, well, they were our enemy, and I was shooting at them. Me and two other guys, we shot *Miša Lakočević*. *Zoran Jovanović* found his death, too. I shot him dead.' This young man, the reporter says, claims that he is going to be a police officer in the new Kosovo police."

The reporter further writes: "Ivan Ničić (25) was driving out of Priština yesterday morning, like thousands of other fleeing Serbs, when he spotted a man he knew, an Albanian. Their eyes met. Suddenly, other Albanians appeared, pulling out their guns, and as Ničić panicked and floored the accelerator, they shot his green Yugo Tempo five times in the back. One bullet passed through his shoulder, and another grazed his skull. Ničić was luckier than others.

Last night KLA checkpoints were appearing all over town, especially at the route north to Belgrade. *Three more* fleeing *Serbs* were reportedly shot dead, and Albanian gunmen had taken the lives of at least one Albanian who worked for the Yugoslav militia, as well as *three other Serb policemen*. All this occurred before the careful, but quite indifferent eyes of "NATO peacekeepers." At today's press conference, the chief of KFOR, General Michael Jackson has expressed regret for all the shortcomings of KFOR engagement, but he did not mention even once the Serbian civilians terrorized by KLA."

…

On June 15, some unknown Albanian civilians stopped a Serb, *Slavoljub Baltić*, on his way out of Vučitrn, toward the village of Miloševo, tied his hands in handcuffs and took him in the direction of Čičavica Mountain (a mountain situated at the center of Kosovo with a length of about 5 miles and a width of about 3 miles. Its highest peak reaches to a height of 3,579 ft. It is in the boundary line between the Drenica region and the Kosovo Plain. The river Sitnica passes close by it.).

The Long "St. Bartholomew's Night"; the Kosovo Eve Arises

June 4/17, 1999, St. Mitrophan and Sts. Martha and Mary Hieromartyr Joannicius of Montenegro Holy Hieromartyr George (Bogić)

The neo-ballists leave behind Devič Monastery with a high tax, plundering and taking with them everything they could—the monastery tractors, the van, the Volkswagen Golf car, saws, generators, telephones, fax machines, re-

frigerators, furniture, money, food… Soon after, His Holiness Patriarch Paul arrives in Devič together with the Bishop of Herzegovina Atanasije and Father Radivoje Panić from Kosovo Polje escorted by KFOR. They serve a supplicatory prayer for the crucified and expelled people over the broken reliquary of St. Joanikije of Devič…

As we find out, the patriarch visits the monastery of Gračanica and the Bishop Artemije of Raška and Prizren. He speaks to the Serbs gathered in the courtyard asking them not leave their homes. The patriarch visits the chief of KFOR, General Michael Jackson, and sends a message of peace repeating his words that "in Kosovo there is a place for everyone, regardless of their religion and nationality." In the evening, the armed Neo-Ballists, Albanian extremists, enter the Priština church yard and yell: "Go away, go away!"

…

About 20 000 Serbs from Uroševac and surrounding area leave their homes. The refugees testify that the Albanians wash the streets after their former neighbors so that together with the streets they wash their traces, too. The Albanians claim that there are apparently mass graves of Albanians in the Uroševac area, but the Serbs there testify that, if there are any mass graves, they contain *the bodies of killed Serbs*—in Klečka, in a mine near Klina and the lake mountains near Uroševac.

The Albanians have attacked a column of refugees near Vučitrn, on their way to the central Serbia.

…

In every step these followers of Ottoman warlord Sinan Pasha from 16th century, notorious for persecution of the Christians, attack unarmed people in their own homes, persecuting and kidnapping them on the streets and roads, forests and fields, either in flights or their solitary refuge… They cut and burn the living flesh of their skulls and bowels with bloody daggers and guns, hand grenades and mortar "bazookas," exterminating the Serbian feeble and courageous heads who did not leave "their" Kosovo…The armed Albanian extremists plunder and burn, all rich or poor unarmed Serb civilians, their stables and folds, cellars and barns, fields and vineyards, grinning or hanging the cattle and Serbian children, or kidnapping hundreds of Serb civilians as "organ donors" [killing them and cutting in pieces for notorious "organ trafficking " organized by KLA] for sale " on the black market," robbing them and their money, cars, machinery, tools and everything Serbian that is either movable or immovable, on the ground or under the ground.

Desecrated Serbian monasteries and churches shattered by explosions are burning, the crosses are falling down, the marbles are getting destroyed with demonic giggles of their desecrators. Dead Serbian bones are whirling upward scattering around from the tombs broken by inhuman madness while crambling into dust under their desecrators' feet and bombs…Even the beasts run away from these pyres and blusters of the long "Bartholomew's" night which falls on Kosovo in the middle of the day and constantly lasts and is going to last who knows until when, while the inhuman are rushing to them to feed the eyes and hellish nostrils of their insanity at the eve of 610th anniversary of the Serbian St. Vitus Day (*Vidovdan*).

The ground groans and the sky echoes from the ferocious haunting coming down from the Prokletije Mountains, the cries and distress of the captured, the cries of petrified birds and the roars of abandoned cattle. In this 1999 year of the Lord, we disappear in the fires and fumes with everything that we are on earth, as so many times before, we choke again on our Golgotha path, hugging our Kosovo cross and tottering underneath it, with the flashes of new poles, axes and "Serbcutters",[18] in the shadow of "Tomahawks" and steel spiders—the 'Apaches' of our "merciful" Euro-Atlantic "angels" of the joint American and their European allies who are outspread above us like vultures…

Under their aegis down here, there are three species of vultures reigning in Kosovo and Metohija today: the ravens, worms and people murderers and slaughterers who grab, demolish and burn to the ashes the last remnants of centuries-old physical and cultural presence of the Serbian people in the heart of Kosovo-Metohija.

We endured 500 years under the Ottomans, so, we will endure this, too, God willing…

June 5/18, 1999, Holy Hieromartyr Dorotheus, Venerable Peter of Koriša

I wake up terrified with a heavy torment on my soul because of what has happened and what is still happening. I go to a church service, following the epic ballad saying: "Flee into the church Kraljević Marko"[19]… Today it is the feast day of St. Peter of Koriša. In the temple I listen to the words from the Psalter: "*How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land*?! And I wonder in amazement: Why have the European nations broken down the thousand-year-long history and culture of a Christian European nation such as Serbian one? General Del Vecchio is here to end this history of Kosovo and Metohija together with us handing them over to Çeku, the steel merchant from Peć, almost a complete master of life and death of the local Serbs and the Serbian holy sites … Serbian Kosovo returns to his essence, to her sanctuaries and their centuries-old guards, the bishops, some priests and monks and the faithful people who did not flee. Elderly nuns slowly burn out in the Patriarchate of Peć, serving the Lord, and what will happen after them? *The Lord guards all who love Him and He destroys all the wicked*, the nun continues with the Psalms. *Put not*

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[18] "Serbcutter"—a type of knife used by the Croatian Nazis (Ustashas) for killing Serbian civilian prisoners in Croatian concentration camps in Jasenovac, Jadovno and elsewhere diring the World War II—*transl. note.*

[19] An excerpt from the Serbian epic poem *Uroš and the Mrnjavčević*, see the *Ballads of Marko Kraljević*, transl. by D. H. Low, Cambridge 1922: 19—*transl. note.*

your trust in princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no help … Great is our Lord, and of great power!

I have never experienced the truth of these words and their comfort this deeply… as the only hope. While the European and American generals inaugurate the "new world order" and "human rights" in Kosovo and Metohija, the Patriarchate of Peć still stands silent counting the centuries. A bitter-sweet prayer flows in it without interruption. These remaining few people gather in it as in Noah's Ark…

…

We communicate using mobile phones, the "Motorola radios." The monasteries got them through Bishop Artemije. Thanks to this connection many have been saved from certain deaths these days. It is over these phones that we talk to the Italian Command. The news of the kidnapping and murders of tens and hundreds of Serbs overtake one another.

Thus, yesterday they informed us that *Luka Petrušić*, *Radmila* and *Slobodan Vujačić*, teachers from the elementary school in Pećka Banja were kidnapped (Vujačić's wife, Draginja, managed to escape). In Peć Branislav Vidić managed to run away from his kidnappers. His wife, *Olga*, was raped by two Albanians in uniforms.

In Peć Dušan Jović (24) was saved and transferred to the monastery, and so were Branko Grujić and Spasoje Lalić. The Albanian bandits broke into the house of *Milorad Novović* and *Dušan* seizing their weapons and a car. They beat them and ordered them: "Go back to Serbia!" They tell us that two members of the *Bukumirić* family and a certain man named *Radulović* were headed for Rožaje in their blue car. On a foreign TV station their dead bodies and their van were spotted along the road (at Savine Vode?), indentified by their relatives from Montenegro…

The Patriarch Paul arrives in the Patriarchate of Peć. Driven by fear and struggling to survive, the people have taken refuge in the centuries-old seat of the Serbian patriarchs seeking salvation from the old patriarch. The refugees ask what the Serbs can do in this catastrophe, and the long-time Bishop of Raška and Prizren and confessor answers their questions asking everyone to stay in their homes: "We endured 500 years of the Ottoman rule. This, too will go away, God willing!"

…

Today in Peć, *Radosav Grujić* (43) and *Dragan* Dašić (36) have been killed.

At the entrance to Holy Trinity Church in Grmovo *Milorad Radjenović* (48) from Grmovo has been found dead, killed by firearms. In Priština, *Vladimir Djokić* (53) has been killed. The commander of the German KFOR in Prizren said that a *70-year old man* was found dead after being beaten by terrorists in the former headquarters of the Serbian police in Prizren. He was found tied to a chair. The commander did neither say if the man was tortured or if so, in what way.

…

The murdered and kidnapped yesterday, on June 3–4/16–17:

In Orahovac, *Svetislav Grković* (66) and *Marko Vitošević* (61) were abducted from their home on St. Sava's Street while *Panta Grković* (60) was killed. In the village of Vidanja near Klina, a pensioner *Živko Gvozdenović* (76), his son, a construction worker, *Gojko* (53) and *Boško Minić* (53) were kidnapped, as the majority of Serbs, including their families, left the village where they had decided to stay. In Klina, near the railway crossing for the village of Zlokućane, *Dragan Vujović* was killed by gunshots from the neighboring yard, in front of the house of Milutin Cincarević. He was murdered by "KLA" terrorists, Roman Catholics from the village of Poljce, among whom was Nua Marku, a teacher in the Klina School Center.

In Uroševac, *Jovan Grković* and *Divna Dasic* were kidnapped.

In the village of Rudice, *Dragan Dašić* (44), *Dragutin Dašić* (32), *Dušan Dašić* (47), *Jovanka Dašić* (42), *Kostadin Dašić*, *Mijajlo Dašić* (56) were abducted. In Priština, *Predrag Vujačić* (59) was kidnapped.

…

Between June 15 and 17, a group of Albanian vandals in uniforms kidnapped a Serb, *Borivoje Pavlović* (65), a retired hotelier, from his sister's apartment after he returned from the monastery in the little town of Dečani.

At night on June 13/14 the *Lazarević* spouses—*Jovan* (87) and *Ljubinka* (75) were forcibly taken out of their apartment in Djakovica and killed on June 15.

Kidnappings, Murders, Rapes, Arsons, Plunders in Peć and Gnjilane Areas

June 6/19, 1999, Venerable Bessarion the Wonderworker, Venerable Martyr John of Stjenica

People call us from all parts of Kosovo and Metohija, from Prizren to Priština, Djakovica and Peć, informing us of the increasing number of kidnappings, murders, rapes. In the villages located in Istok, Klina, Peć, Vučitrn and other municipalities, especially in Metohija, the Albanians have burned hundreds of Serbian houses in the past 24 hours. Many Serbian houses in the surrounding villages of Lipljan, Obilić, Kosovo Polje, Podujevo and Priština Municipality have been burned, too. Several dozens of Serbian apartments and shops temporarily abandoned by their owners have also been looted. On the streets of Peć, in the conflicts between those who defended their homes and their robbers, three people have been killed and one has been wounded.

This new Kosovo suffering deepens the St. Vitus' Day (*Vidovdan*) wound from 1389, with a new wound with no remedy by the hypocritical hand and grenades from Christian European nations, but also by the actions of soulless former Serbs. Jeremiah's prophetic cry echoes by the Lab and the Sitnica as once "by the rivers of Babylon": "*By the*

rivers of Kosovo and Metohija, there we sat down, yea, we wept!" Whenever I touch this wound, I feel as if "as if I stabbed my fingers in a hundred acres of blood."

Every new morning in the Patriarchate of Peć is an occasion for a new horror. One becomes more aware of what has happened and what is happening in Kosovo and Metohija.

This morning the Patriarch serves the service of God in the temple of the Holy Apostles, defending and protecting the people by faith and prayer. Yesterday, Bishop Atanasije of Herzegovina arrived in the Patriarchate, too. After a short stay here, he went to Orahovac to meet in the ghetto in Orahovac with Bishop Artemije and the local people who are also preparing for the forced migration. Otherwise, he manages to get everywhere, same as recently in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slavonija and the Serbian Krajina, visiting each and every destroyed temple, while in the meantime managing to translate the Psalms of David in Gračanica.

...

Today the sky is gloomy. Heavens are high while human bodies are heavy ... Only the birds fly over easily, singing pleasantly, as if nothing was happing for them. The elderly nuns, lead by Mother Fevronija anxiously and patiently carry their cross. They venerate the icons and reliquaries of Holy archbishops and patriarchs of Peć. They quietly and unobtrusively take a blessing from His Holiness today, again on other days from the one who serves, singing "Truly You are Worthy"as they return to the monastic quarters, two by two, after the service.

The rest of the people whom we gather and every day send by buses to Rožaj, talk in small groups in the monastery yard since the early morning. They all get ready to leave, frightened by what has happened to them...

I think that Kosovo appears and shows as a defeat for humanity:

a) Many Albanians, setting fire to the Patriarchate of Peć in 1981, set fire to their homes, too, further stoking the pyres, with worse and worse violence;

b) To some extent the Serbs have experienced moral fall in the eruption of evil, selfishness, hatred;

c) NATO, the United States and the allied European nations manifested their hypocrisy and barbarism, leaving traces of their inhumanity unprecedented in the modern European history.

Everyone is defeated and everyone is guilty in Kosovo, only God knows who more and who less. Many of the Serbs are not of Holy Prince Lazar's, the Jugović's mother's nor of the Jugović brothers' morals anymore.

Lord have mercy! Holy Archbishops and Patriarchs of Peć, Holy King Milutin, King Stefan Dečanski, Holy martyr Prince Lazar and Martyrs of Kosovo, pray to God for us!

...

Today in Peć, *Miloš Jevrić* (60), an automechanic, has been kidnapped in front of the Hotel Metohija in the middle of the day, as well as *Veljko Folić* (50), *Maksim Krstić* (45) of Russian descent and *Miodrag Šoškić* (44). Radulović managed to escape. They took away their car and threw them into the other one. In Nedakovac, an older person *Dušan Brakus* (71) was kidnapped at about one thirty in the afternoon.

...

In Belo Polje there was shooting until the evening. The Blackshirts with qeleshes[20] barged into the village and killed *Rade Stošić*, *Čedo Stošić* and *Filip Kostić*, wounded Mirko Stošić whom the carabineers transferred to hospital. *One more man* was killed. The dead were left in the house.

In Brezanik, the Albanians s caught Tmušić, a Serb civilian but he managed to escape. Danilo Radulović did, too. Today, the Italian carabineers together with Fr. Miljko Korićanin, a Peć parish priest, transferred 52 persons by bus from Belo Polje to a skyscraper in the city center, across from the bus station. There are other Serbs gathered there, too, so that the Italians can protect them.

They report Brestovik was assaulted at about 21.30 pm. There were 12 people left there needing help, because they were in a life threatening danger. This afternoon, the attorney *Milivoje Djuričić* (62) who returned from the Patriarchate to the city, claiming that they wouldn't do anything to him, because they all know and respect him" has been kidnapped, as well as *Radonja Petrović* (64), a pensioner, *Jovica Savić* (40), an electrician at the "Battery-Company," *Jordan Marković* and *Aleksandar Jašović* (63).

Radmila and *Milosav Dabić* from Nerodimlje were kidnapped between June 14 and 19.

Fr. Miljko was caught in the city in the afternoon hours. As he told us afterwards, they took him out of the car, nailed him to the wall putting a rifle to his forehead:"I'll kill you, you bloody Serb!... they hissed. "Well, kill me then!," Father Miljko replied. They took the car plates off his car. In the meantime, a third Albanian showed up saying: "I know this one... let him go!..." This saved his life. He arrived at the Patriarchate and told us what had happened to him, joking at his expense, although obviously upset. It has left its mark on him for months and years later, but it didn't frighten him or deter him from rushing into aid in the city whenever it was necessary those days. Father Budo, the other Peć parish priest, struggled together with him. They both served in the monastery those days, sacrificing themselves at the same time for their suffering parishioners.

The following news arrives: There are about 57 refugees from Knin[21] in the High School of Economics in Peć. They were placed there at the time, but now have been forgotten by everyone and left completely alone. The Albanian thugs who break into apartments and loot them have been spot-

[20] qeleshe or "plis" is a white Albanian skull hat—*transl. note.*

[21] Displaced Serbs from Serbian Krajina in Croatia, during the Civil War in former Yugoslavia(1991–1995). —*transl. note.*

ted around the high school, especially at night. In the best case, a new exile is awaiting the Krajina Serb refugees from Knin area, if they avoid death.

Today we hear from Danilo Radulović from Brežanik who has fled and is hiding together with a Mohammedan and five women in an old house across from the barracks. He cries for help. We helped them with the carabineers to reach the Patriarchate.

From the village of Drsnik, which is said to be the oldest Serbian village of this region with 220 Serbian homes, at about 4:00 pm they inform us by phone that that *Grigorije Vesić*, an old man of 89 years, was killed, while his daughter Ilinka hid at Albanian Roman-Catholics. The carabineers brought her to the Patriarchate. The old man Grigorije was murdered in the presence of his daughter by two Albanians, one of whom was in uniform. He was killed while lying bedridden in his house. The daughter then asked one other Albanian to bury her father near the house (which is why that Albanian was killed, too). Ilinka was the last Serb in Drsnik, all Serbian inhabitants had already fled across Rožaje.

They tell us there were 60 homes in Dolac, while 200 in Osojane. Both villages are already deserted...

Otherwise, the Peć District had about 450 000 inhabitants, of which 45 000 Serbs, 120 000 non-Albanians (Muslims and others), 285 000 Albanians. These days and months, such radical ethnic "cleansing" has been carried out in the District, so that all the remaining non-Albanian residents could have been enumerated by name.

...

At about 10:00 pm they inform us that *three women* were kidnapped in the settlement of Brežanica...

...

Meeting these days with the Serbs from Peć and the wider Peć district, accompanying them and staying with them in the Patriarchate, I get the following impression: this nation is broken and fragmented inside, in a deeper perspective—they are separated from Church. That is why it is easy to scatter them. As if for many of them it was not difficult to run away from their hearths, to abandon the age-old holy sites. Being terrified by the bombing, left at the mercy of Albanian terrorists, forsaken by their own government, encouraged by the authorities to flee, especially by the police, what else the poor people could have done but to head—on a road to nowhere.

...

The bombing, unfortunately, proved that the Western democracy is being transformed into a—*demonocracy*. For the umpteenth time in recent history, what is revealed under the mask of hypocritical protection of human rights, is—the will to power, to rule the world, by imposing one's model of living and thinking as the only correct, or in the language of "cuddly but empty" political correctness—the road "without alternative" and increasingly, without soul and humanness. It is hypocritical and treacherous totalitarianism, more perfidious of all hitherto existing in the world that is actually at work. When they kill and destroy—this is the struggle for peace and human rights. When a small nation defends their lives and the doorsteps, their holy sites, homeland of his grandfathers and fathers from barbarianism—for the Euro-Atlantic fans of human rights this is a crime which needs to be most severely punished and retaliated to extinction.

In Ljutoglava—*Dušanka* and *Gospodjinka Jovanović*, In Piskot—*Dragutin Krstić* (69), in Orahovac—*Budimir Bulić* (49), in Donje Nerodimlje—*Milorad Djordjević*, son of Trojan, have also been kidnapped.

Srećko Karadžić (47) has been killed in Gnjilane. On June 14, *Ilija Ilić* (47), an employee of a Prizren water supply company, was kidnapped from his own apartment in Prizren.

...

In Koretin, a village near Gnjilane, the Albanian terrorists kidnapped two neighbors—*Nenad Arsić* (31), the son of Novica, and *Milivoje Simić* (50), the son of Srba, at a gas pump. Milivoje managed to escape, while the Albanian terrorists in civilian clothes caught Nenad (of Novica) Arsić, and pushed him into the car. Milivoje later returned to try to free Nenad through some Albanian friends and even got himself into the car in which they held Nenad. The terrorists, however, took them further away and killed Nenad shooting him in the head. They threw him out on the bridge near the "Department store" in Kosovska Kamenica. Meanwhile, the Serbs from the Serbian settlements organized themselves and started shooting the Albanians who were driving in a column. Three Albanians were killed then, but the car with the kidnapped Milivoje Simić managed to escape from the angry people. Later on, Milivoje was found massacred, castrated, with the left ear cut off at the Transformer Station in Kosovska Kamenica.

The case of Budimir Bulić: Bulić, a social worker, decided to leave Orahovac in Metohija with his mother. He already came with his friends, but having noticed he forgot his documents at home, decided to return to get them. Since he was gone for a long time, his mother called him and he let her know he was on the way, but never showed up. His mother went back to their apartment to find the entrance door wide open and all the things ransacked and scattered. She knocked at the Albanian neighbor's door, but ran into KLA (UCK). One of them went to get hold of her, but she told them that KFOR was waiting for her in front of the building and managed to escape.

Miloš Ćirković—New Obilić: "You Go, I am Staying!..."

June 7/20, 1999, Hieromartyr Theodotus of Anchyra

Today, the last members of the police and the regular Yugoslav Army are leaving the territory of Kosovo and Metohija. As the responsible in Serbia say, "the Yugoslav army

has a new mission—to protect the Serbian people in Kosovo from the edge of Kosovo!"

We leave for Visoki Dečani with His Holiness from where the Patriarch continues his trip for Belgrade in order to attend the regular session of the Holy Synod. After the Liturgy in Gračanica, Bishop Artemije holds a Great National Assembly in Kosovo Polje, and then leaves for Gnjilane and the surrounding areas. Bishop Atanasije of Herzegovina is in Kosovska Mitrovica, and then in Lipljane and Uroševac where there are only a few Serbs left. Vučitrn has remained without any Serbs, the church and the parochial house there have been burned down. I return from Dečani to the Patriarchate with my associates. A bunch of Albanians have looted and burned about twenty Serbian houses in the village of Grace, near Babin Most. All residents have fled. The British soldiers from KFOR, although being very close, did not intervene, but continued to peacefully regulate the traffic on the road during the looting of villages, while the Albanians drove tractors and cars full of Serbian property returning them empty to get new quantities.

Radovan Bulatović (69), son of Blažo, has been killed in Peć. They inform us: the people near the Institute toward Vitomirica are under siege—they are in need of urgent aid. A fresh news: the Albanians are breaking the buildings at the Metropolitanate—the parochial house and the rest. The Italian guards are not there.

Drenovac: a sick old woman, Božana Jovanović and her son Vojislav have stayed. Nothing is known about them. We went and visited their house. We did not find anyone there.

We find out: Serbian Klina completely moved out on June 17.

...

How are we going to bury the killed in Belo Polje? We leave, with Father Miljko Korinćanin, Father Radomir Nikčević and others, for Belo Polje at 5pm to bury the sorrowful brothers *Radomir* and *Čedo Stošić* as well as *Filip Kostić*. All three of them were killed by a bullet in the forehead. One of them we found on the first floor covered in blood. Right above him, there was a portrait of Slobodan Milošević along the entire wall, all the way to the loft. The other two were nailed by the wall in front of the entrance door, a bullet pierced their brains. They had rubber footwear on their feet, dressed as if they had just returned from the fields, doing their daily rustic work.[22] We rapped them up in the blankets we brought from the Patriarchate. One cannot even think of the coffins here. We carried them on our hands closer to the cemetery, placing them next to one another on a table we got somewhere and held a funeral service. The funeral service was filmed by some foreign TV crews. There were Italian carabineers around us with their machine guns at the ready. The desolate villages looked petrified, and the mountain ranges were silent. The birds were quiet, you could only hear the boom shots from the buildings on the other side of the cemetery... The Italian rushed us. And rightfully so. We were a good target for the KLA bandits. The Italians took Pavle Djukić and his elderly mother Jevrosima out of the village.

We find out from the Italians this, too: Miloš Ćirković, a 38 year old forester, a guide of the Serbian special forces in war who "knew perfectly every tree, every crest," stayed completely alone in his home village. He stayed to defend the village. I send Father Radomir Nikčević together with a young man from the Stošić family to greet him and ask in my name to please move with us to the Patriarchate. Fr. Radomir finds him armed and dressed in his military uniform. He does not want to take it off. The only Serbian soldier in uniform in Kosovo and Metohija after the June 1999 withdrawal. Fr. Radomir extends the greetings to him and the message. He begs him for the sake of Christ, persistently trying to convince him to come with us. The young Stošić begs him, too. And he replies, unearthly determined and earthly harsh: "You'd better shut up, so that I don't kill you! Shame on you, you all betrayed!... You go, I am staying!..."

The last defender of the Serbian Church and the people in this pogrom, ready to die "for the king and fatherland," Fr. Radomir tells us upon his return. "His house is all drilled. He is barricaded in the blind concrete corner on the ground floor with a bunch of ammunition lying around, determined to defend his door step to the death. He thanks us for the care and greetings, but steadfastly refuses to leave home, pronouncedly stopping any further persuasion... "Shaken by the determination of the lone warrior, Father Radomir greets him at parting blessing him on his last venture with these words: "You have chosen a good part, Miloš of the Obilić heart! May God bless you in your good endeavor, Miloš Ćirković!..."

...

Upon returning to the Patriarchate, we soon went to Petrič. We were informed that *Aco Grujić*, *Radomir* and one more person were kidnapped. We visited their deserted house. There were two dogs tied next to it. Already running wild with hunger, they howl. The wailing is heard to the sky, they look more like wolves. My soul still hurts me today ...We should have told the Italians to deliver them from pain. After the Albanian attack, the village of Slivovo of 40 Serbian homes, all poured in Gračanica. In Sofalija there were 25 Serbian homes burned. *Vladimir* and *Persa Stanisavljević* refused to leave the house in Priština and

[22] The only survivor, Mirko Stošić, later on testified that, while they were sitting at home, a group of Albanians came and called Čedo to come to them: "Come here and look at me in the eye!" And when he approached, one of the Albanians fired two shots in his forehead. Mirko ran to them stunned: "You've killed my brother!" "This is your brother? You, too come here!" And they fired two bullets in his head, too. He was taken one of the bullets out in the hospital, while the other one has remained in the forehead because it got stuck in an awkward place, so he still carries it. Then they killed Filip and Rado.

were slaughtered. In Prizren, *Panta Filipović* and *Momir Stamenković* were slaughtered, in the settlement of Goleš all the houses were burned down, at the Batlava Lake near Podujevo, *two persons* were killed. In Suva Reka, *Dušan Crevar* (31) was kidnapped.

I give the following statement to Radio-Svetigora:

The Italian troops protect the Monastery of the Patriarchate of Peć as there are great dangers to any movement of Serbs in Peć, because very tragic and unfortunate things happen from moment to moment here. During this day, a dozen people have not returned and have been kidnapped including those who were here in the monastery and went to the city or a neighboring village to see their houses. To mention just two names of the people who were kidnapped yesterday: Maxim Krstić and Milutin Šoškić, who were taken to an unknown destination, as evidenced by their friend Radulović. Having been shoved out of their cars which were taken away from them, the two of them were forced into another car while Radulović managed to escape. Likewise, another man named Tmušić who was prosecuted yesterday, while his car was taken away from him, managed to escape at night and find a shelter in another village, in Belo Polje, in the end managed to come with great difficulties to us, here at the monastery. Besides the lawyer Milivoje Djuričić, today Radonja Petrović, Jordan Marković, and a young 24 year old man Duško Jokić, Miloš Jelić and Vjeko Kolić have also been kidnapped, while there are numerous other people on whom we do not have any information. However, the situation is all the more pressing, particularly for those people who live further away, in the suburban areas, such as Vitomirica and Belo Polje. The terrorists dressed not in KLA uniforms, but in black suits with white caps stormed with five cars in Belo Polje, where there have been some 50 Serbs until today. They killed two members of the Stošić family, one from the Kostić while wounding one person. Since we informed the Italian command from the monastery, they flew by helicopter to get the wounded person and transferred him to hospital, while the other three remained dead on the spot. They recommended us to move them to church until tomorrow and then to try, if possible, to bury them. We will, however, try to do it today. Alarming news arrive from all areas where there are our people. We, here, appeal to all who can hear us and to all who are responsible for this enormous calamity that has befallen the Serbian nation, to do everything in their power to protection the last remains of our population, because the Italians are not able to offer full protection, despite their willingness to do so, because there are not enough of them.

Right at this minute the Italian command is informing us that the village of Brestovik is under a terrorist attack. A mother and son were killed there yesterday. There is one remaining group of Serbs, and we drew the attention of the Italian command to draw them out of there and allocate them in the city where they would be protected by Italian soldiers. However, this was not done and we are fear casualties.

With the cooperation of our people, the Italians have settled the persons from Belo Polje who have been there until today, in the building in front of the Hotel Metohija in Peć where there are a dozen of our people already. They are somewhat protected over there. This area is in a very bad condition and we do not know what is waiting for us neither during the day nor at night. And we who are here, in the Peć Patriarchate, have made an appeal to the Italian Commander Del Vecchio, the UN representative, the English ambassador, the deputy of General Jackson in Priština, to disarm the terrorist military KLA units because that is the only way to prevent the slaughter of the remaining population in the Peć area. Again, we appeal to the official organs of the Yugoslav government to protect the remaining population and to protect the remaining holy sites in Kosovo and Metohija—particularly the Dečani Monastery and the Patriarchate of Peć. In the Gorioč Monastery there are six sisters and one priest. They are on their own, as are the sisters of the medieval Budisavci Monastery. There are about 250 of our people together with Father Božić in the Prizren Seminary. Father Justin and two monks have stayed in the Episcopate and they have called us today informing us that the situation is somewhat calmer over there. There is a big group of Serbs completely under siege in Velika Hoča and Orahovac. Yesterday, a UN representative and Bishop Atanasije visited them.

What would be important: those who are in charge internationally and domestically, need to make sure that no one comes from the outside and that none of those who are here with us carry weapons. So, people who will be returning, whether they are Serbs or Albanians, who will be massively returning, especially from the direction of Montenegro, must not carry guns. Any arming at this time can be a disaster for both the Albanians and the Serbs, and would likely lead to a total defeat of the international forces, as it is not going to be possible to tame the rampaging passions the explosion of which is on horizon here.

We all ask and appeal to everyone to do everything possible to protect this ancient holy places and to help to establish a real order, especially in the region of Peć district which is controlled by Italian troops. Of course, this applies to all other areas of Kosovo and Metohija.

Just now, a woman who was raped has arrived. Her husband managed to escape from the hands of those who wanted to kill him. Obviously, there are many of such things, such dark and insane events. However, we hope that our appeal to the international community, the factors of international armed forces, as well as to the Yugoslav authorities, will bear at least some fruit.

Any delay in disarming those who have come now, whether they are members of what is known as KLA formations, or various gangs who have started to roam the Metohija region, can be fatal. We hear that those who attacked and raped yesterday, were in the Albanian military uniforms, which means that people who do not belong here

Serbian Graveyard in Podujevo, desacrated by the Albanian extremists in 2004

tury of the strongest spreading of the Ottomans (Turks) and ethnic Albanians in the Greek and Serbian lands.

Let us recall here the words of his appeals and entreaties to his flock decimated or confused by "fear of the Turks and ethnic Albanians": "Let a Christian man or a woman, who *promises not to speak Albanian at home*, stand up and tell this to me, and I will take all their sins upon my soul, since their birth until now. I will ask all Christians to forgive them and they will receive forgiveness which, otherwise, they would not receive, even if they gave thousands of gold coins"...

The foreign language of the heterodox, who were masters of life and death of these poor people, could only blur and corrupt their clear Christian conscience, and their good Christian customs. As often happened in practice, it would separate them from the Church and finally make them convert. Spiridon Gopčević and our other travel writers from the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, witnessed not only the individual examples of conversions, but the whole Islamized villages of the Christian Orthodox Serb population in the Serbian south and southwest, all the way to Thessaloniki and Albania. Out of fear of Muslim Albanians they switched to the Albanian language at their own home.

This bloody cycle has become too heavy from sins to be stopped by any unspiritual means, which neither transform the hearts nor bring us all together to the deepest repentance. Not only through the confession of wrongdoing and regret over them, but also through the renunciation of all this within us that has ever alleged first of all Albanians, but also the Serbs, both as individuals and as nations to lawlessness and crime. Especially, the renunciation of destructive *lust and the arrogance of living*, of immersion into the earthly kingdom that "lasts only a brief time"[26] and of the alienation of the Kingdom of Heaven, that is "everlasting and forever"... Our people know very well why they say, "Sow *not* evils in the furrows of injustice, and thou shalt *not* reap them sevenfold," both in this world and in the other one.

During this time our brothers in the north hasten to Europe. The Federal Prime Minister Momir Bulatović announces in Belgrade: "Despite the eleven-week-conflict with the forces of NATO, FR of Yugoslavia sees her future in strengthening her relations with the neighboring countries and Europe and will constantly strive to be involved in all economic and political processes in the region of Europe."

In Novi Sad, the International Festival of "Alternative and New Theatre," "INFANT," has begun in the Catholic churchyard and on the Petrovaradin bridge on Danube destroyed by the NATO bombings. The program includes performances and installations, as "artistic documents of the evil times," including "The Aircrafts of Darkness," "I Vote for Peace," "SFRY," "The Threepenny Opera" and "The Nightmare for Two"...

For further reading see: *Chronicles of the Renewed Crucifixion of Kosovo* by Metropolitan Amfilohije (Radović), Belgrade–Cetinje 2014.

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[26] Quote from the famed epic cycle of Kosovo; when reflecting on the choice the angel of God offered him when his nation was threatened by the Ottomans, Holy Emperor Lazar prayed:
Dear God, what shall I do and how shall I?
Which kingdom shall I choose?
Shall I choose the earthly kingdom?
Or shall I choose the heavenly kingdom?
The earthly kingdom lasts only a brief time,
But the heavenly kingdom always and forever.—transl. note.

The Cry of the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija

Bishop Atanasije Jevtić

Blessed are Thou o Lord, God of our fathers, righteous are all Thy works, truthful art Thou in all Thine endeavors, unswerving are Thine paths, and Thine judgment based on truth and redemption.

Righteous and fair are thy judgments and admonitions for the sake of our salvation, as well as all that thou hast wrought upon us and our people in this land because of our transgressions. Within Thy realm of truth and justice, Thou hast handed us over to lawless enemies, hateful apostates and domestic atheists. Thou has enslaved us by delivering us to unjust foreign masters, to a global tyrant, more malevolent than any other upon this earth.

"Thou hast become angry, and we too transgressed," said one of Thine servants from antiquity. It is more appropriate, for us to say: "we transgressed, and Thou becamest angry as a result." Truly we did sin; we engaged in lawlessness, we retreated from Thou and Thine precepts. We erred in all things. Thy redemptive commandments, we failed to keep and obey, as Thou commandest us for our salvation's sake.

And now Lord, words dare not pass our lips, as we have become objects of shame and ridicule before the world; before the entire human race. Because, dear Lord, we have been reduced and diminished more than any other nation, humiliated across our own land, from west to east. All because of the wickedness of our leaders, the tyrannical arrogance of our temporal rulers, and because of our many moral lapses and sins.

As our father, the Patriarch has said, today across Kosovo and Metohija we find ourselves: "fleeing, night and day with our dispossessed people, from place to place, like a vessel tossed on the open seas, scurrying across the vast expanse, waiting for the sun to set, for the day to fold, and this dark night to pass, like the wintry calamity which has befallen us." For there is no one to shield us, or to free us from our sorrow. Our pain trebled, weeping, we beseech Thee: "How much longer, o Lord, wilt Thou neglect us? How long will Thou continue to arm Thyself against Thine legacy? Arise, o Lord, from Thy slumber. Why does Thou turn Thy face away from us? And again we ask, arise Lord, succor us in Thy Name's sake. Our sobbing continues unabated; weeping has overtaken our tears, and still we do not receive help from any quarter."

Because, All-seeing and Mighty Lord, there is not amongst us today, a prince or a leader. Not an irreproachable Serb, nor a sacrifice pure and unstained, nor a genuine offering from a blameless heart. We have all strayed from Thy path. Because we've distanced ourselves from Thee, because we've left Thee, the Wellspring of Life, and sought other newly-dug wells, where the water was tainted even before it ran dry, from which we're now being offered muddy water and sludge in an attempt to poison us with the venom of worldly serpents and global vipers. Thou has rightfully imposed upon us Thine neglect. May this deserved estrangement from Thee and Thine people, as well as from ourselves, in our country within our own temporal flesh, never recur.

Thy houses of worship have been desecrated and torched in our country; sacred monastic sanctuaries razed and destroyed. Pure crosses and icons of Thy Holy saints and martyrs have been shattered. Trampled underfoot, first by domestic atheists, and now by the foreign heretics and multifarious occupiers. And so today, as in the time of the Turks, in this Holy Land of the ancient shrines of our fathers, "a solitary Christ extends his arms, awaiting His absent congregation." It's not there Lord, because your flock has been betrayed and sold; turned over to wolves, handed over to inhumane sycophants and subjugators. It has been sold off, as in the days of slavery, left to the whims and mercy of callous foreigners and murderous Albanian arsonists.

The devastation is everywhere. From the Holy Savior's church in Peć, which is once again surrounded by janissaries bent on looting and setting it ablaze, and it continues on both sides of the River Drim throughout Metohija, which has been torched, and its Serbian population exiled. Then across the burned out and destroyed Nerodimlje district, to the fire-gutted Binča Monastery in the Morava plain. With each passing day, attacks become more frequent on the ancient Serbian historic sites of Izmornik and Novo Brdo. From Mt. Šar and the fire-bombed monastery of Holy Trinity in Mušutište, and St. Mark's in Koriša, to the charred Serbian ruins of Podkaljaja in Prizren, and across to King Nemanja's Hoča where Zočište monastery has been leveled to its foundations. From the new concentration camp for Serbs in Orahovac, to Goleš which was demolished by NATO bombing, across to King Milutin's Priština depopu-

Calendar, November 6th, narthex, Dečani

lated with sword and flame, to Prince Lazar's Samodreža church, across the Lab river basin and Bajgora.

Herein lies our new Kosovo Crucifixion, just as six hundred years before a great marble Cross was erected over the same Kosovo Battlefield. Then our fathers, though physically defeated, remained spiritually unconquered.

They built the memorial cross and inscribed it with these words as a living testament to their faith, humanity and heroism: "O man, who treads upon this Serbian soil, whosoever or whatsoever you may be, when you come upon this field which is Kosovo, all across it you will see the skeletons of the dead. Among them, you will behold me, in stony form, a Cross marker, standing erect as a banner in the midst of the battlefield. Here fell a great ruler; a marvel of a man and Serbian Prince, by the name of Lazar. He was a great and pious prince, a pillar of devotion, a man of deep wisdom and fiery intellect. He was a shield to strangers and those in need of refuge. He provided nourishment for the hungry and compassion for the lowly. And was a comfort and solace for the grieving and one who loved all that Christ desired."

And now, compassionate Lord, after six centuries, a pseudo-tsar and a false prophet from Gazimestan rules over us. More like a Muslim convert than a Serb, he proclaimed that there would be no betrayal, even though we knew that treachery had already been committed and was now merely being revealed. With such a godless leader and pseudo-Serb, we're left to dwell "on this earth, but without land, on Kosovo but without Kosovo, of Miloš Obilić yet without him, by ourselves but without ourselves." Possessing honor and reputation, we have been left without either, because that godless communist, that beast and turncoat, trampled and soiled them. Being what he is, in the words of a Serbian poet, he was not able, and cannot fight to defend Kosovo, because: "neither a Turk nor apostate can defend your people, nor an arsonist protect against fire, nor a Pharaoh deliver you from slavery. A false savior will readily lead you to Babylon and into a new captivity." That is how this pyromaniac who torched his own home and others', impostor and traitor, has rapidly led us to this hellish impasse. He has brought us to a place where innocent victims lie unburied, massacred children remain unmourned, holy shrines desecrated and burnt, where an entire people have been scorned, trampled and humiliated.

His ten-year reign of insanity and inhumanity has been attributed to my people, granted, an imperfect people but Thine nonetheless dear Lord, with a conscience and a capacity for repentance. Just like this dictator are the foreign tyrants and hypocrites. Refined yet callous are these barbarians of the pseudo-Christian West, who are even more cunning, insincere and deceitful. They're happy with this outcast from God such as he is, because he provides them the opportunity to inflict their inhumanity on us as they have in the past upon other small peoples and nations around the world. They view him as they see themselves, then judge our people the same way. They, and their domestic sycophants, idolatrous worshippers of Esperia, the New Demonia, mock us because we consider ourselves to be God's people. Because we believe in Justice and God's Truth and still adhere to our fathers' covenant with Heaven, and venerate the Kosovo sacrifice made by our Martyrs and New Martyrs.

It is quite just and true, what the Serbian people of Kosovo today know and feel: "God is angry at the Serbs, because of their many mortal sins. Our leaders trampled upon the Law, and chose folly to be their guiding light. Our own leaders, God's curse be on their souls, carved the empire into little pieces; our own leaders, miserable cowards, thus became the betrayers of our nation."

For five centuries we suffered under the foreign yoke, never completely liberated, but neither totally enslaved, nor alienated from God or ourselves. We suffered from invasions and onslaughts of every evil, from East and West, but our greatest suffering occurred during the most recent fifty-year occupation by those estranged from God and the people. The Serbian nation has suffered at the hands of the godless and inhuman communists and neo-communists, who became rulers with the help of Western atheists and antichrists. It was from the West, and because of it, that the current and most terrible evil has been visited upon us. From these barbarians of the eerily radiant, and simultaneously obscuring West, neither liberty nor humanity has ever emanated, but rather only so-called "new world orders," new enslavements replacing previous ones, such as this present tyranny and bombing. From Easter to Easter, and from Good Friday to Good Friday. Their last three-month NATO-bombing of innocent and enslaved people

was grandly proclaimed, by our domestic tyrant, as well as the foreign tyrants, each for themselves, as their victory. So then Lord, Righteous Judge, who was defeated?

O Lord of the Heavenly Host and Judge above earthly tyrants. We, the innocent people, the enslaved captives, are the defeated ones.

We sit Lord on the banks of the rivers of Kosovo and Metohija: Lab and Sitnica, Drim and Bistrica, and weep like Thy people of Israel once did in Babylon. They won't even offer us pure water to drink, nor allow us to harvest what remains of our wheat, nor to bury our murdered kin, nor sing our ancient Kosovo hymns. Tearfully we eat our stale bread, while being told about abundant humanitarian aid. And who can receive such "help" with an open heart, when it's offered conditionally; when we are blackmailed in exchange for a meal. In many places there is no one to distribute it to, except for an old man or woman here or there, evicted from their homes or apartments. If they've somehow managed to survive, in places like Podujevo, Priština, Štimlje or Prizren, they're maltreated, with wounds and bruises on their bodies and on their souls. "Three elderly women remain, holding up the Cross in Kosovo, out of three hundred thousand Serbs who lived here," cries one half-blind grandmother as she is guarded by tanks of the mighty NATO super-power!

Calendar, November 7th, narthex, Dečani

Two thirds of the Serbian population have been expelled and exiled from the "ethnically cleansed" towns and villages of Kosovo and Metohija. "From Čačane, brother, to Zvečane," the Serbs have been virtually eliminated, much as they were during the Turkish occupation, or as in Ustasha-run Croatia. All the while, the "humanitarian" visitors from the West and their sighted, yet unseeing diplomatic escorts keep asking: "How many of you still remain?" The much tormented Bishop of Kosovo-Metohija, "a sad orphan without friend or kinfolk," replies with bitterness and tears: "We are few in number, yet we are not counted."

A global military force of massive proportions has come to Kosovo, for the stated purpose of stopping aggression and ethnic persecution. Since its arrival however, unspeakable acts of aggression have been perpetrated against Serbs; murders and acts of destruction committed, yet unacknowledged by the world community. During the NATO bombing campaign, bombs and rockets virtually destroyed the wheat fields and vineyards, leaving no grain for communion bread, or wine for the Holy Liturgy. The plains of Kosovo and Metohija are furrowed with bomb craters, farm fields and gardens are poisoned with depleted uranium, and human souls have been embittered and quashed by the inhumanity of it all.

Under the auspices of KFOR "peacemakers," unforeseen evil and aggression against an entire people has intensified to unprecedented levels. The end to this suffering is nowhere in sight as KFOR refuses to use its power to stop the criminal Albanian rampage. How can they, when the Albanian gang leaders are allies and collaborators in NATO's "new world order." It's a partnership in neocolonialism; a new way to control the world through drugs, weapons, money, and various other forms of criminality, all under the label of "demo(n)cracy."

Wherever these barbarians from the West have gone, they've brought war and misfortune. They claim to be bearers of peace and human rights, but bring only greater misery and injustice. They do not resolve problems, but magnify and prolong them. They appear refined but are vulgar, seemingly friendly but are brutal, much like the tools and weapons of their trade, and are just as inhumane as their anti-Christian godlessness.

They claim to be an example for the world and a measure of all things. But they do not have the means to measure, nor desire to know Justice or Truth. They make grand pronouncements about the "new order" of things in the world, but they are faded and worn-out like their sins and inhumanity. Their hearts are decayed, gnawed away by the suspicion that they may appear unsuccessful and lose the confidence (or in their words "credibility of NATO") to lead all of humanity and be its harbingers of joy. Their "new world order" is nothing more than age-old subjugation, re-cycled greed, self-serving interest, and power lust. All in an effort to dominate the world and re-shape it in their own image. Anyone opposed to their plans and designs is proclaimed an outcast, labeled as intolerant, or "uncooperative" and as such deemed unworthy of life or existence. They constantly talk about liberty, but they themselves are slaves to base passions and are unconcealed idolaters of false gods. Wher-

Calendar, September 24th and 25th, narthex, Gračanica

ever they trod, "they leave behind a stench of inhumanity." They constantly shout: "Peace, peace!," but lack it within their own hearts and consciences. That is why they bring disorder wherever they go. They only posses one single argument and single approach to peace; the use of bombs, tanks, NATO, and occupation. War is in their soul and they sow it wherever they go. When they choose not to declare war, they wage "air campaigns," which is their euphemism for the destruction of nations and peoples with uranium-depleted bombs and infernal rockets. And all this is deemed as representing "European" or "Western civilization." We see it as the NATO-fication of the last remnants of Europe, the twilight of a once-Christian civilization. The lasting legacy of that civilization will be: treachery, deadly weapons, and police batons. Berlin and Brussels, New York and Washington have truly become a "the sledge hammer of the earth" as were Egypt and Babylon, Rome and Constantinople in antiquity. Today's "global sledge hammers" are bereft of true human civilization and culture but instead are flush with hypocrisy and moral posturing. Behind their smooth, appealing façade is a festering, postulating maggot pile.

They claim to be anti-Communist, but their behavior is identical to the communists of old. They engage in the tyrannical enslavement of people and nations, trampling human hearts and minds, all the while offering hyperbole about "human rights, liberty, and equality."

The reality of their rhetoric however, comes to an equation of death. Their power is a virtual steamroller that crushes everything which differs from their template. They clearly aspire to reconfigure the world to their exact specifications, in their own image and likeness which is that of apocalyptic beasts, antichrists, god-men and pseudo-gods.

For centuries, the West has prevented us from liberating ourselves; from getting our house in order, constantly imposing upon us their dictates and prefabricated solutions. Those solutions cannot even be realized, let alone sustained, because they are a product of aggression and injustice. They are not a creation of human excellence and virtue, but Satan's handiwork; the fruit of treachery, godlessness and inhumanity. The West persists in this aggressive behavior in order to continue meddling in our house so that they may profit from our suffering and pain. All the while telling us, without a trace of shame or remorse: "You're not capable of organizing your household, or maintaining order in your yard." As if we could forget all that they've done to us in the wars and occupations we've been subjected to. Or how they "liberated" us, only to make us slaves twice over that which we had been. All to prevent us from being who we were, and who we can become. To make us over in their own idolatrous image, as the Lord's prophets warned long ago.

Arise, o Lord my God, and judge Thy people and nations by Thy eternal Justice and Truth. Let Thy hand be raised, and may Thou not forget Thy needy 'till the end of time. Install, o Lord, a law-giver above both us and them, and let all people and nations understand that they are mere human beings. Because those which have attacked us, now have surrounded and subjugated us, and have trained their eyes with the intention of exterminating us. They intend to pound us into the ground, to annihilate and erase any trace of our existence. They wish to destroy Thine shrines, simply because they are not like theirs. They are resentful that we know and remember that "in a martyred land, martyrs are needed."

O God our Savior, Hope of the world, even of the smallest and most distant corners of the earth. We know from our life's bitter experience, and from the historic journey and forbearance of our fathers, that the greater the misfortune, the greater the hope of salvation. That is the mystery of Thy Son's Cross, as well as the mystery of our crucifixion and resurrection on the path through this Valley of Tears that is this earth.

Lord, Thou merciful who loveth mankind, Savior of souls, we pray to Thee with wounded bodies, dispirited souls, with subdued spirits and faltering voices. We pray and beseech Thee to be admitted again. Allow the sacrifice of our humiliation to be accepted before Thee, and let Thy holy will today rule above us. For there is no shame for those who are bound to Thee. And now we adhere to Thee with all our heart, and fear Thee, seeking Thy face. Do not make us ashamed on this day of reckoning and our hour of temp-

tation. In Thy Name's sake, do not forsake us 'til the end time, and do not break the bond of Thy covenant. Do not completely distance us from Thy mercy, for the sake our fathers, Thy righteous servants. Hear us Lord, for the sake of the sainted Sava and the martyred Lazar. For the sake of innocent children murdered and exiled, and grieving orphans. Our collective soul has become filled with apprehension, our hearts and bellies with tumult, our bones with tremors because of our many transgressions, and of Thy righteous anger. Descended from Nemanja and Lazar, Orlović and Tankosić, we have become unworthy of our ancestors. Our tormentors are uprooting the foundations of Thy shrines, thereby extracting the roots of our life and being. They want to destroy Dečani monastery and dismantle the beautiful Gračanica, to remove the cross atop the Patriarchate of Peć, and build a minaret atop Ljeviška church. "They've severed the nerves in our eyes, and now would like to snatch away the 'seeing' white cane from our hands. Land we've received from Heaven, others have promised away," sold, and they have betrayed us to our mortal enemies.

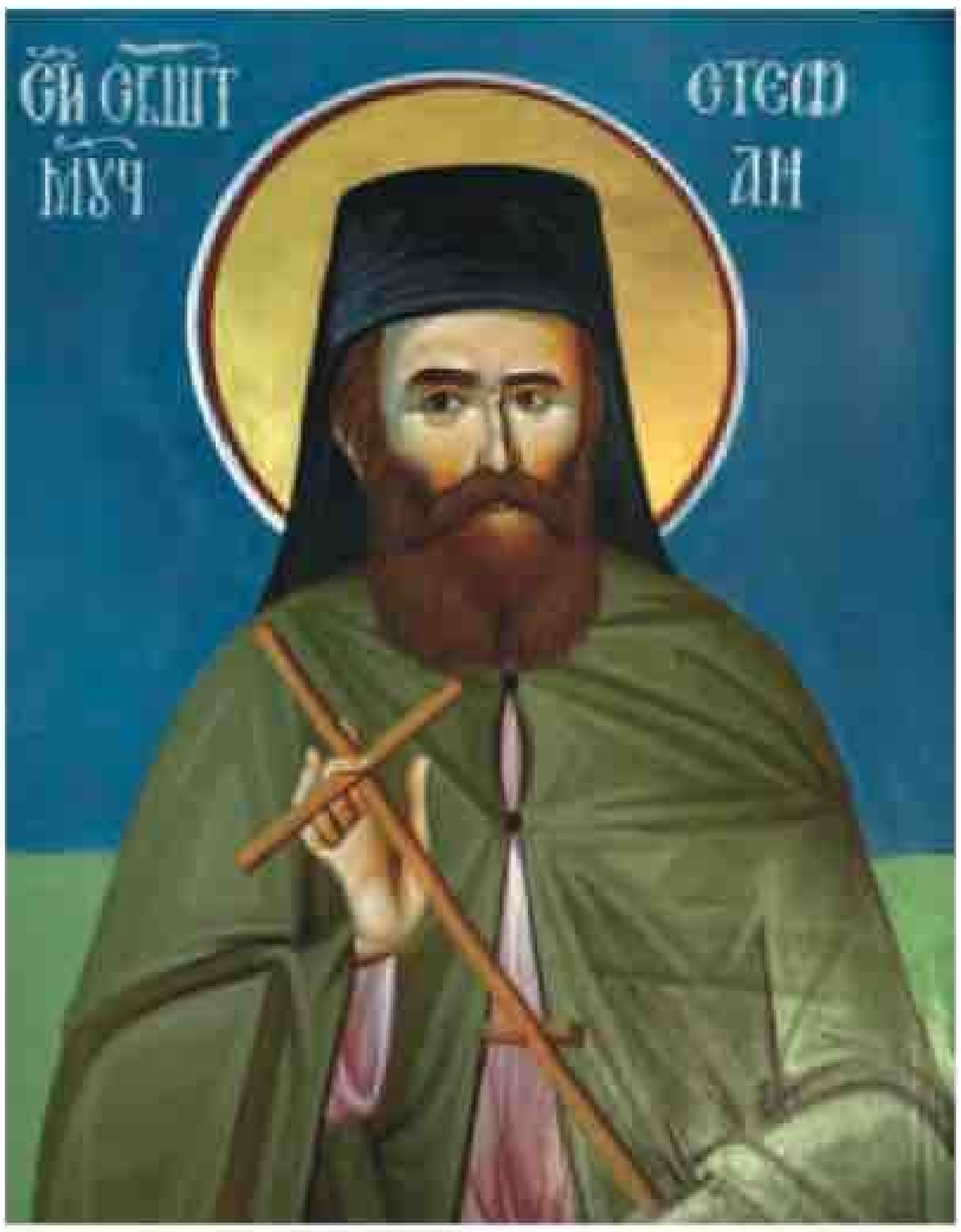
But don't Thou, our only Lord, betray us. Thou, the One True God, do not abandon us to our mortal enemies and executioners, but call us to Thee and again give us life. Should even my skin decompose, and my bones rot, I will again arise and stand before Thee, glorify Thee, and confess to Thy Holy Name. For we, as a people were of your flock, but were made sacrificial lambs, and objects of prey for wild beasts, and food for worms. Along with the criminal on the cross, we cry: "Remember us, o Lord, in Thy Kingdom."

Gentle and Almighty Lord, look at Thy needy, who for centuries have been oppressed and trampled by all who have passed this way. Remind Thyself that we are earthly dust, with a soul inside our bodies. For Thou hast stood, in the beginning, above the dust and called us from non-being into being, led and resurrected us from death into life. For Thou art the Resurrection and Life, and Thy many mercies are boundless, before which my sins are like dust and ashes to be dissolved and dispersed by the breeze of Thy Spirit and cleansed by the Cross of Thy Son, so that we can be made whiter than snow and more radiant than the sun.

In all of this Lord, we have not forgotten Thee. Because of it, Thou wilt not forget the trampled plantings of Thy vineyard. If we should forget our Lord's Name, or if we hold out our hands to a false and alien god, bring us back and re-direct us, illuminate us with the radiance of Thy face. Cleanse us of our visible and secret sins and transgressions, resurrect us from our graves. Because Thou art God who ventured and descended into hell, broke the shackles of the captives and resurrected Adam's progeny, consecrating for us the Heavenly Kingdom.

Should I forget you Kosovo, my Jerusalem, may my right hand be forgotten. May my tongue cleave to my palate if I fail to remember you, Metohija mine, or if I do not place you at the beginning of my song, my psalmody to God, who is my salvation.

† The **monk Hariton** (Lukić) was kidnapped by Albanians in the presence of KFOR troops in the middle of Prizren on June 14th, 1999. His body was found on August 8th, 2000, in an unmarked individual grave in the cemetery of the Albanian village of Tusus near Prizren by the Commission of exhumation. The body was decapitated and severely mutilated. The head was not found. The body was buried at Monastery Crna Reka, on November 12, 2000.



†**Hieromonk Stefan** (Purić) was kidnapped in front of the monastery Budisavci in Metohija on July 19, 1999 by Roman Catholic Albanians. To date, the international forces of NATO and UNMIK have not located him.

Tombstones and Inscriptions at Old Serbian Cemeteries and Church Sites in in Kosovo and Metohija

Tombstones and grave markers at old Serbian cemeteries are most frequently situated around a church or a church site, on hillsides outside villages, in the shade of ancient oaks as an inseparable part of the landscape. They had an important place in folk art as part of a far larger and significant whole, whose value still has not been fully perceived and which offer a separate and interesting complex to archaeological, urban-rural, historical, ethnological, philological, art and other types of research.

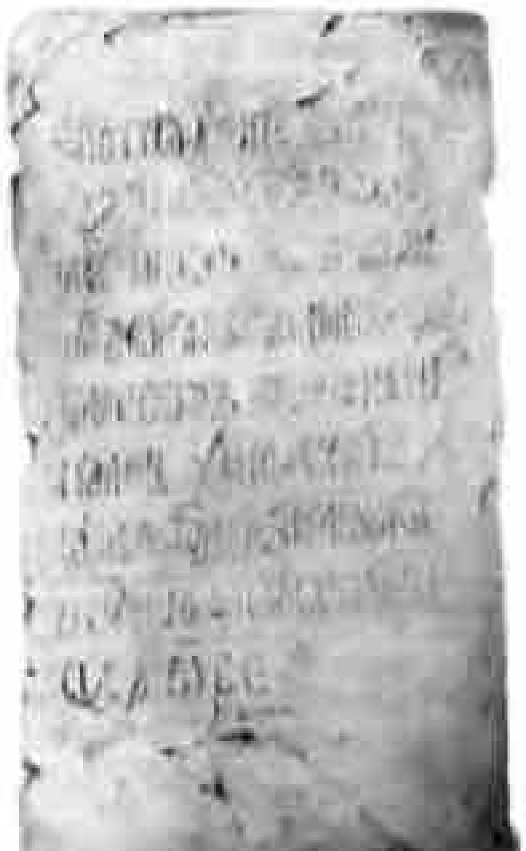
Although the results of work conducted over several decades on recording and studying tombstones at the old Serbian cemeteries are not included in this book, we have given basic information about the old Serbian cemeteries and presented most characteristic of the tombstones found there today.

Since more than 200.000 Serbs and Montenegrins were forced to leave their ancestral homes in Kosovo and Metohija as a result of ethnic Albanian nationalist violence in recent decades, old and modern Serbian cemeteries alike are constantly being destroyed, desecrated, even plowed by ethnic Albanians. A large number of illustrations have a documentary value because a considerable number of monuments had in the meantime been destroyed. We hope that somebody will record the rest of Serbian cemeteries in Kosovo and Metohija and in this way preserve them from oblivion before they physically disappear.

The Raising of Lazarus, west arm of the cross, vault, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

Tombstone lid of Miloš the judge, son of Ozrislal, Studenica of Hvosno, near Peć

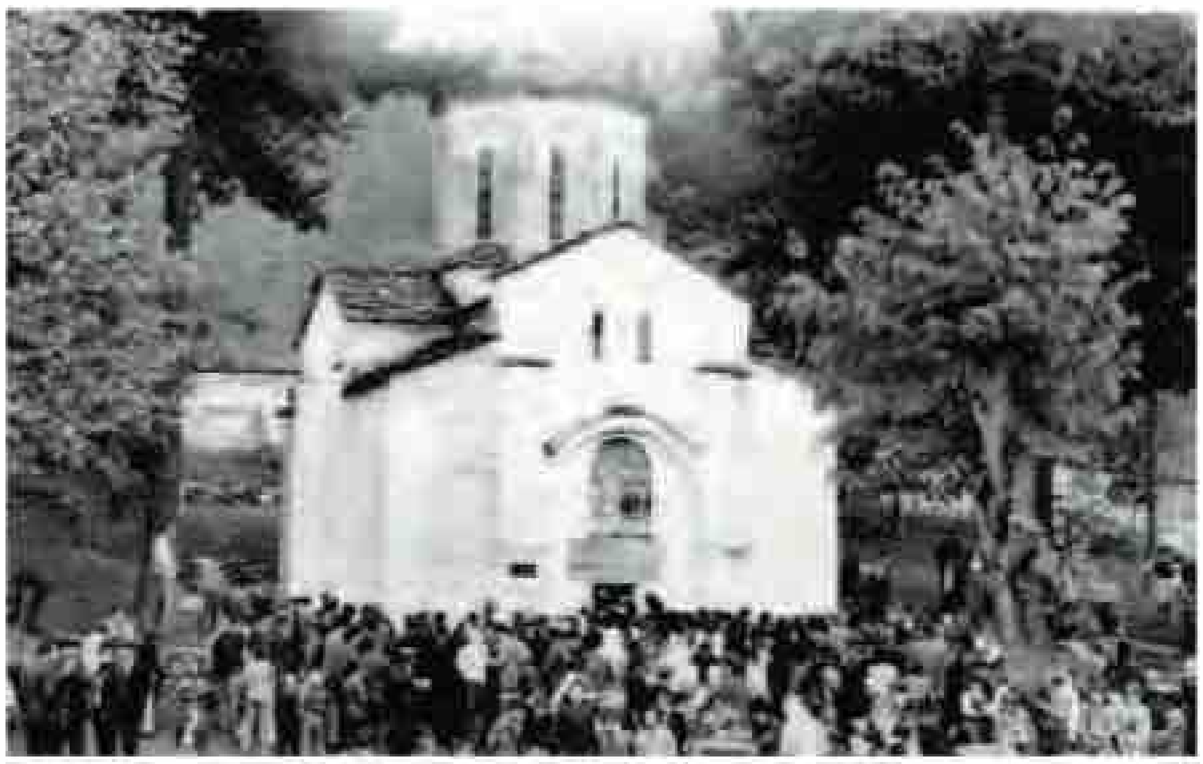
Tombstone lid of landlord Radoslav (Jovan as monk) in Crkolez, near Peć, 1395



Tombstone inscription of Todor, son of Žegar, nomic (legislator) from the Holy Mother of God of Ljeviša, 1387

The Destruction of Serbia's Patrimonial Sites in Kosovo

Mirjana Menković



How to differentiate the violence of war, which both sides experienced, from the violence of postwar "peace," which was unfolding in many dimensions?

I
CHURCHES, MONASTERIES AND ENSEMBLES—WORLD HERITAGE

A) IN ALBANIAN-POPULATED AREAS

Notes:

The lists were complied on the basis of the Central Register of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia

* Further information: *Project* Urgent Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Metohija: *Final Report*, Belgrade: MNEMOSYNE, 2003, pp. 370–384; Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija

No	ASSET	MUNICIPALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNERSHIP	DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999.
1	**MONASTERY OF DEČANI Since 2004, i.e. 2006, the monastery has been listed as World Heritage and World Heritage in Danger**	Dečani	1327–1335	SK 1368 Extraordinary importance UNESCO World Heritage List	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Archaeological research; Project for the kitchen; Reconstruction project for Leontije's Dormitory **
2	**PATRIARCHATE OF PEĆ Since 2006, the monastery has been listed as World Heritage**	Peć	13th c.	SK 1370 Extraordinary Importance UNESCO World Heritage List	SOC	Cadastre extract*	**
4	**HOLY MOTHER OF GOD OF LJEVIŠA POGROM, MARCH 2004 SINCE 2006, the church has been listed as World Heritage and World Heritage in Danger**	Prizren	11th / 13th / 14th c.	SK 1369 Extraordinary Importance UNESCO World Heritage List	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Refurbishment of ancillary building in the churchyard **
5	**MONASTERY OF HOLY ARCHANGELS POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Prizren	1343–1352	SK 1366 Extraordinary Importance UNESCO World Heritage List	SOC	Cadastre extract*	**

II/1
PRESERVED CULTURAL ASSETS
Active churches and monasteries

A) IN ALBANIAN-POPULATED AREAS

Notes:

The lists were complied on the basis of the Central Register of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia

No	ASSET	MUNICIPALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNERSHIP	DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999
1	**Budisavci**	Klina	First half of the 14th c.	SK 1396 Extraordinary importance	SOC – Monastery of the Patriarchate of Peć	Cadastre extract*	Project for the perimeter wall Photographs**
2	**Monastery of Gorioč**	Istok	14th–16th c.	SK 1378 Extraordinary importance	SOC – Monastery of Dečani	Cadastre extract*	Consolidation project for the church Photographs**

** Further information: *Ibid.*
–Interventions by the Reconstruction Implementation Commission for Orthodox Religious Sites in Kosovo; source: Serbian Orthodox Church

CC – Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija; MC – MNEMOSYNE Center; IPCMRS – Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia; SOC – Serbian Orthodox Church; CoE – Council of Europe

INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
Archaeological research Construction of the kitchen In 2004–2005, Leontije's Dormitory was renovated.	Refurbishment of the churchyard Reconstruction of the heating facility Fire-fighting measures	Conservation professionals of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia carried out the conservation of wall paintings in the chapel of St. Nicholas and a part of the narthex. Between 2010 and 2013, a new dormitory was built at the site where the Prizren Dormitory once stood. The enclosing wall and the gate were repaired.
Geodetic survey Partial conservation of frescos in the church of the Holy Mother of God Hodegetria (Pilot project in cooperation with INTERSOS)	Damp elimination project; Consolidation of the perimeter wall Consolidation of ancillary buildings Reparation of the water-supply and the construction of a well Fire-fighting measures	Between 2005 and 2007, large-scale works aimed at consolidating and reconstructing the churches and the narthex were carried out. On that occasion, the façades were reconstructed to their design in the 14th century. In 2013, owing to a Russian donation that came through UNESCO, conservation experts of the Provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments in Novi Sad carried out a large-scale conservation and restoration of the frescos in the church of the Holy Hodegetria.
u Reparation of the lead roof		Between 2005 and 2008, the structure of the church was repaired, the roofing was replaced and a new gallery and a staircase leading toward the belfry were built. During the same period, a souvenir shop next to the church was restored and a new parish house was built. Between 2011 and 2013, conservation and restoration works were undertaken on the burnt and severely damaged wall paintings in the church and the exonarthex.
Construction of a heating facility in the dormitory		The burnt dormitories were renovated in 2012–13.

* Further information: *Project* Urgent Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Metohija: *Final Report*, Belgrade: MNEMOSYNE, 2003, pp. 370–384; Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija
** Further information: *Ibid.*

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INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
Consolidation of the church; Reconstruction of the water supply		In 2009, Serbian conservation specialists fully conserved and restored the frescos; the project was sponsored by UNESCO.
	Reconstruction of electricity and water supply	The monastery complex has recently been restored. The dormitory was renovated and the monastery yard was refurbished.

II/1
PRESERVED CULTURAL ASSETS
Active churches and monasteries

B) IN SERB-POPULATED AREAS

Notes:
The lists were complied on the basis of the Central Register of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia

No.	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUC-TION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNER-SHIP	DOCUMENTA-TION AFTER 1999
1	**LIPLJAN** **Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God in the Temple**	Lipljan	14th / 16th c.	SK 1392 Extraordinary importance			
2	**Monastery of Sokolica**	Zvečan	14th c.	SK 1449 Extraordinary importance			
3	**CRKOLEZ** **Church of St. John the Baptist**	Istok	1355	SK 1380 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
4	**VELIKA HOČA** **Church of St. John**	Orahovac	13th–14th c.	SK 1395 Extraordinary importance	SOC – Serbian Orthodox Parish of Velika Hoča	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
5	**VELIKA HOČA** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Orahovac	14th c.	SK 1394 Extraordinary importance	Municipality of Orahovac	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
6	**BOGOŠEVCI** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Prizren	Late 16th – early 17th c.	SK 1407 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
7	**DRAJČIĆI** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Prizren	Late 16th c.	SK 1408 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre Extract*	Consolidation project for the church Photographs**
8	**GORNJE SELO** **Church of St. George**	Prizren	Late 16th – early 17th c.	SK 1408 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre Extract*	Photographs**
9	**MUŠNIKOVO** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Prizren	Second half of the 16th c.	SK 1409 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre Extract*	Photographs**
10	**MUŠNIKOVO** **Church of Holy Apostles**	Prizren	1563/1564	SK 1406 Extraordinary importance	SOC and the Munici-pality of Prizren	Non-existent*	Photographs**
11	**SREDSKA PEJČIĆI** **Church of the Mother of God**	Prizren	First half of the 17th c.	SK 1404 Extraordinary importance	SOC and the Munici-pality of Prizren	Cadastre Extract*	Photographs**
12	**DONJA BITINJA** **Church of St. Theodore Teron**	Štrpce	Second half of the 16th c.	SK 1421 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre Extract*	Photographs**
13	**GORNJA BITINJA** **Church of St. George**	Štrpce	16th c.	SK 1421 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
14	**GOTOVUŠA** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Štrpce	Second half of the 16th c.	SK 1422 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
15	**ŠTRPCE** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Štrpce	1576–1577	SK 1423 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre Extract*	Photographs**
16	**VELIKO ROPOTOVO** **Church of Holy Archangel Michael**	Kosovska Kamenica	Second half of the 19th c.	III Protected			Consolidation project
17	**DONJE KORMINJANE** **Church of the Mother of God**	Kosovska Kamenica	Late 18th c.	III Protected			Consolidation project

* Further information: *Project* Urgent Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Metohija: *Final Report*, Belgrade: MNEMOSYNE, 2003, pp. 370–384; Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija
** Further information: *Ibid*.

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INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
	Consolidation of the church Rearrangement of the plateau around the church	The church was renovated in 2002. In a project sponsored by UNESCO, conservation specialist of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments in Serbia undertook a full conservation and restoration of the frescos in the church.
Construction of a road and water-supply	To compete the construction of water-supply	The conventual buildings were renovated; the roof of the church and the enclosing wall were repaired and the monastery yard was refurbished.
		After 2004, at the time when the church was being transformed into a monastery, the porch with a belfry to the north of the church was expanded to serve as a dormitory. At the foot of the hill where the church stands, on the southeast side, a memorial fountain dedicated to the killed inhabitants of Hoča was built.
		The church was renovated and repaired in 2008.
Consolidation of the church		The church was consolidated and renovated in 2003. The structure of the building is not endangered. However, in 2013, the demolition of the Serbian school was undertaken but was stopped after the protest of the Serbian Community in Kosovo and Metohija.
		In 2010, small-scale repairs were begun.
		The church was broken in and plundered in 2012.
Consolidation of the church and its frescos		The church and the belfry have recently been renovated and the churchyard has been refurbished. A part of the fresco decoration underwent conservation and restoration in 2002.
		The church has recently been renovated. A part of the fresco decoration underwent conservation and restoration in 2002.

No.	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUC-TION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNER-SHIP	DOCUMENTA-TION AFTER 1999
18	**VRAČEVO** **Church of Holy Doctors Cosmas and Damian**	Leposavić	1316; recon-structed on several occa-sions	III Protected			Consolidation and restoration project
19	**LIPLJAN** **SS Florus and Laurus**	Lipljan		III Protected			Consolidation project
20	**PASJANE** **Church of the Transfiguration**	Gnjilane	1861	III Protected			Consolidation project
21	**SUŠICA** **Church of St. Demetrius**	Priština	Early14^{th} c., 1991	III Protected			
22	**BERIVOJCE** **Monastery of Globarnica**	Kosovska Kamenica	16th–17th c.	III Protected			
23	**LEŠAK** **Borjani Church**	Leposavić		III Protected			
24	**DOBROTIN** **Church of St. Demetrius**	Lipljan	First half of the 19th c.	III Protected			
25	**BABIN MOST** **Church of the Veil of the Mother of God**	Obilić	20th c.	III Protected			
26	**VELIKA HOČA** **Church of St. Luke**	Orahovac	14th–16th c.	III Protected	SOC – Serbian Or-thodox Parish of Velika Hoča	Non-existent*	Photographs**
27	**PLANJANE** **Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God**	Prizren	1868	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
28	**SREDSKA** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Prizren	17th-18th c.	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
29	**BANJA RUDNIČKA** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Srbica	Before 1432	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
30	**CREPULJA** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Zubin Potok	16th–17th c.	III Protected			
31	**ČEČEVO** **Church of St. Paraskeve**	Zubin Potok	14th; 20th c.	III Protected			
32	**DUBOKI POTOK** **Church of the Mother of God**	Zubin Potok, Čitluk	14th c.	III Protected			

INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
Archaeological research; Consolidation and restoration of the church		
Consolidation of church's façades, side-walk and roofing		
Consolidation of the church and frescos		The church has recently been renovated and statically consolidated. In 2002, the mural paintings undervent partial restoration and conservation.
Fence construction		In 2006, the fence around the church was damaged.
		Over the several past years, the old-style roofing tiles have been replaced with new ceramic tiles. The apse has been covered with metal sheets. The church is in a good condition. In 2010, a dormitory was built next to it.
		The church is in a good condition. It has recently been renovated. In 2013, a belfry and a dormitory were built next to the church.
		The dormitory was repaired and reconstructed in 2003. The church was repeatedly desecrated and looted, most recently in 2013.
		It has recently been renovated.
The church was repaired in 2003.		
Construction of a dormitory and an enclosing wall		

II/2
PRESERVED CULTURAL PROPERTIES
Other cultural properties

A) IN ALBANIAN-POPULATED AREAS

Notes:
The lists were complied on the basis of the Central Register of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia

No.	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CON-STRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNERSHIP
1	**GAZIMESTAN The Battle of Kosovo Memorial complex DAMAGED IN 1999**	Priština	1953	I PKIC 59 Extraordinary importance		
2	**Remains of the Monastery of the Mother of God of Hvosno**	Istok	13th c.	I SK 1379 Extraordinary importance		
3	**DJAKOVICA "Terzijski" Bridge**	Djakovica	Late 15th – early 16th c.	I SK 1372 Extraordinary importance	Public property	Public property*
4	**VUČITRN Vojnovićs' Bridge**	Vučitrn	Late 14th – early 15th c.	I SK 1373 Extraordinary importance		
5	**VUČITRN Castle**	Vučitrn	14th c.	I SK 1374 Extraordinary importance		
6	**Monastery of Kmetovce**	Gnjilane	14th c.	I SK 1375 Extraordinary importance		
7	**POGRADJE Church of Holy Doctors Cosmas and Damian (Lower Church)**	Klina	Second half of the 16th c.	I SK 1389 Extraordinary importance	Municipal-ity of Klina	Cadastre extract*
8	**LETNICA Statue of Montenegrin Virgin with the Child; Statue of St. Rocco**	Vitina	Late 16th or early 17th c.	III Protected		
9	**VUČITRN Old City Center**	Vučitrn	19th c.	III Protected		
10	**GOJBULJA Remains of the cemetery church of St. Paraskeve**	Vučitrn	16th c.	III Protected		
11	**Monastery of Draganac**	Gnjilane	1865–1869	III Protected		
12	**GNJILANE Vlastimir Dimić's house (Stojana Trajkovića Street, No 19)**	Gnjilane	19th c.	III Protected		
13	**DJAKOVICA, "Tabački" Bridge**	Djakovica	15th–16th c.	III Protected	Public property	Non-existent*
14	**DJAKOVICA "Talići" Bridge**	Djakovica	19th c.	III Protected	Public property	Cadastre extract*
15	**KAČANIK Fortress of Kaljaja**	Kačanik	14th / 16th c.	III Protected		
16	**BOŽEVCE Prilepac (Prilepnica) Frotress**	Kosovska Kamenica	14th and 15th c.	III Protected		
17	**STARI TRG St. Peter's Basilica – "Saxon Church"**	Kosovska Mitrovica	13th–14th c.	III Protected		

* Further information: *Project* Urgent Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Metohija: *Final Report*, Belgrade: MNEMOSYNE , 2003, 370–384; Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija
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DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999	INTERVENTIONS		
	IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED IN 2006–2014
	Restoration of the inscription; Reparation of electricity supply	Physical protection (guard)	After the Pogrom of 2004, the text on the façade and inside the tower was reconstructed. A new staircase was built. The façade was restored. The area surrounding the tower was refurbished. However, the site is endangered due to the construction of a warehouse in the area surrounding the memorial complex.
Photographs**			
Photographs**			
			The church was broken in and desecrated in 2006.
Reconstruction project for the dormitory		Maintenance	The monastery was partially reconstructed and expanded between 2002 and 2012.
Photographs**			
Photographs**			
		Conservation of remains	

No.	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CON-STRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNERSHIP
18	**KOSOVSKA MITROVICA, Edifice of the former Russian Consulate in Zelengora Street № 10**	Kosovska Mitrovica	Early 20th c.	III Protected		
19	**KOSOVSKA MITROVICA House in Ilije Birčanina Street № 17**	Kosovska Mitrovica	19th c.	III Protected		
20	**BELASICA Vrhlab Fortress**	Podujevo	13th–14th c.	III Protected		
21	**BADOVAC Remains of the Monastery of Vojsilovica**	Priština	14th c.	III Protected		
22	**BALABANE Remains of a church**	Priština	14th-16th c.	III Protected		
23	**PRIŠTINA Building of the Metropolitanate Residence and the First Serbian School**	Priština	1869	III Protected		
24	**ŠAŠKOVAC, Veletin (fortified city)**	Priština	9th–10th c.	III Protected		
25	**ŠAŠKOVAC Remains of St. Paraskeve's church (Ćelije šaškovačke)**	Priština	14th c.	III Protected		
26	**MUŽIČANE Remains of a church**	Štimlje	16th-17th c.	III Protected		
27	**RAČAK NEAR ŠTIMLJE Church of Holy Doctors**	Štimlje	14th c.	III Protected		
28	**BELICA Church of St. George**	Istok	14th / 16th c.	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*
29	**LEOČINA Church of St. John**	Srbica	Second half of the 16th c.	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*

II/2
PRESERVED CULTURAL PROPERTIES
Other cultural properties

B) IN SERB-POPULATED AREAS

Notes:

The lists were complied on the basis of the Central Register of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia

No.	ASSET	PLACE, MUNICIPALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	Owner	PROOF OF OWNER-SHIP
1	**ULPIANA**	Gračanica	98–118 AD; mid-sixth century	AN 124 Extraordinary importance		
2	**NOVO BRDO Medieval fortress**	Novo Brdo	Early 14th c.	SK 1393 Extraordinary importance		

DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999	INTERVENTIONS		
	IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED IN 2006–2014
Photographs**			
Photographs**			

* Further information: *Project* Urgent Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Metohija: *Final Report*, Belgrade: MNEMOSYNE, 2003, pp. 370–384; Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija

** Further information: *Ibid*.

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DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999	INTERVENTIONS		
	IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
		Physical protection Purchase of land	
		Physical protection	Early in 2014, UNESCO invited a tender for the restoration of the fortress.

No.	ASSET	PLACE, MUNICIPALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	Owner	PROOF OF OWNER-SHIP
3	**ZVEČAN** **Fortress**	Zvečan	10th–11th c.	SK 1416 Extraordinary importance		
4	**VAGANEŠ** **Church of the Mother of God**	Kosovska Kamenica	1354–1355	SK 1390 Extraordinary importance		
5	**MOČARE** **Ubožac (Rdjavac) Monastery**	Kosovska Kamenica	14th–17th c.	SK 1391 Extraordinary importance		
6	**LOVAC** **Remains of St. Panteleimon's church**	Zvečan	14th c.	III Protected		
7	**BRNJACI** **Remains of the Castle of Queen Helen of Anjou**	Zubin Potok	13th–14th c.	III Protected		
8	**AJNOVCE** **Tamnica (Rečane) Monastery**	Kosovska Kamenica	13th–14th c.	III Protected		
9	**MAŽIĆ** **Medieval complex**	Kosovska Mitrovica	Middle Ages	III Protected		
10	**CERANJSKA REKA** **Remains of St. Paraskeve's church and a marble statue**	Leposavić		III Protected		
11	**GORNJA GUŠTERICA** **Church of St. Elias**	Lipljan	17th c.	III Protected		
12	**LIPLJAN** **Old Primary School**	Lipljan	19th c.	III Protected		
13	**SLOVINJE** **Monastery with St. George's church**	Lipljan	14th c.	III Protected		
14	**SLOVINJE** **Church of St. John**	Lipljan	14th–16th c.	III Protected		
15	**BOSTANE** **Remains of the Church of the Mother of God**	Novo Brdo		III Protected		
16	**BOSTANE** **Remains of a Saxon church**	Novo Brdo	14th or 15th c.	III Protected		
17	**VELIKA HOČA** **Metochion of the Dečani Monastery**	Orahovac		III Protected	SOC – Monastery of Dečani	Cadastre extract*
18	**VELIKA HOČA** **Winery of St. Stephen's Church**	Orahovac	18th c.	III Protected	SOC – Serbian Orthodox Parish of Velika Hoča	Cadastre extract*
19	**VELIKA HOČA** **House of the Hadžispasić Family**	Orahovac	1830 and 1835 c.; 1860	III Protected	Miloš Hadžispasić	Cadastre extract*
20	**VELIKA HOČA** **Memorial Tower of Lazar Kujundžić**	Orahovac	1936	III Protected	Municipality of Orahovac	Cadastre extract*
21	**LAPLJE SELO** **Čača's watermill**	Priština	Before 1830	III Protected		

DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999	INTERVENTIONS		
	IMPLE-MENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
Lighting project		Rehabilitation project	
Consolidation project			The church has recently been repaired and its ceramic-tile roof was replaced with a metal-sheet roof.
Consolidation project			
Consolidation project			
			In 2011, a new church, a belfry and a dormitory were built upon the remains of the church. The project was sponsored by donations of Serbs from Serbia and the Diaspora. The remains of old tombstones can be seen around the dormitory.
			The church was renovated in 1987 and it is in a good condition.
Photographs**			
Photographs**			
Plans, sections, elevations Photographs**			
Photographs**			The interior of the tower and the area around it have recently been refurbished.

III
DAMAGED AND DESTROYED CULTURAL PROPERTIES

A) IN ALBANIAN-POPULATED AREAS

Notes:
The lists were complied on the basis of the Central Register of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia

No.	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CON-STRUC-TION	Protection category	Owner	PROOF OF OWNER-SHIP	DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999
1	**MUŠUTIŠTE** **Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Suva Reka	1315	I SK 1414 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Reconstruction project for the church Photographs**
2	**MONASTERY OF ZOČIŠTE** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Orahovac	14th / 16th c.	III Protected	SOC	Non-exis-tent*	Reconstruction project for the church Photographs**
3	**DJURAKOVAC** **Church of St. Nicholas** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Istok	16th c.	I SK 1381 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
4.	**DOLAC** **Monastery of the Presentation of the Mother of God in the Temple** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Klina	14th / 17th c.	I SK 1383 Extraordinary importance		Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
5.	**GORNJE NERODIMLJE** **Monastery of Holy Archangels** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Uro-ševac	14th / 17th c.	I SK 1420 Extraordinary importance	Public Company "Srbija šume"	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
6.	**DOBRA VODA** **Monastery of Sts Peter and Paul** **DAMAGED IN 1999**	Klina	14th / 16th c.	I SK 1382 Extraordinary importance	Public Company "Srbija šume"	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
7.	**ČABIĆI** **Church of St. Nicholas** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Klina	Late 15th or early 16th c.	I SK 1386 Extraordinary importance	Municipality of Klina	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
8.	**DRSNIK** **Church of St. Paraskeve** **DAMAGED IN 1999**	Klina	16th c.	I SK 1384 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
9.	**KIJEVO** **Church of St. Nicholas** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Ma-liševo	14th c.	I SK 1385 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
10.	**MLEČANE** **Church of St. Nicholas** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Ma-liševo	14th c.	I SK 1385 Extraordinary importance	Municipality of Klina	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
11	**LOĆANE** **Danilović's Log Cabin** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Dečani	1710s	I SK 1386 Extraordinary importance	Branko Danilović	EXIS-TENT*	
12	**PRIZREN** **Kaljaja Fortress** **POGROM, MARCH 2004.**	Prizren	11th c.	I SK 1399 Extraordinary importance		Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
13	**PRIZREN** **Church of the Holy Savior** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Prizren	ca. 1330	I SK 1401 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**

* Further information: *Project* Urgent Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Metohija: *Final Report*, Belgrade: MNEMOSYNE, 2003, pp. 370–384; Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija
** Further information: *Ibid*.

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INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
	Rehabilitation project for the churchyard and ancillary objects	
	Reconstruction of the church Refurbishment of the churchyard Construction of a dormitory	After the fraternity had been reestablished in October 2004, a gradual reconstruction of the monastery complex was undertaken; the funds were provided by the religious community and the Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija of the Republic of Serbia. The church was entirely reconstructed, the conventual buildings were rebuilt and the churchyard was refurbished. Since the reestablishment of the fraternity, monks have been exposed to occasional attacks and provocations because the monastery is located in an Albanian-populated area.
		After 2009, when a part of the Serbian population had returned to the village, an initiative was started to renovate the church.
		After the Pogrom of 2004, the Kosovar authorities organized the reconstruction and development of the fortress.
		In 2005, emergency works were undertaken in both structures: windows were glazed and the roof and doors were replaced. In autumn 2013, both churches were broken into, which indicates that the security of the building is threatened.

No.	ASSET	MUNICIPALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	Protection category	Owner	PROOF OF OWNERSHIP	DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999
14	**PRIZREN** **Church of St. Nicholas ("Tutić's")** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Prizren	1331–1332	I SK 1402 Extraordinary importance	SOC – Monastery of Dečani	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
15	**MONASTERY OF DEVIČ** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Srbica	1434	I SK 1413 Extraordinary importance	SOC	NON-EXISTENT*	Photographs**
16	**MUŠUTIŠTE** **Monastery of Holy Trinity** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Suva Reka	Before 1465; 1837.	I SK 1414 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
17	**REČANE** **Church of St. George** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Suva Reka	Second half of the 14th c.	I SK 1415 Extraordinary importance	SOC	Cadastre extract*	Photographs**
18	**ŠAJKOVAC** **Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God (Monastery of Holy Emperor Uroš)** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Uroševac	Late 14th c.	I SK 1419 Extraordinary importance			
19	**BUZOVIK** **Monastery of Holy Archangel Michael** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Vitina	16th c.	III Protected			
20	**VUČITRN** **Church of St. Elijah** **POGROM, MARCH 2004.**	Vučitrn	1834	III Protected			
21	**SAMODREŽA** **Church of Holy Prince Lazar** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Vučitrn	1932	III Protected			
22	**ŽEGRA** **Church of St. Elijah** **DEMOLISHED IN 1999**	Gnjilane	1931	III Protected			
23	**KOŠ** **Tomić's fortified house (kulla)** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Istok	Late 19th c.	III Protected		Existent*	Photographs**
24	**KAČANIK** **Church of St. Elias** **DEMOLISHED IN 1999**	Kačanik	1929	III Protected			
25	**SIĆEVO** **Church of St. Nicholas** **DESTROYED**	Klina	1452	III Protected			
26	**KOSOVO POLJE** **Church of St. Nicholas** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Kosovo Polje	1940	III Protected			
27	**KOSOVSKA MITROVICA** **Church of St. Sava** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Kosovska Mitrovica	1896–1912	III Protected			
28	**BRNJAČA** **Church of St. Kyriake** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Orahovac	First half of the 14th c.	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
29	**PEĆ** **Mira Protić's House** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Peć	ca. 1860	III Protected	Heirs of the Protić family	Cadastre extract*	

INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
		Between 2005 and 2008, the structure of the church was repaired and the roof was covered with new lead sheets. The inner surfaces which were not covered by frescos were plastered.
		Between 2005 and 2008, the complex of the monastery was restored both structurally and functionally.
		The removal of the remains of the church and the dormitory from the site is to be completed in 2014.
		Between 2005 and 2008, both the church and the parish house were entirely reconstructed.
		The church has been turned into dump and constantly exposed to desecration.
		In 2005, the remains of the burnt furnishings were removed and the exterior and the interior of the church were restored. The church was subsequently furnished with a new iconostasis.
		In 2005, the church was restored both inside and out.
		In 2005, the building and the gate of the churchyard were restored.

No.	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CON-STRUC-TION	Protection category	Owner	PROOF OF OWNER-SHIP	DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999
30	**PEĆ** **Stara čaršija (Old market-place)** **DEVASTATED IN 1999**	Peć	16th / 18th / 19th c.	III Protected		Non-existent*	Photographs**
31	**SIGA** **Church of St. George** **DAMAGED IN 1999**	Peć	1937	III Protected			
32	**PODUJEVO** **Church of St. Andrew (St. Elias)** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Podujevo	1930	III Protected			
33	**RAKITNICA** **Church of Holy Archangel Michael** **DAMAGED IN 1999**	Podujevo	15th c., 1936.	III Protected			
34	**KORIŠA** **Monastery with St. Mark's Church** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Prizren	15th c., 1882.	III Protected			
35	**LJUBIŽDA** **Church of St. Nicholas** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Prizren	16th c.	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
36	**PRIZREN** **Church of St. George ("Runović")** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Prizren	14th–16th c.	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
37	**PRIZREN** **Theological Seminary of Sts Cyril and Methodius** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Prizren	1872	III Protected	SOC		
38	**PRIZREN** **Potkaljaja, Pantelija and Potok mahala complex** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Prizren	19th c.	III Protected		Non-existent*	Photographs**
39	**PRIZREN** **Church of St. Kyriake** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Prizren	1371; 1966	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*	
40	**PRIZREN** **Church of St. Nicholas ("Rajko's Church")** **DAMAGED IN 1999**	Prizren	First half of the 14th c.	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
41	**PRIŠTINA** **Stara čaršija (Old Market-place)**	Priština	19th–20th c.	III Protected			
42	**PRIŠTINA** **Church of St. Nicholas** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Pri-ština	1830	III Protected			
43	**POPOVLJANE** **Church of St. Nicholas** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Suva Reka	1626	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
44	**DONJE NERODIMLJE** **Remains of a fortress and the Church of St. Nicholas** **DESTROYED IN 1999**	Uro-ševac	1983 (on earlier foundations)	III Protected	SOC		Photographs**

INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
After 2001, the church was pulled down; only the foundations have remained.		
		Between 2005 and 2008, the church was completely restored both inside and out but no church furnishings and iconostases have been set up. The belfry that stands next to the church was restored on the same occasion. During 2012, new damages were observed in the church: broken pendant lustres and traces of rain leakage and bird droppings on the new floor.
		The church was entirely restored between 2005 and 2008. In 2013, Greek conservation professionals completed the conservation and restoration of the remains of the damaged mural decoration.
		Between 2005 and 2008, the Rectorate building, the students' dormitory and the so-called "Uncle Sima's" building within the Seminary complex were completely renovated.
		By the "restoration" that followed the Pogrom of 2004, damaged buildings were actually additionally devastated, destroying the identity and the heritage value of this once important ensemble.
		Between 2005 and 2008, the church was entirely renovated. However, due to subsequent "clearing of ruins" in its vicinity, its structure has been severely threatened by the sapping of foundations on the southwest side of the building.
		Urgent interventions aimed at preventing further dilapidation have been undertaken recently.
		Between 2005 and 2008, the church and the parish house were fully renovated. A new iconostasis has not been made. The remaining wall paintings should undergo a conservation treatment.

No.	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CON-STRUC-TION	Protection category	Owner	PROOF OF OWNER-SHIP	DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999
45	**ŠTIMLJE** **Church of St. Nicholas** **DEVASTATED IN 1999**	Štimlje	1926	III Protected			
46	**ŠTIMLJE** **Church of Holy Archangel Michael** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Štimlje	1920–1922	III Protected			

III
DAMAGED AND DESTROYED CULTURAL PROPERTIES

B) IN SERB-POPULATED AREAS

Notes:
The lists were complied on the basis of the Central Register of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia

No.	ASSET	MUNICIPALITY	DATE OF CON-STRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNERSHIP
1	**GNJILANE** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Gnjilane	1861	III Protected		
2	**CERNICA** **Church of St. Elijah**	Gnjilane	1933	III Protected		
3	**KOSOVSKA KAMENICA** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Kosovska Kamenica	1862	III Protected		
4	**SLOVINJE** **Church of St. Nicholas**	Lipljan	16th c.; 1997	III Protected		
5	**BELO POLJE** **Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God in the Temple** **DAMAGED IN 1999** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	Peć	1866–1868	III Protected	SOC	Non-existent*
6	**NOVAKE** **Lodgings** **DESTROYED**	Prizren	mid-19th c.	III Protected		

INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
		In 2005, only emergency interventions were undertaken: windows were glazed and metalwork was repaired. Since there is no Serbian population in the town, the church is still endangered; it was stoned, broken into and the roofing material was stolen.

* Further information: *Project* Urgent Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Metohija: *Final Report*, Belgrade: MNEMOSYNE, 2003, pp. 370–384; Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija
** Further information: *Ibid*.

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DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999	INTERVENTIONS		
	IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
			The damages have been repaired. Due to fractures in the wall, it is necessary to consolidate the building statically.
			The church was renovated immediately after destruction due to funds donated by Serbs in the Diaspora.
			The church was repeatedly broken into, plundered and desecrated after the arrival of the UN Mission in Kosovo and Metohija in June 1999. Due to its poor condition, the renovation was begun in 2013.
Consolidation project Photographs**	Consolidation of the church		

IV/1
RELIGIOUS OBJECTS WITHOUT HERITAGE STATUS
DAMAGED AND DESTROYED CHURCHES AND CEMETERIES

A) IN ALBANIAN-POPULATED AREAS

Notes:
The lists were complied on the basis of the Central Register of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia

No	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNERSHIP	DOCUMENTA-TION AFTER 1999
1	**BINAČ** **Cemetery church of St. Paraskeve**	**Vitina**	1973	-			
2	**GRMOVO** **Church of the Holy Trinity**	**Vitina**	Late 20th c.	-			
3	**GRNČAR** **Church of St. Nicholas (St. Paraskeve)**	**Vitina**	1976	-			
4	**ŽITINJE** **Church of the Holy Trinity**	**Vitina**	1980.	-			
5	**PODGORCE** **Church of the Mother of God**	**Vitina**	Before 1996	-			
6	**BANJSKA** **Church of St. Nicholas**	**Vučitrn**	14th c.; reconstructed	Recognized heritage			
7.	**VELIKA REKA** **Church of the Holy Trinity**	**Vučitrn**	1997	-			
8.	**GORNJI LIVOČ** **Church**	**Gnjilane**		-			
9.	**DOBRČANE** **Church of St. Paraskeve**	**Gnjilane**	After 1918	-			
10.	**DONJI RATIŠ** **Church of the Holy Trinity**	**Dečani**	1935	-			
11.	**BISTRAŽIN** **Church of St. Elijah** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Djakovica**	1918–1941	-			
12.	**DJAKOVICA** **Holy Trinity Cathedral** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Djakovica**	1994–1999	-			
13.	**DJAKOVICA** **Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Djakovica**		-			
14.	**PISKOTE** **Cemetery church of Holy Prince Lazar**	**Djakovica**	1991–1994	-			
15.	**DJURAKOVAC** **Church of all Serbian Saints**	**Istok**	1997	-			
16.	**ISTOK** **Church of Holy Apostles Peter and Paul** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Istok**	1929	-			
17.	**KOŠ** **Church of Holy Prince Lazar**	**Istok**	1969	-			
18.	**LJUBOVO** **Church of St. Vasilije Ostroški**	**Istok**	1939	-			
19.	**GREBNIK** **Chursh of St. Jeremiah**	**Klina**	1920	-			
20.	**KLINA** **Church of St. Mark**	**Klina**	Late 19th c.	-			

* Further information: *Project* Urgent Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Metohija: *Final Report*, Belgrade: MNEMOSYNE, 2003, pp. 370–384; Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija
** Further information: *Ibid*.

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INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
		In 2005, the rubble was removed, the churchyard was cleared, the foundations of the church were consolidated and subjected to conservation measures; two tombstones in the churchyard were also restored.
		After the Pogrom of 2004, at the site previously occupied by the church and the churchyard, which are owned by the Serbian Orthodox Church, the city park was built and a memorial dedicated to the "Republic of Kosova" was set up there. Thereby any trace of their existence at the site was erased. This was done in 2008. UNMIK was aware of these actions but it failed to react, though it had been duly informed by the Serbian Orthodox Church, which also protested.
		Between 2005 and 2007, the new church and the parish house were built as entirely new buildings. However, the new church features elements reminiscent of the earlier building. It has been furnished with a new iconostasis and wall paintings and fully equipped to serve for liturgical purposes.
		Between 2005 and 2008, the church and the parish house were repaired. The interior of the church and its furnishings have not been restored.

No	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNERSHIP	DOCUMENTA-TION AFTER 1999
21.	**BRESJE** **Church of St. Catharine**	**Kosovo Polje**	After 1945	-			
22.	**PETROVCE** **Church of Holy Apostles**	**Kosovska Kamenica**				-	
23.	**OBILIĆ** **Church of Holy Archangel Michael** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Obilić**		-			
24.	**ZOČIŠTE** **Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God in the Temple**	**Orahovac**	20th c.	-			
25.	**OPTERUŠA** **Church of St. Nicholas**	**Orahovac**	1934	-			
26.	**OPTERUŠA** **Church of the Holy Savior**	**Orahovac**	1925	-			
27.	**RETIMLJE** **Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God**	**Orahovac**		-			
28.	**VELIKO KRUŠEVO** **Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God in the Temple**	**Peć**	1980–1981	-			
29.	**VITOMIRICA** **Church of St. Luke**	**Peć**	1912	-			
30.	**NAKLO** **Church of the Mother of God**	**Peć**	1992	-			
31.	**PETRIČ** **Church of the Holy Trinity**	**Peć**	1992	-			
32.	**PEĆ** **Church of St. John the Baptist**	**Peć**	1982	-			
33.	**PEĆ** **Church of St. Paraskeve**	**Peć**	1912	-			
34.	**PEĆKA BANJA** **Church of St. John the Baptist** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Peć**	1998	-			
35.	**GORNJA PAKAŠTICA** **Church of Holy Apostles Peter and Paul**	**Podujevo**	1925	-			
36.	**GORNJA SRBICA** **Church of St. Basil the Great**	**Prizren**	1863	Recognized heritage			
37.	**ŽIVINJANE** **Church of St. Kyriake** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Prizren**	1936	Recognized heritage	SOC	Non-existent	
38.	**KORIŠA** **Church of the Shroud of the Mother of God**	**Prizren**	16th or 17th c.	Recognized heritage			
39.	**LJUBIŽDA** **Church of St. Paraskeve**	**Prizren**	Late 20th c.	Recognized heritage	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
40.	**LJUBIŽDA** **Church of St. Elias**	**Prizren**	1979	-	SOC		
41.	**LJUBIŽDA** **Church of St. Kyriake**	**Prizren**	19th c.	Recognized heritage	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
42.	**PRIZREN** **Edifice of the Episcopate** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Prizren**	ca. 1960	Recognized heritage	SOC		
43.	**PRIZREN** **Cathedral of St. George** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Prizren**	1856–1857	Recognized heritage	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**

INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
Fund-raising for an iconostasis		In 2005, urgent repairs were undertaken: damaged joinery and metalwork were repaired.
Photographs**		
		Between 2005 and 2008, the church was fully reconstructed and fixtures were set up. After the Cathedral, Runović's church and the Episcopate building had been renovated, the yard was also refurbished.

No	ASSET	MUNICI-PALITY	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF OWNERSHIP	DOCUMENTA-TION AFTER 1999
44.	**PRIZREN** **Church of St. Panteleimon** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Prizren**	1937	Recognized heritage	SOC		
45.	**PRIZREN** **Church of Holy Doctors Cosmas and Damian** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Prizren**	Late 19th c.	Recognized heritage	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
46.	**RUDNIK** **Church of St. George**	**Prizren**	XIV/XVI	Recognized heritage			
47.	**SMAĆ** **Church of St. Elijah**	**Prizren**	1994	-			
48.	**POMAZATIN** **Church of St. Elias**	**Priština**	1937; 1964	Recognized heritage			
49.	**PRIŠTINA** **Church of Holy Savior (Cathedral)**	**Priština**	Late 20th c.	Recognized heritage			
50.	**DVORANI** **Church of Holy Savior**	**Suva Reka**	Late 20th c.	-			
51.	**MUŠUTIŠTE** **Church of St. Paraskeve**	**Suva Reka**		-			
52.	**MUŠUTIŠTE** **Church of Holy Savior**	**Suva Reka**		-			
53.	**MUŠUTIŠTE** **Church of Holy Archangel Michael**	**Suva Reka**		-			
54.	**SUVA REKA** **Church of the Mother of God**	**Suva Reka**	1938.	Recognized heritage	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
55.	**BALJAK** **Church of the Holy Trinity**	**Uroševac**	1996.	-			
56.	**GATNJE** **Church of St. Nicholas**	**Uroševac**	1985.	-			
57.	**GORNJE NERODIMLJE** **Church of the Mother of God**	**Uroševac**	1925.	-			
58.	**DONJE NERODIMLJE** **Church of St. Stephen**	**Uroševac**	1996.	-			
59.	**ZASKOK** **Church of St. Paraskeve**	**Uroševac**	end of 20th century	-			
60.	**NEKODIM, Church of St. Elijah** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Uroševac**	1975.	-			
61.	**SOFTOVIĆ, Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Uroševac**	1918–1941	-			
62.	**SRPSKI BABUŠ** **Church of the Holy Trinity**	**Uroševac**		-			
63.	**TALINOVAC, Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Uroševac**	1840	Recognized heritage			
64.	**UROŠEVAC** **Church of Holy King Uroš** **POGROM, MARCH 2004**	**Uroševac**	1926–1933	Recognized heritage	SOC	Non-existent*	Photographs**
65.	**ŠARENIK** **Monastery of the Holy Kong Uroš and the Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God**	**Uroševac**	Second half of the 14th century	Recognized heritage			

INTERVENTIONS		
IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
		Society of the Friends of the Monastery of the Holy Archangels is preparing the renovation of the church.
		During 2012, the renovation of the church was organized by the Society of the Friends of the Monastery of the Holy Archangels and supported by donors.
		Small-scale emergency interventions were done in 2005. On that occasion, a part of the tombstones in the cemetery within the churchyard were repaired.
		In 2005, the church was fully renovated.
		In 2005, emergency interventions were done: the roof and the parish house were repaired.
		Emergency repairs of the joinery and metalwork were done in 2005. The church has been repeatedly marred by offensive graffiti and hatred messages.

IV/2
RELIGIOUS OBJECTS WITHOUT HERITAGE STATUS
A. ACTIVE CHURCHES

B) IN SERB-POPULATED AREAS

Notes:
The lists were complied on the basis of the Central Register of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia

No.	ASSET	MUNICIPALITY	DATE OF CON-STRUCTION	PROTECTION CATEGORY	OWNER	PROOF OF
1	**SOČANICA**					
2	**PLEMETINA**	Obilić				
3	**KORETIŠTE**					
4	**LAPLJE SELO**	Priština				
5	**VITINA**	Vitina				
6	**KOSOVSKA KAMENICA**	Kosovska Kamenica				-
7	**DONJA GUŠTERICA**	Lipljan				
8	**PARTEŠ**					
9	**BOSTANE**	Novo Brdo				
10	**GNJILANE**	Gnjilane				
11	**LEPOSAVIĆ**	Leposavić				
12	**OSOJANE**	Peć				
13	**RANILUG** **Church of St. John**					
14	**RANILUG** **Church of Holy Trinity**					
15	**LEPINA**					
16	**BUDRIGA**					
17	**VALAČ**					
18	**SVINJARE**					
19	**DRIJEN**					
20	**LEPOSAVIĆ**	Leposavić				
21	**LIPLJAN** **Church of the Presentation of the Mother of God in the Temple**	Lipljan				

* Further information: *Project* Urgent Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Metohija: *Final Report*, Belgrade: MNEMOSYNE, 2003, pp. 370–384; Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija
** Further information: *Ibid.*

CC – Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija; MC – MNEMOSYNE Center; IPCMRS – Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia pe; SOC – Serbian Orthodox Church; CoE – Council of Europe

DOCUMENTATION AFTER 1999	INTERVENTIONS		
	IMPLEMENTED 2001–2006	PLANNED	IMPLEMENTED 2006–2014
		Construction of a dormitory Construction of water-supply	
	Consolidation project for the church		
	Consolidation project for the church		
	Consolidation project for the church		
	Consolidation project for the church		
		To resume the construction of the church	
	Condition assessment study and consolidation project for the church		
		Fund-raising for construction work	
		Fund-raising for construction work	
		Fund-raising for construction work	
		Fund-raising for construction work	

SERBIA
National capital
Republic capital
Autonomous province capital
Town, village
Major airport
International boundary
Republic boundary
Autonomous province boundary
Highway
Road
Railroad
Canal
0 20 40 60 km
0 20 40 mi
HUNGARY
CROATIA
ROMANIA
BULGARIA
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
MONTENEGRO
ALBANIA
THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REP. OF MACEDONIA
VOJVODINA
SERBIA
KOSOVO
Adriatic Sea
Szeged
Pécs
Mohács
Subotica
Kanjiža
Bajmok
Senta
Bačka Topola
Sombor
Kikinda
Timişoara
Ada
Sivac
Apatin
Crvenka
Kula
Bečej
Osijek
Titov Vrbas
Srbobran
Elemir
Temerin
Zrenjanin
Vinkovci
Bačka Palanka
Novi Sad
Vršac
Šid
Indija
Alibunar
Ruma
Sremska Mitrovica
Stara Pazova
Nova Pazova
Banatsko Novo Selo
Brcko
Pančevo
Bela Crkva
Bijeljina
Šabac
Beograd (Belgrade)
Železnik
Kovin
Obrenovac
Smederevo
Požarevac
Golubac
Kladovo
Loznica
Mladenovac
Majdanpek
Smed. Palanka
Petrovac
Velika-Plana
Negotin
Žagubica
Ljubovija
Valjevo
Bor
Rogacica
Gornji Milanovac
Kragujevac
Vidin
Jagodina
Ćuprija
Paraćin
Zaječar
Sarajevo
Užice
Čačak
Požega
Kraljevo
Sokobanja
Aleksinac
Priboj
Ivanjica
Trstenik
Kruševac
Knjaževac
Nova Varoš
Foca
Pljevlja
Prijepolje
Niš
Raška
Prokuplje
Sjenica
Bela Palanka
Pirot
Novi Pazar
Bijelo Polje
Leskovac
Vlasotince
Kosovska Mitrovica
Ivangrad
Vučitrn
Nikšić
Surdulica
Priština
Herceg-Novi
Peć
Priboj
Vranje
Gnjilane
Bosilegrad
Podgorica
Bujanovac
Kotor
Cetinje
Đakovica
Orahovac
Uroševac
Preševo
Prizren
Bar
Shkodër
Tetovo
Skopje
Ulcinj
Fruška Gora
North Albanian Alps
Kopaonik
BALKAN MTS.
Dunav
Drina
Tisa
Sava
Morava
18°
19°
20°
21°
42°
43°
44°
45°
46°
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

The Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija 1999–2007

Surviving in Ghetto-like Enclaves

Dušan T. Bataković

The legal position of Serbia's troublesome autonomous province of Kosovo and Metohija was redefined after the seventy-eight days of NATO bombing campaign (from 24 March to 10 June 1999). The bombing campaign, lacking UN approval, consisted of a massive air-strikes operation in order to stop the "humanitarian catastrophe" of the Kosovo Albanians and their fighting units (KLA) confronted by the Yugoslav armed and police forces. The Military-Technical Agreement between NATO and Yugoslav military representatives was signed in Kumanovo (FYROM) on 9 June 1999.

Under the Kumanovo Agreement, Kosovo and Metohija—constitutionally an autonomous province within Serbia, a member state of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia—was to be entrusted, after the eventual withdrawal of all Yugoslav military and police personnel, to the military protection of a NATO-led 48,000-strong Kosovo force (KFOR). The bilateral Military-Technical Agreement that finally ended the bombing campaign was a prerequisite for UN Security Council Resolution 1244, adopted on the East River in New York the following day, 10 June 1999. Kosovo and Metohija (referred to only as Kosovo by the UN Resolution) were placed under the administration of the United Nations.[1]

Calling for the disarmament of Albanian paramilitary units (the Kosovo Liberation Army), UNSC Resolution 1244 reaffirmed the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia over Kosovo and Metohija and foresaw the return of an agreed number (less than 1,000) of Yugoslav (i.e. Serbian) security and military forces to the Province. The UN Resolution also envisaged the establishment of "a substantial autonomy" for Kosovo and Metohija within Serbia—since June 2006 the legal successor of both the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (April 1992-February 2003) and the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (February 2003-June 2006).[2] The main purpose of UNSC Resolution 1244—at least the one officially declared as such—was not to bring about the separation of Kosovo and Metohija from the rest of Serbia, but to rebuild this war-torn area into a new democratic, tolerant multicultural society that would eventually, enjoying the highest possible degree of autonomy, be reintegrated into a future democratic framework of the Republic of Serbia.

Under UN administration since June 1999, the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija and its Albanian-dominated Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) were under obligation to restore the protection of fundamental human rights and to ensure freedom of movement for all of Kosovo inhabitants, regardless of their ethnic origin or religious affiliation. Furthermore, according to UNSC Resolution 1244, they were obliged to provide for the fast and safe return of internally displaced persons and to create a stable legal framework as the main precondition for the restoration of multicultural, multi-ethnic society in compliance with fundamental UN and European standards regarding human rights, property rights, and so on.

However, none of these solemnly proclaimed goals have been achieved, not even partially, within the first eight years of UN administration, despite the fact that democracy was finally restored in Belgrade after the ousting of the authoritarian regime of Slobodan Milošević in October 2000, and the new authorities were eager to co-operate closely with both the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and NATO-led KFOR. Furthermore, both the federal and Serbian governments were offering serious negotiations with the legitimate representatives of Kosovo Albanians, to support the fulfillment of the requirements of UNSC Resolution 1244. Belgrade's democratic approach to the Kosovo problem was manifested in the rapid liberation of all Kosovo Albanian civilian prisoners of war detained in Serbian prisons, while efficient cooperation with KFOR was established in managing the security in the Ground Safety Zone established between Kosovo and the rest of Serbia after June 1999.

In contrast to the open and democratic policy of Belgrade, the whole post-June 1999 process of rebuilding Kosovo and Metohija as a democratic, multi-ethnic society failed, as it made little or no progress in most of the sensi-

[1] D.T. Bataković, "Kosovo: from Separation to Integration," *Serbian Studies. Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies*, vol. 18, № 2 (Washington DC 2004), 311–320.

[2] The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, renamed the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro on 4 February 2003, was eventually succeeded by the Republic of Serbia on 5 June 2006, after the referendum on independence of Montenegro.

tive areas that involved multi-ethnic cooperation or inter-ethnic reconciliation. UNMIK administration and KFOR forces, focused on helping Albanians, perceived as the main victims of civil conflict, failed to provide efficient protection for non-Albanian communities and minority groups from the highly orchestrated large-scale campaign of ethnic cleansing directed primarily against Serbs, a constituent nation in Kosovo and Metohija. Carried out by Albanian extremists led by former warlords, this new wave of post-war ethnic cleansing against the Serbs, Roma, Goranies and other non-Albanian ethnic groups was tacitly approved not only by the majority of Kosovo Albanians, but by their political leaders as well.

The ethnic cleansing against the Kosovo Serbs was openly justified both by Albanians and by their supporters throughout the international community as a kind of ugly and regrettable but inevitable revenge for all the criminal acts against local Albanians previously committed by the Serbian police or paramilitaries under the Milošević regime while fighting the KLA and its supporters during the fifteen months of armed clashes before and during the NATO bombing campaign.[3] In compliance with the Kumanovo Agreement, the Yugoslav army took all its military equipment out of Kosovo and Metohija, while KLA fighting units remained armed, despite occasional, mostly symbolic, handovers of arms to KFOR. The complete disarmament of the KLA was never accomplished although it was one of the main prerequisites in UNSC Resolution 1244. Thus, fully disarmed, the Kosovo Serbs could find protection only with KFOR, while Albanians, using the reluctance of KFOR to confront the KLA, a major NATO ally during the bombing campaign, were free to take their revenge against the Serbs and the members of those ethnic groups considered as having been loyal to Serbia during the 1999 conflict.

It is not a surprise then that despite the massive military presence of international (KFOR) troops, the overall security situation concerning personal safety and freedom of movement for the Serbs and non-Albanian minorities has been constantly deteriorating since June 1999. The major positive achievement of the UN mission in Kosovo was the quick and safe return of hundreds of thousands of Albanians who had fled or had been forced to leave Kosovo during the 1999 NATO bombing campaign. They safely returned to their often destroyed homes within weeks after KFOR and UNMIK took full control over the administration of the Province. As confirmed by independent sources, however, along with them came dozens of thousands of Albanians from the economically backward areas of northern Albania in order to pillage the abandoned property of the Serbs who, in fear of spiralling violence, had fled to central Serbia or to Montenegro.[4]

[3] The Albanian testimonies to wartime sufferings, extensive but not always fully reliable, are available in *Under Orders. War Crimes in Kosovo* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2001).

Post-1999 ethnic cleansing

Conversely, most of the Kosovo Serbs and other non-Albanians were forced out of the Province by Albanian extremists, while the remaining ones were and still are deprived of their fundamental human rights. The chronology of post-war developments as far as the Serbs and other non-Albanians are concerned is the following: prior to the establishment of UNMIK, at least 30,000 Serbs hastily left Kosovo and Metohija fleeing from Albanian persecutions, retribution and attacks. During the first three months of UNMIK-KFOR administration, approximately 150,000 Serbs were expelled from Kosovo and forced to find refuge in central Serbia or in Montenegro.

After KFOR officially took over in Priština on 12 June, busy with finding suitable accommodation for the incoming troops, "a wave of unprecedented violence, looting, murders and abductions spread throughout the Province, especially in the cities, the victims of which were the remaining Serbs, Roma, Goranies and Muslim Bosniacs."[5] Furthermore, tens of thousands of Roma, and thousands of Muslim Slavs (mostly Goranies), whose houses were also burnt or usurped by Albanians, also fled the Serbian province freshly entrusted to UN.[6]

The very difficult situation for the Serb and non-Albanian population became critical, going from bad to worse. Thus, on 17 June 1999, about 5,000 Kosovo Serbs left Uroševac, an important town in the south of the Province, escorted by a strong KFOR contingent. According to the data offered by the Serbian police and eventually confirmed by UNMIK, since 1 January 1998 there were 1,303 missing persons: 944 Serbs, 210 Muslim Roma and 149 ethnic Albanians. According to other data provided by The Hague Tribunal (ICTY), 547 Serbs were killed and 932 Serbs and non--Albanians kidnapped in June 1999 alone.[7]

The first five Serb civilians were abducted on the streets of Priština as early as 12 June 1999, while news kept arriving of an orchestrated campaign of terror against both the Serb and Roma populations. The Serb population of the village of Zočište near Orahovac fled on 14 June after their homes and the fourteenth-century Serbian monastery of Sts. Kos-

[4] The first UNMIK administrator Bernard Kouchner warned publicly on 2 August 1999 of "the presence of gangsters coming from neighbouring Albania and amplifying the already existent chaos in Kosovo." Despite 36,500-strong military forces and civilian personnel, with only 555 international policemen and 20 judges, it was impossible to deal with a KLA-sponsored Albanian mafia in UNMIK-administrated Kosovo.

[5] *Cf.* more in *The Memorandum of the Serbian Orthodox Church on Kosovo and Metohija.*

[6] *Cf.* the documentation in "Ne ubijaju Srbe tamo gde ih nema" [Serbs not being killed only in places where there are none], *Blic*, Belgrade, 22 August 1999.

[7] *Cf.* detailed documentation on 932 missing persons in *Abductions and Disappearances of non-Albanians in Kosovo* (Belgrade: Humanitarian Law Center, 2001).

mas and Damian were set on fire by a group of Albanian extremists. After that, the small but historically important medieval monastery church was blown up. Between 14 and 16 June in Orahovac (a vine-growing area of Metohija) about 600 Serb residents scattered in various parts of the town all fled to the Serbian quarter in the vicinity of the church, ready to organize joint resistance to Albanians who were setting fire to all Serbian houses, one after another. On 24 June 1999 roughly 3,200 Serbs were forced to leave Orahovac escorted by KFOR: of 6,000 prewar Serb residents barely 2,000 remained ghettoized in the Serb-inhabited quarter. A 1,200-Serb-strong enclave in neighbouring Velika Hoča, a historic Serb village with fourteen churches dating from various periods, monuments of Oriental architecture and the well-preserved fourteenth-century wine cellars founded by the Serbian Emperor Stefan Dušan (1331–1355) and presently in the ownership of the monastery of Dečani, managed to survive at that moment, protected, as the Serbs of Orahovac, by KFOR tanks and barbed wire.

Another notable fourteenth-century Serb monastery, the Holy Trinity in Mušutište was looted and burned to the ground on 12 June, while the nuns barely managed to escape. Four days after German KFOR troops entered Prizren, on 16 June 1999, a KLA group kidnapped Fr. Hariton Lukić, a monk of the monastery of the Holy Archangels near Prizren, in charge of the evacuation of Serb nuns from Mušutište and monks from Zočište. More than a year later his beheaded, mutilated body was found near Prizren. On 15 June 1999, German KFOR finally decided, though not until the Albanian mob had destroyed most of the Serbian monuments around the seat of the Diocese of Raška-Prizren, to provide military protection for the besieged Serbian cathedral and bishopric.

The other areas of Metohija, with significant Serb settlements, were rapidly emptied as the ethnically motivated terror of armed Albanian extremists continued unhindered, from abduction and expulsion to torture and random killings. Belo Polje and Vitomirica near Peć were completely emptied of Serbs. Driven out of their houses, the Serbs of Belo Polje near Peć left for neighbouring Montenegro on 19 June, after three of their compatriots were found slaughtered. Between the middle of June and late July 1999, the Metropolitan of Montenegro and his monks, authorized by the Serb Patriarch to provide protection for the Patriarchate of Peć and its flock, found and buried some thirty bodies of Serbs, mostly elderly men and women, civilians brutally massacred throughout the Peć area. The monastery of Dečani, famous for giving shelter to civilians in danger regardless of their ethnic origin, especially to Albanians during the 1999 war, now provided shelter not only to Serbs but also to fifty Roma whose houses in the neighbouring area were torched by the Albanians. Another family sheltered in Dečani was from the Muslim-Slav Gorani (*Goranci*) community. The tiny Christian Serb community of Djakovica, living in a single street, known as Serbian Street (*Srpska ulica*), totalling roughly 700 persons, gathered around the walls of the parish church of the Mother of God. A series of migrations reduced the presence of Serbs to six old ladies, living in complete isolation under the protection of Italian KFOR forces.[8]

As reported on 15 August 1999 the situation in the British-controlled area of central Kosovo was the following: "Looted houses, banished senior citizens, stolen cars, racketeering, murders, abductions, rape, trafficking: the KFOR troops are facing crime, both organized and uncontrolled, committed by Kosovars and Albanian Mafia. In two months, in the British Sector only, there were 127 murders (accounted for), 378 arsons, 504 known robberies. Kosovo has only been under UNMIK administration for six weeks, and the word 'mafia' emerged into media reports. A coincidence?"[9]

According to the verifiable sources of the Kosovo and Metohija diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church (Raška-Prizren Bishopric), the number of Serbs remaining in the larger cities in August 1999 was as follows:

Gnjilane: 25,000 Serbs reduced to about 5,000
K. Mitrovica: 27,000 Serbs reduced to 15,000
Kosovo Polje: 20,000 Serbs reduced to less than 10,000
Peć: 12,000 Serbs reduced to less than 100
Priština: 30,000 Serbs reduced to 500 to 1000
Prizren: 5,000–6,000 Serbs reduced to 600[10]

During the first three months of UN administration approximately 250,000 Serbs and other non-Albanians (Roma, Muslim Slavs, Croats and the tiny Jewish community) were driven out and displaced from Kosovo, finding refuge in the rest of Serbia or in Montenegro, the other constituent republic of the FRY. Abductions and random killings of Serbs in all parts of the UN-governed Province became the predominant contents of hundreds of exhaustive and well-documented reports of local priests and church-people's councils, covering the events involving Serb victims from the Gnjilane, Vitina, Lipljan, Klina, Uroševac, Prizren, Orahovac and Peć areas.[11] A significant number of Serbs left Kosovska Vitina on 19 July 1999, after the random attacks by Albanian extremists culminated in a group of Serbs be-

[8] These ladies were eventually evacuated by Italian KFOR on 17 March 2004 when thousands of Kosovo Albanian rioters attacked their parish seat and church hurling stones and petrol bombs. After their evacuation to the monastery of Dečani, the parish church and seat were looted and set on fire. In the following days all remains of the church were completely removed.

[9] Report by *Agence France-Presse* of 15 August 1999.

[10] For a detailed account, see D.T. Bataković, "Kosovo: From Sparkling Victory to Troublesome Peace" in D. Simko & H. Haumann, eds., *Peace Perspectives for South Eastern Europe*, Proceedings of the Symposium 2000 Basel, Switzerland, 29–30 June 2000 (Academia: Prague 2001), pp. 127–147.

[11] These *Reports*, covering especially the first post-war months (July-October 1999), sent from Gnjilane, Vitina, Lipljan, Prizren, Orahovac and Peć, have been partially reproduced in the collection of documents on post-war crimes against Serbs and non-Albanians *Nova Srpska Golgota* [A New Serbian Golgotha], vols. 1–3 (Cetinje: Svetigora, 2000).

ing injured by a hand grenade thrown near the Serbian Orthodox church in the town.

Hieromonk Stefan Puljić of the monastery of Budisavci (a dependency of the Peć Patriarchate) was abducted with one other Serb civilian by extremist Albanian Roman Catholics, only to be tortured and eventually killed.

Metohija, the fertile plain stretching from Peć to Prizren and bordering Albania, was the first area to become ethnically cleansed of Serbs as early as August 1999, with tiny surviving enclaves, apart from Orahovac and Velika Hoča, remaining as small pockets (village of Goraždevac near Peć, the villages of Suvo Grlo, Banja and Crkolez east of Istok). The Serbian cemeteries in all the abandoned villages—such as Belo Polje near Peć, and the villages of Seča, Brestovik and Šakovica in the vicinity—were either desecrated or totally destroyed.

The worst crime in the first weeks of large-scale terror and violence against Serbs committed by the Kosovo Albanians was the "Harvest Massacre." On 23 July 1999, fourteen Serbian farmers from the village of Staro Gracko in the Lipljan area of eastern Kosovo were killed by local Albanian extremists while harvesting their crops in the early evening hours. The UNHCR official report stressed that "a wave of arson and looting of Serb and Roma homes throughout Kosovo has ensued. Serbs and Roma remaining in Kosovo have been subject to repeated incidents of harassment and intimidation," while "more seriously, there has been a spate of murders and abductions of Serbs since mid-June, including the late-July [Staro Gracko] massacre of Serb farmers." Despite official scaling-down of the level of discrimination and persecution against Kosovo Serbs, it was the *Philadelphia Inquirer* that reported "a sinister pattern of violence and intimidation" where "Serb houses are bombed and set ablaze" and where the scale of violence amounts to "systematic ethnic cleansing."[12]

The Albanian perpetrators of the "Harvest Massacre" have not been identified, apprehended or tried, as in thousands other similar cases of ethnically motivated crimes against members of the Serbian community. It became a practice that additionally forced the Kosovo Serbs still surviving in the mixed Serb-Albanian areas to leave the Province. Despite a huge international civilian and military presence, they remained deprived of the rule of law and minimal guarantees for both their security and property. Ruled by the criminal gangs that emerged from the highest ranking officials of the KLA guerrilla, Albanian-dominated Kosovo was turned into a law-free area for all sorts of criminal activities and illegal trafficking, but its dominant political agenda remained to be ethnic and religious discrimination, abductions, property usurpations and random killings of Serbs and non-Albanians.

Mixed villages gradually emptied, urban areas completely cleansed

During the last months of 1999, the pre-war Serbian population of 40,000 of Priština, the provincial capital—urban (30,000) and suburban (up to 10,000)—decreased to less than 1,000 only to be additionally reduced, within months, to barely 120, all confined to a single apartment building (YU Program Building), heavily guarded by KFOR, but fully deprived of freedom of movement through the city.[13] Priština, previously the main economic, cultural and university center for the Kosovo Serbs, became totally devoid of Serb intellectuals, professors, medical doctors, engineers etc. Tens of thousands of Roma of urban and suburban Priština, a distinct component of the provincial capital's population, virtually disappeared under orchestrated Albanian violence. Both Serbs and Roma mostly were replaced by rural Kosovo Albanians, who rushed to settle in Priština, moving with their extended families into the vacant houses and apartments of the expelled Serbs and other non-Albanian groups.

Furthermore, during the last months of 1999 and in early 2000, the urban Kosovo Serbs were first reduced and eventually completely evicted from all other major Kosovo towns such as Peć, Prizren, Djakovica and Uroševac. Of the original several thousand Serb inhabitants of Prizren, only few dozen persons remained, mostly elderly, surviving by hiding in churches or in the Serbian Orthodox Theological School (*Bogoslovija*), as elsewhere owing to the protection of KFOR units. At least 200 Serb, Roma and Muslim residents of Prizren found refuge in the Serb Theological School in Prizren under German guard, along with a group of Kosovo Albanians who received death threats from their compatriots for supporting Serbs.[14]

The formerly flourishing community of 12,000 Serbs and Montenegrins in the town of Peć, successful in trade, business and crafts, was completely driven out by early 2000, while the number of Serbs in Prizren, already reduced to less than 200 in 2000, further declined to 68, mostly elderly people in 2002. The first wave of attacks on Serbs in Gnjilane started on 24 July 1999. The first wave of destruction targeted the monument to the Holy Prince Lazar, the hero of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, while six mutilated Serb bodies were found on the local hospital garbage dump. Once numerous, strong and prosperous, the Serb urban residents of Gnjilane and Orahovac, lacking efficient and continuous protection from international forces, were eventually forced to flee Kosovo in 2000: in early 2001 their number was reduced from pre-war 12,000 to 400 in Gnjilane and approximately 450 in Orahovac.

12 *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 18 November 1999.

13 Jean-Arnault Dérens, *Kosovo, année zero* (Paris: Ed. Paris-Méditerranée, 2006), 214.

14 For more detail, see Dušan T. Bataković, "The Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija: War, International Protectorate and National Catastrophe," *Eurobalkans* 36–37 (Athens, Autumn/Winter 1999), pp. 23–40.

The monastery of Devič, in the Drenica area, venerated by the Christian Serbs and a privileged target of Muslim Albanian extremists (set ablaze in 1941 and reconstructed after 1945) was held for three days under the KLA siege in mid-June 1999, and restored to its sisterhood only after nuns from Kosovo's northernmost monastery, Sokolica, brought French KFOR forces to establish military protection of this oldest medieval Serb endowment in the Drenica area. The monastery of Devič, famous in medieval Serbia and during Ottoman rule, venerated by pilgrims from all neighbouring states for the relics of the local saint St. Joanikije Devički, was desecrated anew by the KLA in 1999.

The revengeful wave of ethnic cleansing, carried out by Albanian extremists against Serbs and other non-Albanian populations became a by-product of the new political landscape dominated by Kosovo Albanians and controlled by extremists: "Amid this anarchy, the question has to be asked: can the shameful campaign of 'ethnic cleansing' and murder of Serbs that continues under KFOR's eyes still be explained away as revenge attacks, as retaliation for the mass atrocities committed against Albanians by Serb forces before and during the Kosovo war? A growing number of Albanian intellectuals, including several courageous journalists on the [Albanian] daily *Koha Ditore* newspaper, fear that the murders and dispossession of Serbs are now being organized."[15]

Most of the remaining Kosovo Serbs have since June 1999 been confined to ghetto-like living in virtual segregation within the KFOR-protected enclaves in Kosovo and Metohija. The Kosovo Serbs' enclaves located south of the Ibar River in particular were all deprived of basic security provisions, lacking freedom of movement and other fundamental civil rights. Only several predominantly Serb-inhabited areas north of the Ibar River, owing only to the direct territorial link with the rest of Serbia, in the Kosovska Mitrovica area (districts of North Mitrovica) as well as in the municipalities of Zubin Potok, Zvečan and Leposavić, have managed to escape the discrimination and isolation that the Serbs confined in smaller or larger enclaves (Štrpce, Kosovska Vitina, Gračanica, Gnjilane, Goraždevac, Novo Brdo, Velika Hoča and others), usually bordering predominantly Albanian-inhabited areas, could not.

The imposed regrouping of the remaining Serbs into several KFOR-protected enclaves keeps about 130,000 Serbs in four separate zones: 1) the northern zone, north of the river Ibar and Kosovska Mitrovica (encompassing Zubin Potok, Zvečan and Leposavić municipalities), to which the citizens of the Vučitrn region resorted; 2) the central zone, encompassing the area between the village of Gračanica and the town of Lipljan with thirteen Serb-inhabited villages, to which a certain number of Serb citizens from Priština and the neighbouring villages fled and found refuge; 3) the zone from Kosovska Kamenica to Gnjilane and Novo Brdo, where the Serb majority exiled from the Gnjilane area has found temporary shelter; 4) the Štrpce municipality (*Sirinićka župa*) with Brezovica Mountain, where a number of Prizren's Serbs and the people from the neighbouring areas (*Sredska* or *Sretačka župa*) inhabited by Muslim Slavs fled from violence and persecution by Albanian extremists. Remaining Serb enclaves covering the areas of Kosovska Vitina, Ranilug, Parteš or Vrbovac in eastern Kosovo remained to be highly vulnerable to ethnically motivated violence ranging from random attacks and arson to abduction, despite significant KFOR presence and numerous check-points or enhanced patrolling in areas with a mixed Serb-Albanian population.

Between June 1999 and December 2000, all judges and prosecutors were Kosovo Albanians, while seven subsequently appointed Kosovo Serb judges were forced to resign and flee to inner Serbia as a result of threats by Albanian extremists. The appointment of international judges, although welcomed, proved to be insufficient due both to constant pressures and to the reluctance of the predominantly Albanian environment to cooperate in finding the perpetrators of ethnically motivated crimes. According to the report of 26 June 2003 of the Secretary-General on UNMIK, there were only fifteen international judges and ten international prosecutors serving in the local justice system, capable of dealing with only three percent of criminal cases. The inevitable consequence of the inefficient judiciary was the emergence of a culture of impunity surrounding violence against the non-Albanian population, Serbs in particular.[16]

In addition, thousands of houses, apartments (approximately 45,000) and estates owned by non-Albanians were in 2006 still under the occupation of squatters after usurpation by local Albanians, while an additional 30,000 dwellings and other property were either robbed or damaged. In comparison to approximately 70,000 Albanian-owned properties that were burned, damaged or destroyed by Yugoslav forces during the fighting in 1998 and the NATO bombing campaign in 1999, this post-war record of Kosovo under the weak and inefficient UNMIK administration is an obvious evidence of a large-scale revenge, a nineteenth-century-style collective vendetta against the Serbs, the Albanians' main rivals, as well as against other non-Albanian ethnic communities.

[15] "Armed Albanians take revenge with campaign of murder, house-burning and intimidation that has driven out thousands Serbs murdered by the hundred since 'liberation'," reported Robert Fisk from Priština to *The Independent*, 24 November 1999. Other eyewitnesses whose reports have been published: Mike O'Connor, "Rebel Terror Forcing Minority Serbs Out of Kosovo," *New York Times*, 31 August 1998; R. Jeffrey Smith, "Kosovo Rebels Make Own Law," *Washington Post*, 24 November 1999; Peter Worthington, "NATO's Reputation a Casualty of War," *The Toronto Sun*, 18 November 1999. *Cf.* also Max Boot, "U.N. Discovers Colonialism Isn't Easy in Kosovo," *The Wall Street Journal*, 2 November 1999.

[16] Bataković, "Kosovo: From Separation to Integration."

"Vandalism with a mission": The orchestrated destruction of the Serbian cultural and religious heritage

In parallel with the persecution of the Serb civilian population, the target of Albanian retaliation were numerous Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries, ranging from medieval Byzantine-style monuments to more recent churches built between the sixteenth and the twentieth century. Until the end of 1999, more than seventy Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries were plundered, desecrated and, in most cases, levelled to the ground. One-third of these churches were important cultural monuments dating from the medieval period with invaluable frescos, sculptures, and icons.[17] As stressed by a Western eyewitness "...this demolition cannot be just 'revenge'—NATO's usual excuse for the destruction under its auspices. You do not just fill with rage and spend days gathering explosives to blow up churches. This is vandalism with a mission."[18]

A renowned British war correspondent reported that "the Serb Church has issued its own list of destroyed or partly demolished buildings. Between 13 June—when NATO troops entered Kosovo—and 20 October, they say, seventy-four churches have been turned to dust or burnt or vandalized. The fifteenth-century monastery of the Holy Trinity above Mušutište, begun in 1465, has been leveled with explosives. The monastery of the [Holy] Archangels near Vitina, built in the fourteenth century, has been looted and burnt. So have the church of the Archangels in Gornje Nerodimlje; and the church of St. Paraskeva near Peć: and the church of St. Nicholas in Prekoruplje—razed and its nine sixteenth-century icons lost, including that of the apostle Thomas. The rubble of Orthodox churches across Kosovo stands as a monument to Albanian vandalism. After declaring that Kosovo must remain a 'multi-ethnic society', 40,000 troops from K-For cannot, it seems, look after its historical heritage against the violence of those whom its spokesmen treated as allies in the war against Yugoslavia's President, Slobodan Milošević, only five months ago."[19] The destruction continued in the Suva Reka area: the Serb parish church in the town and the impressive medieval church in Mušutište, dedicated to the Mother of God and beautifully frescoed (built in 1315, immediately after the monastery of Gračanica), were both levelled to the ground.

During the second half of 1999, an additional number of centuries-old Serb religious centers were destroyed in a highly orchestrated action, focusing primarily on the living Serb communities around certain churches and monasteries. The church of Petrič near Peć, Nerodimlje near Uroševac, the monastery of Binča near Vitina, and another fifty churches and monasteries were destroyed or levelled to the ground, dozens of Serb cemeteries desecrated or devastated, in addition to an unknown number, mounting to thousands, of abandoned Serb homes routinely looted, torched and destroyed, in order to prevent the return of their rightful owners.

A series of renewed attacks on civilian convoys took place in February 2001 in order to reinforce fear and insecurity within the Serb-inhabited enclaves of Kosovo. The most criminal, among several others, occurred on 14 February 2001 between Merdare and Podujevo, when Albanian extremists, applying Sicilian-mafia methods, planted explosive beneath the road and destroyed a whole bus with 56 Serb civilians travelling home under the escort of Swedish KFOR troops. Among 44 heavily injured victims, fourteen Kosovo Serb passengers perished, including two children. KFOR and UNMIK played down the whole incident, not naming the ethnic origin and number of the civilian victims of the "bus bombing massacre" near the village of Livadice.[20]

From June 1999 to June 2003 the number of destroyed and desecrated Serb Orthodox churches—at least one-third of them important Byzantine-type medieval Serbian monuments—amounted to 117, while the most important medieval monasteries, from the Patriarchate of Peć and Visoki Dečani to Gračanica and Prizren's Cathedral of the Mother of God Ljeviška, were after June 1999 put under continuous KFOR protection. The general impression is that after the establishment of UN administration there was an orchestrated attempt by Albanian extremists to evict not only all of the Serbs, but also to remove all traces of their cultural and historical heritage, something perceived by them as an important precondition for obtaining independence for an Albanian-dominated Kosovo.

As stressed on many occasions by representatives of the Raška-Prizren Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church, this is a strategy of cutting off Kosovo Serbs from their historical and religious traditions. Only in November 2002, for instance, a day before UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's visit, two separate explosions blew up two Serbian Orthodox churches in western Kosovo: a church in Ljubova was razed to the ground, while the interior of the church in nearby Djurakovac sustained serious damage. In addition, during the same month, several cemeteries in Dečani

[17] *Cf.* bilingual Serbian-English publication: *Crucified Kosovo. Destroyed and Desecrated Serbian Orthodox Churches in Kosovo and Metohija (June-August 1999)*, ed. Fr. Sava Janjić (Belgrade 1999); revised and updated Internet edition: *www.kosovo.net.*; French and Russian editions are available at *www.yunet.com/destruction.html* and *www. kosovo.net.*

[18] Robert Fisk [from Djakovica], "NATO turns a blind eye as scores of ancient Christian churches are reduced to rubble," *The Independent*, 20 November 1999.

[19] *The Independent*, 20 November 1999.

[20] A detailed report by Bishop Atanasije Jevtić in the Diocesan archive in Gračanica Monastery describes the attempt by UNMIK to scale down the number of Serbs killed in this Albanian-organized attack. Although it was known right away that eleven passengers died on the spot, UNMIK claimed only seven deaths. Less than ten killed is considered a crime, while more than ten is considered an act of terrorism.

and Kosovo Polje were vandalized by Albanian extremists, raising the toll of desecrated Serbian cemeteries all over the province of Kosovo to several dozen.[21]

In May 2003, Spanish and Greek soldiers of KFOR were attacked with hand grenades while protecting Serbian churches in Istok (monastery of Gorioč) and Uroševac respectively. On 26 July 2003, the discovery of a powerful explosive device in the vicinity of the Holy Archangels near Prizren prevented the massacre of at least one thousand Serbian pilgrims who came, under heavy KFOR escort, to celebrate the 650th anniversary of the monastery. A detonation rang out on the hillside above the Holy Archangels during the Divine Liturgy. The nine kilograms of powerful explosive were planted in the hillside in order to bring the huge cliff down on the gathered Serb pilgrims and the monastery. The next target was the Serb church and community in Klokot (Vitina area in eastern Kosovo).

Although the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the UN High Commission for Refugees stressed in their reports that 2002 saw a continued fall in ethnically motivated crime, this was only due to the fact that many Serbs had simply disappeared from many previously mixed areas after continuous threats, attacks and assassinations perpetrated by Albanian extremists. Since May 2002, KFOR has begun to scale down its presence in the so-called 'minority areas', which was a signal to Albanian extremists to resume their strategy of ethnic cleansing, persecuting Serbs from all parts of Kosovo and Metohija, through a new series of ethnically motivated crimes, in order to force them to leave the province, and, additionally, discourage those willing to return.

Freedom of movement, after three years of KFOR presence, remained unattainable for Serbs and non-Albanians. Among dozens, if not hundreds of examples, this is a striking one: a group of some fifty retired Serbs transported by UNMIK bus from Osojane to Peć were heading for the local bank on 11 October 2002, but experienced a brutal attack by over 600 Albanians in the streets of Peć. Their bus was stoned and additionally demolished by Molotov cocktails, while at least fifteen elderly Serbs were injured and subsequently evacuated by Spanish KFOR to a temporary refuge in the nearby building only to be hastily escorted back to their village.[22]

The decreased number of ethnically motivated killings in 2002 showed, however, that the targets were not any more large Serbian communities, but usually smaller and more vulnerable ones, mostly in ethnically mixed areas. On 6 January a Serb was killed by a grenade in front of his house in Kosovska Kamenica. On 23 February, a Serbian woman in Lipljan was shot and killed by an unknown perpetrator. In August, five Serbian houses in Klokot near Kosovska Vitina were destroyed by planted explosive devices while several persons were injured, including two members of US KFOR troops. In October, a woman from the same village was assassinated. In December, a Serbian peasant from the village of Cernica, near Gnjilane, was killed. The number of attacks that did not end up in killings was considerably higher. The number of ethnically motivated attacks against Serbs, resulting in serious injuries had increased from 274 in 2001 to 454 in 2003.[23]

The ghetto-like situation is typical for smaller Serb communities (villages, parts of villages or groups of villages): the village of Cernica in the Gnjilane area previously had 85 Serb households amidst 400 Albanian. From 2000 to 2003 Serb residents were frequently attacked by the local Albanian extremists, including arson and assassinations. Five Serbian families in Cernica lost their members, including a child; dozens were wounded, their houses burned or destroyed, while the church of St. Elijah was devastated. After four years of international rule, at the end of 2003, in 6,391 ethnically motivated attacks by Albanian extremists, 1,192 Serbs were killed, 1,303 kidnapped and another 1,305 wounded. Nevertheless, few perpetrators have been identified, let alone arrested, tried and sentenced.[24]

On 12 April 2003 Albanian extremists planted 40 kilograms of explosive under the railroad bridge of Ložište near Banjska and Zvečan. Due to an error made during placement and activation, the explosive only slightly damaged the bridge but killed both Albanian perpetrators, members of the "Kosovo Protection Corps" and the terrorist group known as the "Albanian National Army." An UNMIK police investigation established that the purpose of the attack was to blow up the train carrying Serbs from the central Kosovo enclaves to Serb-inhabited Leposavić in the north, on its way to its final destination, Belgrade.

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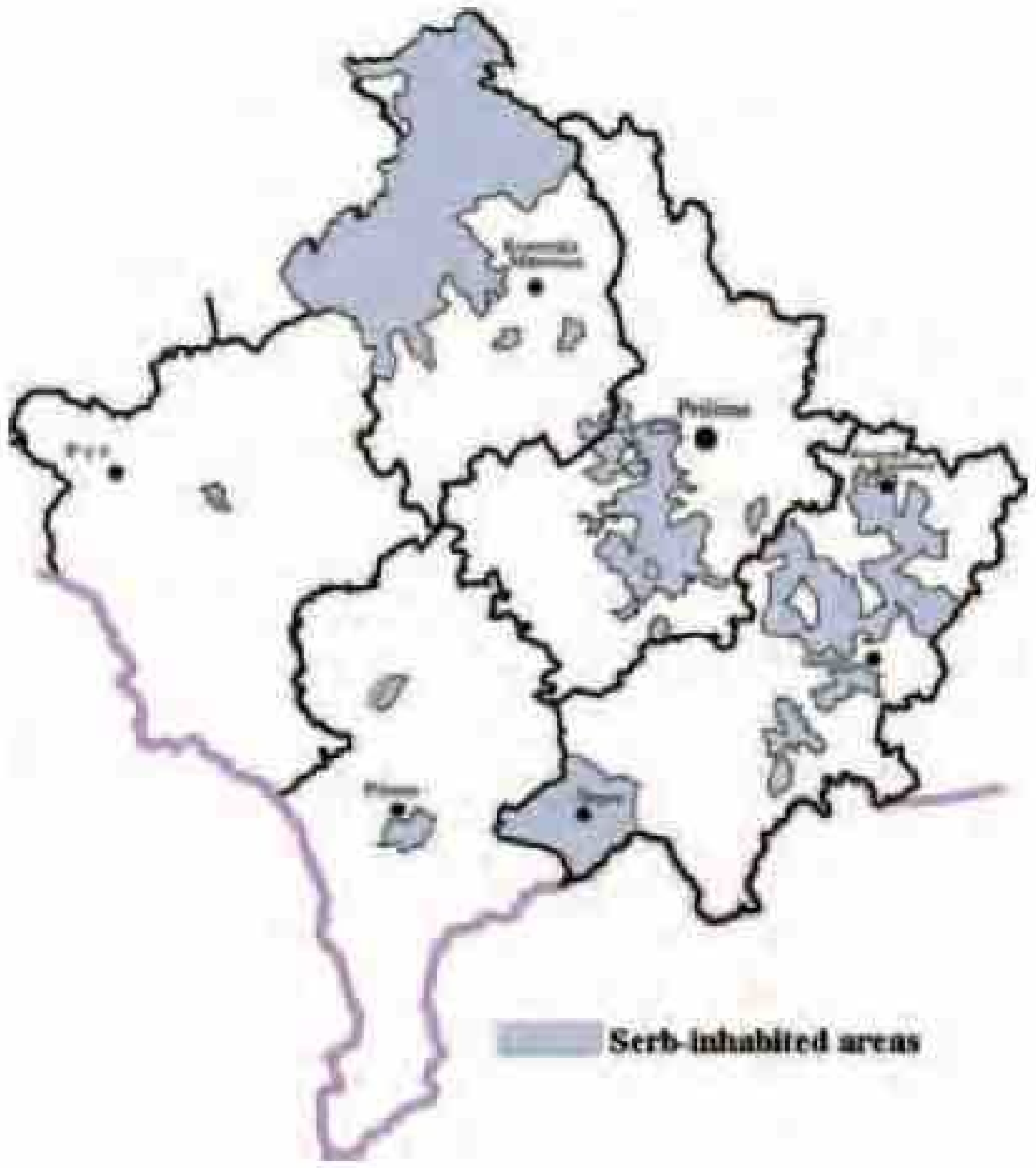
21 Info Service of Serbian Raška-Prizren Diocese of Kosovo and Metohija (ERP KIM), report from Gračanica of 28 November 2002. The report related to the destruction of cemeteries is as follows: "Marking the national holiday of Albania, the so-called Flag Day, in the night between 28 and 29 November, local Albanian extremists destroyed a total of 46 gravestones at the [Christian] Orthodox cemetery in Kosovo Polje [...] the gravestones of prominent Serb families and Serbs killed after the arrival of the international mission in Kosovo and Metohija. On most gravestones the photographs of the deceased were completely destroyed and their names removed. [...] Following the attack on the cemetery of Dečani two days ago, this latest act of vandalism demonstrates the intent of the Albanian extremists to fully achieve their goal and erase the last traces of Serb graves and holy places in Kosovo and Metohija. In all of this, especially upsetting is the fact that the UN mission and KFOR have no solution to this problem and that cemeteries and more recently built churches have been completely left to their fate and the barbarism of the *Balkan Taliban*." (ERP KIM, report from Gračanica, 30 November 2002).

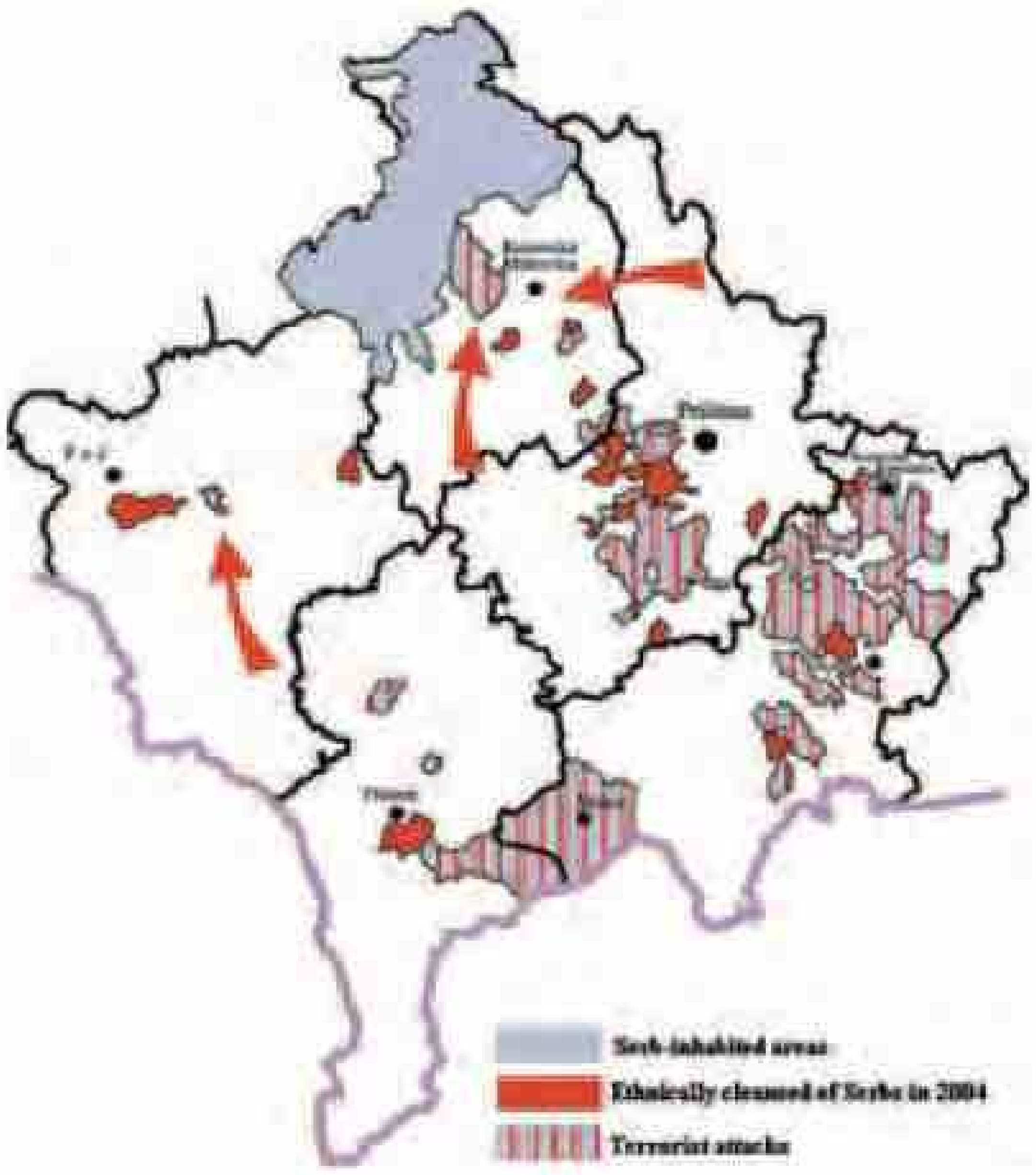
22 Additional data in the Memorandum of the Serbian Orthodox Church on Kosovo and Metohija.

23 More in Bataković, "Kosovo: From Separation to Integration."

24 For detailed data on the victims of Albanian terror in the period between June 1999 and November 2001, see I. Simić, ed., *Žrtve albanskog terorizma na Kosovu i Metohiji* (Belgrade: Committee for Gathering Information on Crimes against Humanity and Violations of International Law, 2001).



Kosovo & Metohija, Serb-inhabited Areas, 2002



Kosovo & Metohija, March 2004 Pogroms

It was rightly observed that "neither United Nations police forces nor NATO Kosovo peacekeeping forces (KFOR) were willing to acknowledge that as early as the previous summer there had been an increase in ethnic and criminal violence against minorities and police that had raised the total expulsions of Serbs, Roma and other minorities since 1999 to 240,000. Regardless of the warnings of minority leaders, checkpoints and sentries protecting Serb settlements and churches had been withdrawn. The number of KFOR personnel had been prematurely reduced, to 17,500 troops. Neither civilian officials nor the military command were prepared for the two-day pogroms by majority Albanians against non-Albanians. There simply were no contingency plans for such an emergency."[25]

The March pogrom of 2004

In March 2004 it became obvious, at least to international observers, that some leaders of the Kosovo Albanians believed that by several orchestrated waves of ethnic cleansing of all the remaining Serb population from the Province they could present the international community with a *fait accompli*. The incentive for the next wave of ethnic cleansing was the mild international reaction to the previous ethnic cleansing of two-thirds of Kosovo's Serbs that had begun in mid-June 1999. Although Kosovo's Serbs had been warning of the real nature of Albanian nationalism in Kosovo for years, both the UN and the West assumed they were exaggerating, only to receive a confirmation of almost all Serbian claims in just three days of orchestrated violence—the March pogrom—Kosovo's *Kristallnacht*.

The previous destruction of at least 117 Serbian cultural sites, mostly churches and monasteries, passed almost unnoticed or was mildly criticized everywhere except in Serbia, Russia and Greece. Ethnic purity, as envisaged by Kosovo Albanian extremists, however, is not a concept that can be accepted as the legitimate foundation for either democracy or state independence. It became evident that none of the values of the West would eventually take root in the lawless, illegal trafficking paradise of mafia-ruled Kosovo, a "Balkan Columbia," as it was named by international experts for drug trafficking routes to Western capitals.[26]

The official pretext for the three-day campaign of violence against the Serb-inhabited enclaves triggered on 17 March 2003 was the tragic drowning of several Albanian children in the Ibar River near Kosovska Mitrovica. The

[25] Quoted from Marie-Janine Calic, "Standards and Status. Violence against minorities a year ago scared everyone," Internationale Politik, Munich 2005.

[26] "International agencies fighting the drug trade are warning that Kosovo has become a 'smugglers' paradise" supplying up to 40% of the heroin sold in Europe and North America. NATO-led forces, struggling to keep peace in the province a year after the war, have no mandate to fight drug traffickers; and—with the expulsion from Kosovo of the Serb police, including the '4th unit' narcotics squad—the smugglers are running the 'Balkan route' with complete freedom." (Maggie O'Kane [from Belgrade], "Kosovo drug mafia supply heroin to Europe," *The Guardian*, 13 March 2000). *Cf.* also Nick Wood [from Priština], "Kosovo 'mafia' strikes," *The Guardian*, 13 September 2000.

allegations that the Albanian boys drowned after being chased by local Serbs turned out to be false, and this was later confirmed by UNMIK. Quite the opposite, as observed by Derek Chappell, the UNMIK spokesman, "the wave of violence has been too coordinated to be a spontaneous, popular reaction to rumors […] It was planned in advance."[27] More than 51,000 Albanians participated in the thirty-three areas where there was mass ethnically motivated violence, while 163 of them were arrested, as reported by UNMIK on 22 March for arson, murder and other criminal acts.

Busloads of Albanians were transported to Serb-inhabited areas, clashing occasionally with KFOR units on the way, while targeting in particular those enclaves that stood in the way of controlling the main transport and railway routes in Kosovo. For this reason, entire Serb villages in central and eastern Kosovo were razed to the ground, and some 4,000 Serb civilians became homeless within two days of unconstrained violence. The UN evacuated its missions from at least three cities in Kosovo. In two of them, Serbian Orthodox churches were set aflame. The only functioning Serb Orthodox church in Priština, St. Nicholas (*Sv. Nikola*), dating from the 1830s, was eventually set ablaze, as another act of denying the Serbs the very possibility of living or returning to the provincial capital of Kosovo and Metohija.[28]

While insisting that they are capable of governing an independent state, the Albanian leadership in Kosovo and Metohija also claim that they were unable to control their compatriots and to halt the pogrom against the Serbs. Hence, while the most influential Albanian party leader in Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, travelled overseas preaching the virtues of multi-ethnicity and a civic-based identity, the five most important medieval Serbian sites in his hometown of Prizren were burned or heavily damaged by his supporters in the raging Albanian mob, in front of a passive German KFOR contingent, lacking orders from Berlin to act against the perpetrators.[29]

The March Pogrom of 2004 was labelled by Admiral Gregory Johnson, NATO commander for Southeastern Europe, as "ethnic cleansing," while he was still sending additional troops to halt the two-day outburst of violence against Serbs.[30] As confirmed by Italian General Alberto Primiseri, the whole campaign was planned in advance, forcing Kosovo into blood and fire.[31] UN ombudsman Marek Antoni Nowicki called this pogrom a real "drama of the Serbs," while the correspondent of *Le Figaro Magazine* titled his detailed report *Kosovo Serbs: Suitcase or Coffin* (*Les Serbes du Kosovo : la valise ou le cercueil*).[32]

The series of subsequent reports of Kosovo ombudsperson Nowicki about negative trends in multi-ethnic relations, as well as the detailed November 2005 report of UN Special Envoy in Kosovo, Ambassador Kai Eide, about the situation in the Province have shown that very little or no progress has been recorded for the last seven years, i.e. since June 1999. Kai Eide reported that the position of Serbs, and of other non-Albanians, was "grim"[33] and that Kosovo Serbs chose to stay outside the PISG of Kosovo and to maintain direct ("parallel") links with Belgrade for both health and educational services. He described that the Kosovo Serbs feared that they would be, as they had been before, simply a decoration to any PISG of Kosovo, with little abil-

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[27] *Cf.* reports and analysis of Raška-Prizren Diocese, ERP KIM 17–19 March 2004. *Cf.* also Special report on violence on Kosovo by B92, Belgrade (*Specijal B92: Nasilje na Kosovu. Hronologija događaja (16–22. marta 2004)*.

[28] Upon hearing the news of the pogrom and the burning of churches in Kosovo, a small but aggressive crowd of Belgraders surrounded the Bairakli mosque. In retaliation, the windows were broken, and a fire started. (A similar retaliation against the local mosque took place in Niš, the second largest city of inner Serbia.) In contrast to the scene in Kosovo and Metohija, the Serbian government dispatched police forces. However, they were not entirely successful in dispersing the angry mob. A Serbian Orthodox bishop joined his fellow Muslim clerics in Belgrade in trying to prevent the crowd from attacking the mosque. These were isolated incidents in reaction to the Kosovo pogrom, not a systematic campaign of destruction as in Kosovo and Metohija.

[29] "Murder upon murder, kidnapping upon kidnapping, arson upon arson, and now finally this pogrom, have led the Serbs to the realization that they are at the mercy of barbarians. This is ethnic aggression of the worst sort 'in the heart of Europe' (as Madeleine Albright famously called Kosovo before she bombed Serbia). Today, we see the true face of the 'multiethnicity' of which all spoke so highly. And all this is happening under U.N. and NATO administration. Imagine how bad it could get if Kosovo becomes independent." "Senator Sam Brownback (R., Kan.), after having met the bishop of Kosovo several weeks ago [before March 2004] in Washington, wrote a letter to President Bush in which he concluded: 'We should not consider advancing the cause of independence of a people whose first act when liberated was to ethnically cleanse a quarter of a million of their fellow citizens and destroy over a hundred of their holy sites.' This week's dismal events have proved him all too right. Perhaps this pogrom will force the Bush Administration to take seriously the warnings of Belgrade, and help stop the rivers of Kosovo from flowing red with blood." (Quoted from "Kristallnacht in Kosovo. The burning of churches raises questions about independence," 19 March 2004, by Damjan Krnjević-Mišković, on www.nationalinterest.com).

[30] *Voice of America* News, 19 March 2004. *Cf.* also IWPR (Institute for War and Peace Reporting), London, Report of 19 March 2004; *Danas*, Belgrade, 20 March 2004.

[31] *Italijanski general: Albanci imali smišljen plan*, FoNet & B92, 19 March 2004.

[32] Jean-Lous Tremblais in *Le Figaro Magazine*, April 2004. *Cf.* also Marek Waldenberg, "Why Kosovo should not be independent" in *Kosovo and Metohija. Past, Present, Future* (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2006), 428.

[33] With regard to the foundation for a multi-ethnic society, the situation is grim. Kosovo leaders and the international community should take urgent steps in order to correct this picture. The overall security situation is stable, but fragile. The level of reported crime, including inter-ethnic crime, is low. However, on the ground, the situation is complex and troubling, especially for minority communities. There are frequent unreported cases of low-level, inter-ethnic violence and incidents. This affects freedom of movement in a negative way. To correct this situation, it will be important to prosecute crime more vigorously. When perpetrators remain at large, a sense of impunity prevails.

ity to achieve tangible results or to protect their rights. In turn, Eide confirmed that the Kosovo Albanians had done little, if anything, to dispel this widespread fear.[34]

Moreover, the Kosovo Albanians' condemnation of ethnically-motivated violence against the Serbs since June 1999 has always come tardily, reluctant and mildly phrased, and exclusively under strong pressure from UNMIK or Contact Group representatives, who demanded public condemnation from the Kosovo Albanian leaders of orchestrated campaigns of ethnically motivated crimes perpetrated by Albanian extremists.

The return of at least 230,000 internally displaced persons expelled from Kosovo and Metohija since June 1999 remains an unresolved issue. The main obstacle to their sustainable return is strong opposition from both local Albanian communities and the Albanian-dominated PISG. According to UNCHR, for the eight years of UN administration (June 1999-June 2007) only 7,100 IDPs returned, most of them elderly peasants. Furthermore, despite joint efforts by both KFOR and UNMIK, the systematic persecution of the Kosovo Serb population and of non-Albanians in general carried out by extremists and tacitly approved by the majority of Albanians, has continued to be the main impediment to any viable progress toward rebuilding a tolerant multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multireligious Kosovo society that would function under the rule of law. According to the UNMIK office for returnees, more than 1,467 of 4,100 Serbs forcibly displaced in March 2004 were still outside of their previous households more than a year later.[35] According to a Beta-Press report quoting the UNHCR representative in Belgrade, in mid-2005 there were 226,000 Serbs and members of other non-Albanian communities and ethnic groups still living as displaced persons in central Serbia and more than 25,000 in Montenegro.[36]

Concluding remarks

The orchestrated ethnic cleansing of the Kosovo Serbs, organized and carried out in several waves after June 1999, has continued throughout 2006 and 2007 with occasional attacks, bombing of churches and random killings. The final goal of Albanian extremists was to reduce radically the number of Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija from eighteen to less than ten percent, in order to be able to present them as an insignificant minority not entitled to the rights of a constituent nation that they have elsewhere in Serbia. The number of Serbs remaining in northern Kosovo (in several municipalities with a Serb majority, Zvečan, Zubin Potok, Leposavić and the northern part of the city of Mitrovica) and within several KFOR-guarded, variously-sized enclaves scattered throughout the Province (Gračanica, Novo Brdo, Štrpce) is between 130,000 and 146,000. Hence, roughly sixty percent of the Serbian population has been expelled from Kosovo and Metohija during the last eight years of international rule; most of them still live as IDPs in central Serbia. The actual number of registered displaced and expelled persons is 212,781 in Serbia, and 29,500 in Montenegro.

All of the province's cities, with the exception of the Serb-controlled northern part of Kosovska Mitrovica, were ethnically cleansed of Serbs in 1999, and remain so today. There are practically no Serbs left in large cities such as Priština, Prizren, Uroševac or Peć. In Priština, there were about 40,000 Serbs prior to 1999, while today there are less than a hundred of them living in a single building, under appalling conditions and constantly guarded by KFOR. The conditions in different Serb enclaves in terms of personal security and freedom of movement are still precarious. There is rampant unemployment among Serbs (up to 93 percent) and extreme poverty, while the living standards in general remain far below the average in the region and the Province itself. The number of returnees, despite many written agreements with UNMIK and frequent promises by both UNMIK and the Albanian-dominated provisional institutions, remains insignificant. So far, only 5.5 percent of the total number of internally displaced Serbs and other non-Albanians have returned to the UN-administered Province since June 1999, and in practice, very few of the returnees have been permanently resettled.

The export of the Kosovo war model of ethnic domination, first, in 2000, to the mixed Serb-Albanian municipalities in the Preševo Valley in southern Serbia, and then, in 2001, to the predominantly Albanian-inhabited areas of neighbouring Slavic Macedonia (FYROM), demonstrated that the anachronistic concept of Albanian nationalism in the region is not motivated by the noble struggle for human, civil, collective or any other internationally sanctified rights, which is how it is usually presented to internationals, but by a narrow-minded long-term project of establishing full and uncontested ethnic domination over a territory through systematic persecution, pressure and discrimination of all other, numerically weaker ethnic groups.

In essence, the Albanian war concept means making life impossible for members of every other national group or ethnic community until they become numerically and politically so negligible that they no longer represent any

[34] "The continued existence of camps inside Kosovo is a disgrace for the governing structures and for the international community. The Roma camps in Plementina and Žitkovac are particularly distressing. They should be dealt with on an emergency basis." "The Serbian Orthodox religious sites and institutions represent a critical element of the spiritual fabric of Kosovo Serbs. They are also part of the world cultural heritage. There is a need to create a 'protective space' around these sites, with the involvement of the international community, in order to make them less vulnerable to political manipulation."

[35] Beta-Press, Belgrade, 16 June 2005.

[36] Beta-Press, Belgrade, 21 June 2005: "Roughly 220,000 Kosovo citizens are still living as internally displaced persons in other parts of Serbia and Montenegro." According to UNHCR, after the arrival of international peacekeeping forces in 1999, 230,000 Serbs and Roma left Kosovo, while 800,000 Albanians returned to Kosovo.

threat to the whole strategy of exclusive ethnic domination. The concept of full control over a certain territory is combined with some seemingly democratic political demands, which, however, are paving the way to the creation of an independent Kosovo and, in the next phase, most probably, of a single, ethnically unified Greater Albania, if not *de iure*, at least *de facto*.

For years the extremists among the Kosovo Albanians have found crucial logistic support in the extended, and dominant in Europe, Albanian-controlled trafficking in drugs, arms and humans. Thus, organized crime gave a strong economic stimulus to the war concept of the Kosovo Albanians, while endemic lawlessness additionally boosted illegal businesses, especially drug smuggling.[37]

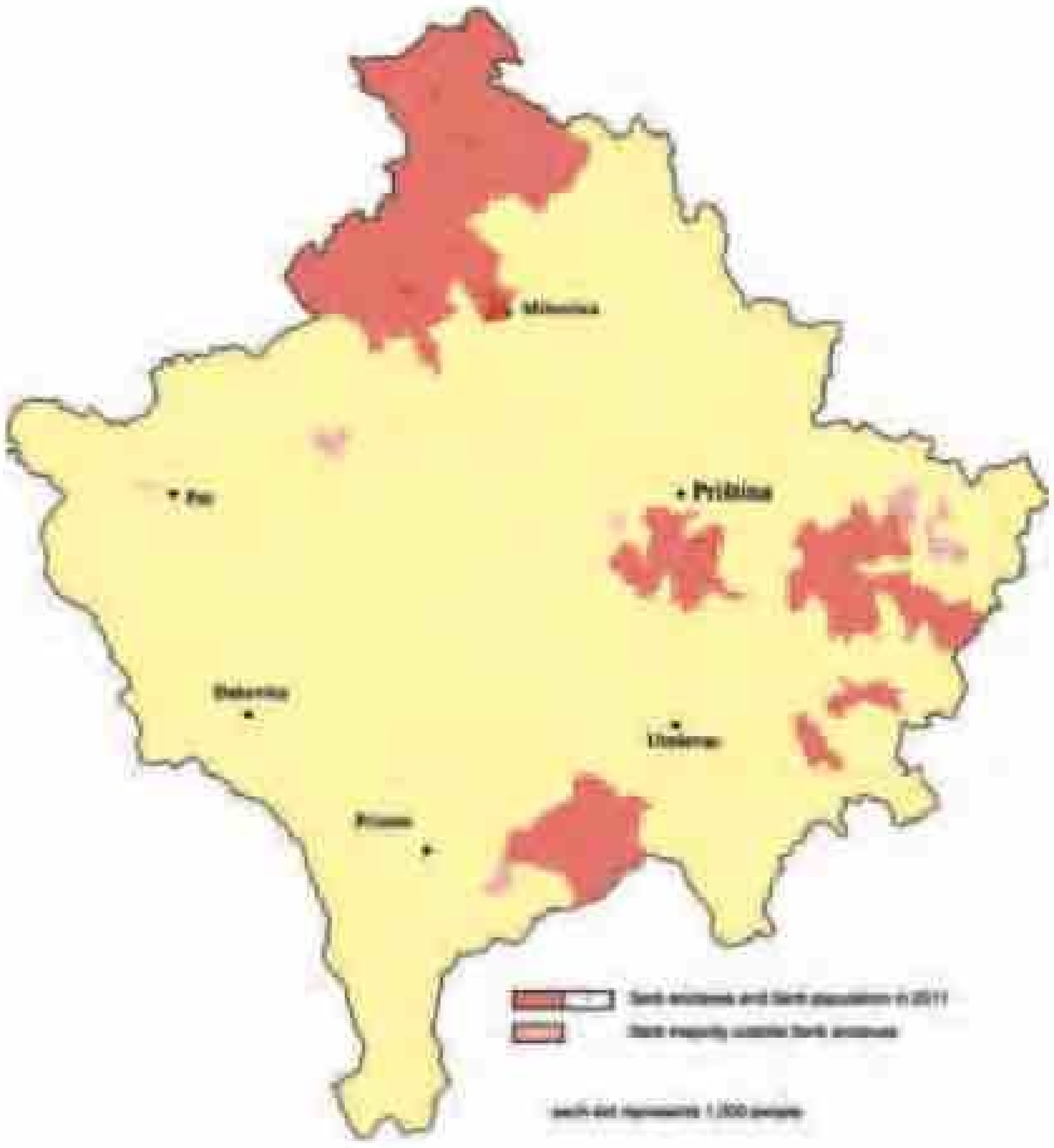
According to reliable data gathered by the German Intelligence Service (BND), filed in the sixty-seven pages of the confidential report of 22 February 2005, recently partly published by the Swiss weekly *Weltwoche*, the leading political figures of Kosovo Albanians, former KLA warlords Hashim Thaci, Ramush Haradinaj (indicted by the ICTY tribunal at The Hague) and Djavid Haliti, are, for years now, deeply involved in organized crime in the Province, from arms and drugs smuggling to human trafficking and money laundering.[38]

The same report includes the statement of Klaus Schmidt, chief of the European Mission for Police Assistance of the EU Commission in Albania (PAMEC), that "through Kosovo and Albania 500 to 700 kilos of drugs are smuggled daily, and that a part of it is refined in Kosovo laboratories." The lack of control over borders and the movement of people and goods between UN-controlled Kosovo and Albania additionally strengthen organized crime, which further increases the concerns of the international community.[39]

Over the last eight years, the KLA war commanders, doubtlessly involved in criminal activities and accused of war crimes, have become the leaders of the most influential Kosovo Albanian political parties. They continue to be the main representatives of the war concept as the only effective method of resolving the Kosovo status problem, by harassing and discriminating Serbs, in order to change the prewar ethnic structure and thus delegitimize all the claims of Serbia to Kosovo and Metohija.

Within such a context, the Serbs and non-Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija, sharply diminished in number, are still living under the strong, permanent and highly discriminating pressure of extremist Albanians, most often fully deprived of basic security, individual and collective rights, legal and ownership protection and the right to maintain and further develop both their national and cultural identities. The protection of their identity, including the right to return, as stressed not only by UNSC Resolution 1244, but also by the eight standards of the international community, set to develop the rule of law, inter-ethnic tolerance and democracy, and to provide for the Province's sustainable development. Thus, Kosovo and Metohija remains very far from the minimal standards required for a society to be modern, tolerant and civilized and to function in accordance with the most fundamental European values.

Violence against the Serbs has somewhat diminished due to the UN-sponsored negotiations on Kosovo's future status in Vienna (2006–2007), but the general trend of covert or overt pressures aiming at an Albanian-dominated and ethnically cleansed Kosovo is still underway. On European soil, under the UN flag, the Serbs, members of one of the oldest European nations, still live in ghetto-like conditions, in areas guarded by international military forces, their armoured vehicles and, in some places, by barbed wire. For the majority of them, the only solution for their very survival, for their demographic recovery, sustainable return and both political and economic sustainability is to maintain Kosovo within Serbia, on the path toward the European Union.



Serb population of Kosovo in 2011

[37] Xavier Raufer (avec Stéphane Quéré), *Une menace pour l'Europe. La mafia albanaise. Comment est née cette superpuissance criminelle balkanique?* (Lausanne: Favre, 2000).

[38] Jürgen Roth, "Rechtstaat? Lieber nicht!," *Weltwoche* 43/05, pp. 48–50.

[39] *Ibid.*

Chaos and Disorder

Kosovo and Metohija Four Years Later

Archimandrite Fr. Sava Janjić, Abbot of the Dečani Monastery

FOUR YEARS after the deployment of the UN Mission and KFOR troops in Kosovo and Metohija one can hardly claim that the war-torn southern Province of Serbia is on the right track to become a democratic and multiethnic society. Quite on the contrary, UNMIK's policy of constant concessions to Kosovo Albanians and their political goals has made life for the Serbs and other non-Albanian communities extremely difficult and without true perspectives in the future. UNMIK's constant ignoring of UNSC Resolution 1244 and legitimate claims of the Serbian people on one hand and the creation of temporary "multiethnic" institutions without any link to Serbia-Montenegro on the other, have turned Kosovo and Metohija into a virtually independent ethnic Albanian state prior to any negotiations at all. In fact, it appears that the goal of some international circles and Kosovo Albanian leaders is to pursue a policy of *fait accompli* and practically leave independence as the only remaining option to which Serbia is expected to agree pushed along by certain concessions on the other side.

The willingness of Kosovo Serbs to participate in the building of multiethnic institutions along the lines stipulated by UNSCR 1244 has only been exploited in order to give a false legitimacy to the institutions which in reality remain under the complete control of Kosovo Albanians and have become tools of institutional repression. If such policy of UNMIK is continued in the future and if there is no constructive revision of the Constitutional framework to return the process of institutionalization inside the limits of UNSCR 1244, Kosovo may not only become an independent state but also a state in which all traces of the Serbian people and its culture will be completely eradicated. Four years of the internationally enforced peace with a terrifying record of crimes and destruction of cultural heritage are only a shadow of what the Province might look like once Kosovo Albanians are given full and unrestrained power. Last but not least, this "state" may become the main destabilizing factor for all of South-eastern Europe, which will seriously obstruct the process of European integration and democratization of the Balkans. As a focal point for future ethnic Albanian integrations, independent Kosovo may become a dangerous precedent for redrawing political maps of Europe according to ethnic lines.

Changes for the better for only one community

Frankly speaking, in Kosovo and Metohija much has changed for the better in the last four years but only for the Albanian community. Under UNMIK's rule, however, changes are only slightly or not at all reflected in Serb areas where less than 100,000 remaining Serbs are hard pressed to see any essential improvements since the end of the war. While it is true that many hospitals have been restored, Serbs cannot seek treatment in them; numerous roads have been tarmaced but Serbs lack the freedom to travel on them; tens of thousands of houses have been renovated but only about one hundred of them are owned by Serbs. After the war, all mosques were repaired and many new ones built while over one hundred Serbian churches still lie in ruins and not one has been reconstructed; there are many new supermarkets, gas stations and restaurants, but what use are they to Serbs when only Albanians and foreigners can safely enter them. In short, based on his first-hand experience, the average Serb feels that UNMIK has come to help only one community while Serbs appear fated to live as second-class citizens on the margins of society.

Nevertheless, the greatest failure of UNMIK is that in three years it has not managed to stop the negative development of creating an ethnically pure and divided society where citizens are divided into the privileged and those who lack basic human rights. This system is being perpetrated largely due to the fact that UNMIK is simply not ready to implement the basic provisions of Resolution 1244. The overwhelming majority of Kosovo Serbs still lack civil freedoms and rights, as well as free access to public institutions in urban centers: hospitals, schools and cultural institutions. The cities and towns of Kosovo and Metohija, except in the north of the Province, have been almost emptied of their Serb population. In Priština today there are only about 250 Serbs remaining; an equal number are in Gnjilane; in Orahovac, there are about 450; in Prizren, 65; in Djakovica, 5; in Peć there are none, with the exception of some 20 elderly nuns in the Peć Patriarchate. Towns such as Uroševac, Srbica, Glogovac and Klina have already become ethnically pure Albanian settlements. All assessments suggest that these small Serb communities in urban centers will soon be extinguished unless the provisions of UNSC Resolution 1244 are implemented.

KFOR checkpoint in front of Visoki Dečani Monastery

In a particularly difficult situation are Serbs living in "multiethnic" areas such as Obilić and Vitina. In these areas systematic pressures, attacks and murders have left the remaining Serbs without true prospect of normal life. Everywhere around the Province, institutions and settlements are decorated with flags of the Republic of Albania and posters of Adem Jashari; monuments to new heroes from "the war of national liberation" are springing up everywhere, along with kitschy statues of new Kalashnikov-armed "Albanian heroes." At the same time, Serb cemeteries are being transformed into public garbage dumps and the ruins of destroyed churches are overgrown with weeds. Everywhere signs in the Serb language have been obliterated, and towns are being given new fangled names which have never existed before in history. History itself is being falsified with the goal of creating a new artificial identity in order to destroy centuries of history and cultural development. Once known as the cradle of Orthodox Christianity, medieval churches and frescos, Kosovo now more resembles Afghanistan.

UNMIK and its virtual reality

From UNMIK's comfortable and well-protected headquarters one cannot see the Serb ghetto in Priština's "YU Program" building, nor the forsaken Serb villages near Obilić where every day brings uncertainty and Serb children live in daily fear. From their virtual reality, well-paid international bureaucrats do not see the hospitals, schools, movie theaters and restaurants which have been inaccessible to Serbs for the past four years despite the presence of UN and NATO forces. Nevertheless, the number of crimes is decreasing, proudly claim UNMIK officials. This claim is not incorrect but the statistics do not explain that this positive trend is largely the consequence of the isolation of the Serb community in their protected enclaves. According to the distorted logic of some UNMIK officials the cities in which there are no Serbs are the safest and the most stable places in Kosovo. For example, the city of Peć was seen as such a place too. That is why half a year ago, international caretakers hurried to take a group of 50 elderly Serb pensioners from the neighbouring Serb enclave to that city to claim their pensions. Of course, they barely managed to get them out alive under a hail of Molotov cocktails and stones from the local Albanians. "But how can this be?" surprised UNMIK officials asked themselves. "According to our assessments Peć is a safe city for Serbs; not a single Serb has been killed there in the past two years." What they forget to take into account is that there are no more Serbs in Peć since the war. According to the same logic, the city is equally safe for Inuit and Chinese. Statistics and real life differ considerably.

For many internationals in Priština the situation seems to be quite normal and they fail to notice that some courageous young Serbs, usually interpreters who work for UNMIK or OSCE, appear in public places exclusively using English and ID cards with international names to avoid risks. This has become so normal that certain international offices regularly organize cultural events and presentations with translation only in Albanian since it is assumed that even if any Serbs dared attend such events they would naturally speak only English. The remaining Serb native residents of Priština who cannot buy bread normally in Albanian shops and are not good at English do not have much choice but to stay in their homes. Such is the life in the city in which to be and to stay a Serb is an adventure.

Returns only on paper—Serbs forced to give up return

The second greatest failure of UNMIK is the lack of return of the Serb population. Only several hundred Serbs have been able to return to their homes, most of them elderly people whose names were first listed and carefully filtered by local Albanian staff and KLA veterans. UNMIK's inflated figures of thousands of Serb returnees are inaccurate and refer to returnees of other at-risk communities, primarily Roma. Frequently even those who come to visit their relatives from Serbia are registered as returnees while those who leave Kosovo and Metohija in the meanwhile are not. Despite all efforts and programs, the returnee villages of Osojane and Biča near Istok continue to live under siege,

Bishop Teodosije and Abbot Sava with KFOR officers at Visoki Dečani Monastery

Eucharistic gathering in Visoki Dečani

surrounded by KFOR protective forces. Are 30,000 KFOR troops and several thousand UNMIK policemen really unable to ensure the return of expelled persons to their homes? Obviously, that would not be met with approval from Albanian extremists, and UNMIK and KFOR have no intention of getting involved in a conflict with them and endangering the safety of their own personnel. This generates a vicious circle with UNMIK increasingly becoming a passive sponsor of an ethnically cleansed society in the eyes of the Serbs; the very kind of society (according to the official interpretation) the international community sought to prevent by dropping tons of bombs on Serbia in 1999 and killing thousands of innocent men, women and children. Since judge and prosecutor in Kosovo and Metohija are one and the same, the blame for these problems apparently falls again on Serbs such as Bishop Artemije, who, it appears, stubbornly refuses to acknowledge what a good life his people are living. Perhaps we should blame the last remaining Serb grannies in Djakovica. According to a "lucid" interpretation of an arrogant international bureaucrat, they are "provoking the Albanian population by their isolation, consequently justifying their refusal to accept them"? Thus five old ladies are provoking 100,000 Albanians, who on the other hand refuse to allow them to buy bread in the store, let alone to live the last years of their lives in peace.

Several returnee projects in the Peć region, pompously announced by UNMIK last year, have been practically abandoned simply because UNMIK "does not want to create new enclaves." In fact this is just an excuse to avoid responsibility for the protection of returnees and deployment of additional troops able only to provide a minimum of security for the returnees. Officially, displaced Serbs are kindly invited to return individually. In reality, not even groups of Serbs are safe from Albanian extremist attacks, which makes this invitation nothing but a bitter irony. When displaced Serbs complain and say that their return is impossible under such conditions, UNMIK officials interpret their words as a lack of willingness to return at all. Planned reductions of troops in many parts of Kosovo and Metohija, in which Serbs used to live before, practically bring hopes of return to zero, because in the existing security situation their return is absolutely not possible.

For example, UNMIK has announced the closing of the local office in Dečani Municipality, the transfer of competencies to the local municipal administration (which, by the way, consists of ethnic Albanians only), while KFOR plans to cut down the number of troops to a minimum, which will probably be enough to provide a certain level of security only for the monastery of Dečani. In such a situation 1000 displaced Serbs from this town practically have no hope for return and are thus forced to sell their property. With such a policy UNMIK and KFOR are indirectly pressing displaced Serbs to give up the idea of return. On the other hand some Western governments (like the USA) donate money for the integration of refugees in central Serbia, which additionally discourages returns. The logic seems to be clear—the less willing the Serbs are to return, the easier it will be for KFOR to reduce troops and for UNMIK to accomplish its exit strategy and pull out; the less Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, the less problems for the international community and Kosovo Albanians.

During the past years, Kosovo Serbs were exposed to hundreds of various extremist attacks, and thousands of provocations and threats. Houses were blown up, land mines exploded, people were killed and wounded. Ethnically motivated crimes still continue. The recent massacre of a Serb family in Obilić and the murder of a Serb teacher near Vitina are not exceptions but indicators of the prevailing atmosphere of ethnic terror. Not one member of the former KLA has been brought to justice for any of the crimes committed against Serbs during the war. A few have been arrested, but only for crimes against their own Albanian compatriots. Despite all this, UNMIK insists that Serbs "accept this new reality and become integrated" in a society where there is no room for them. There is so much irony and injustice in this claim by which UNMIK hopelessly tries to hide its own responsibility for failure.

Serbian Orthodox Church under persecution

The destruction of Orthodox Christian churches and Serbian cultural monuments also continues and their restoration is still not possible because they might be destroyed again. Indeed, Kosovo and Metohija is a unique postwar area in which, four years after the conflict, the restoration of the Christian holy sites is impossible due to the prevailing intolerance of the Albanian Muslim majority. While at the same time dozens of new mosques have been built, many of them with ample funding from Arabian states, Orthodox Christianity remains under persecution: nuns are stoned and verbally abused, priests cannot normally visit their flock, parish churches are stoned, and the theological school in Prizren, which worked even in the times of the Ottoman Empire, is closed without any hope of reopening. Cemeteries are being systematically desecrated,

crosses are broken and holy icons burnt. Half a year ago one Serbian Orthodox church was blown up and another seriously damaged. The perpetrators of these attacks have never been found, just like in other attacks in which 110 churches were blown up, burned or damaged. Medieval churches which survived five centuries of Ottoman rule perished under the internationally "granted" peace, in the presence of thousands of peacekeepers. Now the Serbian Church struggles to preserve the ruins of these churches because local Albanian municipal councils would gladly see these ruins removed and replaced by their own monuments to the "war heroes."

Serbs without economic prospects

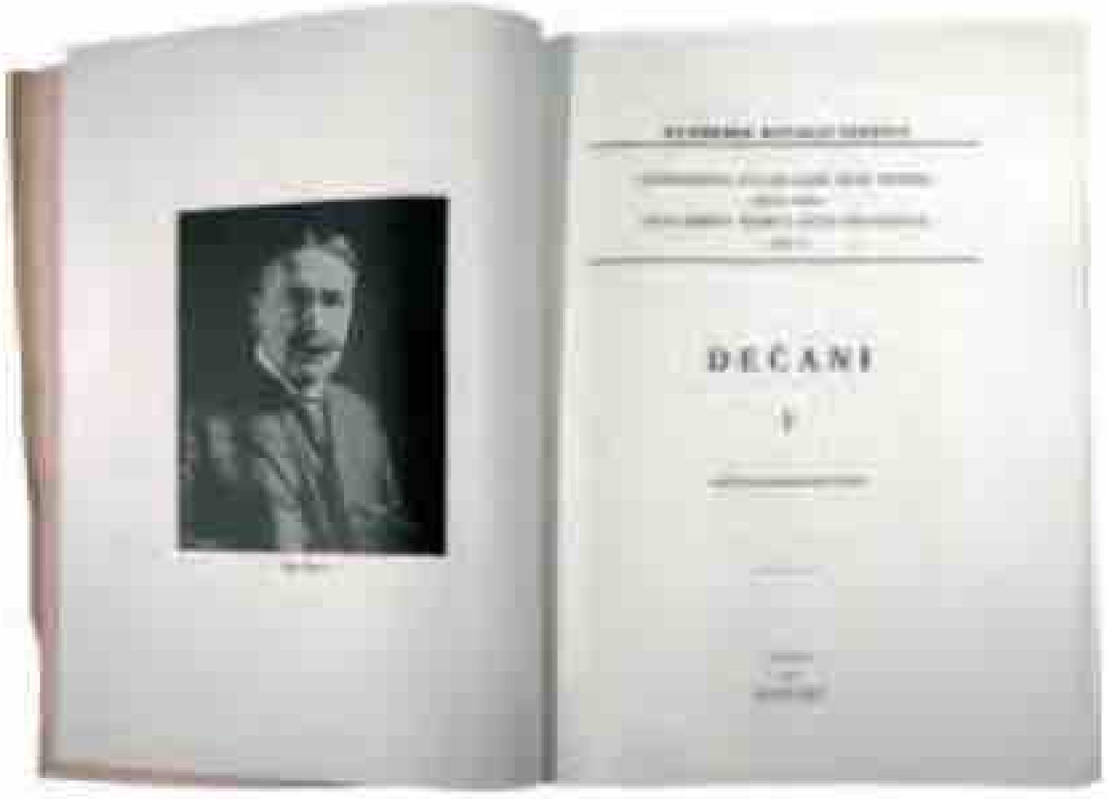
While enormous financial resources have been invested to meet the needs of the Kosovo Albanians, Serb villages and enclaves continue to live in poverty and misery. People are without jobs; thousands of hectares of Serb-owned land remain uncultivated due to lack of security. Grazing one's livestock in a meadow involves a serious safety risk, let alone contemplating the sale of farm products at the local farmers' market. Daily pressure continues on the remaining Serbs to sell their property, especially in cities and towns where the Albanians have illegally occupied thousands of Serb-owned private houses, apartments and businesses. They often use this usurped property without any compensation to the owners before UNMIK's very eyes and sometimes with its tacit approval. At the same time, thousands of hectares of state-owned land and forests have been devastated by looting and illegal lumbering.

Every appeal to the court is condemned to fail from the start because the justice system in the Province is a tragicomic parody of law and (dis)order. Due to a lack of witnesses, who are under enormous fear of Albanian extremists, not one major incident against the Serbs has been positively resolved. At the same time, dozens of Serbs are wasting away in the interrogative jails of UNMIK, completely against all existing laws, because the courts lack evidence to sentence them as war criminals. Restitution of property is a near impossibility; in the few cases where, by some miracle, a Serb manages to get back his confiscated house, he is immediately forced to sell it because it is not safe for him to return with his family to live in it. UNMIK has an explanation for this, too. Recently the deputy civil administrator for Priština stated nonchalantly that the Serbs in fact "do not want to return to their homes at all despite UNMIK's invitation to do so." How are they supposed to return to constant danger, uncertainty, injustice and poverty?

Privatization legitimizes injustice done in the past

After the Second World War and the establishment of Communist rule in Yugoslavia large tracts of arable land and forests were confiscated from the Serbian Orthodox Church, primarily in Kosovo and Metohija. The Church has failed to restitute its property ever since because it was viewed as one of the strongest opponents of the Communist rule. After the confiscation in 1946, a part of the Church land was simply distributed to Albanian farmers, many of whom had immigrated to Kosovo and Metohija from Albania during Nazi occupation. The other part was kept as state-owned property or assigned to socially-owned companies. Kosovo Albanians who benefited the most from this confiscation now understandably want to avoid restitution of the Church land by all means and press UNMIK to pursue a hasty privatization which will finally bring the former Church property into their private hands before a law on restitution is drafted.

The latest UNMIK regulation on privatization threatens to allow Kosovo Albanian companies and private owners to "legally" privatize the former Church property and thus make restitution impossible. To the Church, which has lost more than 100 holy sites since the beginning of the UN Mission in Kosovo, this is an additional blow and discouragement. The Serbian Orthodox Diocese has therefore already asked the Coordination Center and UNMIK to take into consideration its rightful claims, but so far no assurances have been given that former Church property will be spared from privatization and restituted to its owner.



The Monograph on Dečani Monastery financed by Michael Pupin (1858-1935) foundation. Michael Pupin was, along with Nikola Tesla (1856–1943), a famous Serbian-American inventor. Pupin was as well a renown professor at Columbia University in New York. Pupin was a honorary consul of the Kingdom of Serbia in United States.

Institutions: A smokescreen for false multiethnicity

However, the greatest misconception in Kosovo and Metohija is that the constitutional framework, supposedly free elections and institution-building will enable the Serbs to improve their position through the institutions of the system. For a year representatives of the Serb Return (*Povratak*) Coalition participated in the work of the Kosovo parliament without being able to achieve a single concrete result. Is Kosovo any closer to being a multiethnic society?

Have better conditions been created for the return of expelled persons, the goal from which the Coalition took its name? Is Resolution 1244 being more effectively implemented? The answer to all three questions is No. Incidents continue to occur and Kosovo does not even remotely resemble a multiethnic society; instead, it has become a classic model of institutionalized apartheid and intolerance. Only a few hundred out of about 200,000 expelled persons have a roof over their head in their isolated enclaves. And as far as Resolution 1244 is concerned, it has never been more trampled on and disregarded. Kosovo Albanians are using institutions which Serbs have joined to prove that Kosovo and Metohija is indeed "multiethnic" and that it should become independent. Occasionally their leaders, accompanied by UNMIK officials, take a stroll through a Serb enclave, snap a few photographs and immediately run to Western capitals to show pictures which supposedly prove their concern for "the Serb minority." In fact, hiding behind this false façade of the UN mission and the new Kosovo institutions is a tragic reality of unbridled violence, organized crime, corruption and bureaucratic chaos. UNMIK has not only tarnished the moral reputation of the international community in the Balkans but is now consciously turning as blind eye to the destruction of an entire people and their culture for no other reason than to rationalize its own failure.

In the past four years the Kosovo Albanians have done absolutely nothing with regard to respect for human rights of the Serb community. Although Kosovo legislation contains many provisions guaranteeing, theoretically, the rights of minorities, Kosovo Serbs can hardly make use of them, simply because they live on the margins of law and order, isolated in their poor enclaves and exposed to daily threats by Albanian extremists. So far UNMIK has not even been able to guarantee the free public use of the Serbian language, let alone other rights. Almost all Serbian signs bearing the names of towns put up by the UNMIK administration have been obliterated by black spray paint. Many Serbs deduce correctly that if the Albanians cannot even accept our language, then how can they accept and respect our other rights and ensure our free and dignified life?

In search of an exit strategy

Despite all difficulties and problems which they endure from the local Albanians, what hurts Kosovo Serbs the most is the unscrupulous propaganda conducted by UNMIK, which rudely falsifies the actual situation in Kosovo and Metohija. The goal of this campaign is to rationalize the tremendous failures of this mission, whose purported "successes" are increasingly coming under fire in New York and Brussels. The current unofficial goal of the Mission appears to be to finally implement an effective exit strategy that includes transferring all authority to the local authorities, i.e. institutions overwhelmingly dominated by the Albanian majority, prior to the withdrawal of the international community from the Province and the pronouncement of the successful conclusion of the Mission. As the logical consequence of this strategy, local Albanians and some international circles are expecting recognition of an independent Kosovo, i.e. a second ethnic Albanian state in the Balkans, which will supposedly guarantee Serbs all rights "according to the highest European standards." Taking into account that areas inhabited by Albanians are the cleanest ethnic territories in the Balkans, it is difficult to expect an exception to the rule in an independent Kosovo where ethnic and religious tolerance are out of the question. Such a creation would be in fundamental contradiction with everything which contemporary Europe represents and wishes to achieve today. It is not necessary to comment on the economic sustainability of a society largely based on smuggling and illegal activities. Without friendly relations with their next-door neighbours, Serbs and Macedonians, the Kosovo Albanians can depend only on poverty-stricken Albania, which has enough problems of her own.

It is very important to emphasize that the active presence of Serb deputies in provincial institutions is seen as a key element for a successful exit strategy and the eventual secession of the Province from Serbia, because this would be the strongest argument before the world that the Serbs are really able to shape their future independently, freely and effectively through the multiethnic institutions of a future independent state. Of course, these Serb deputies, who commute to parliamentary sessions in armoured police vans and who do not dare to step outside the building for a simple coffee break, are themselves beginning to understand what and whom they are in fact serving. This is why further participation in such institutions, under extremely discriminatory and humiliating conditions, is not possible any longer. Without essential changes in the institutional system, which must be brought to compliance with UNSC Resolution 1244, Serb participation in the Parliament will only make additional damage to the position of the Serbian people and help Kosovo Albanians create their independent state.

Despite everything said above, the Serbian people still hope that UNMIK will finally abandon the policy of double standards and begin building a truly free and multiethnic society in accordance with Resolution 1244 and international law. In the institutions of such a society, where all citizens regardless of religion and ethnicity will have a right to a dignified and free life, the Serbian people will be quite ready to participate with all other citizens and to offer their constructive contribution. However, if UNMIK intends to continue building a new ethnic Albanian state in which Serbs would continue to live as second-class citizens or disappear completely, it is illusory on the part of the international community to expect Serb cooperation and support for such a project.

Italian KFOR troups

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS (SEPTEMBER 2003)

App. 1

Precise figures of post-conflict ethnically motivated crimes in Kosovo

Fr. Sava Janjić, ERP KiM Info-Service

Devastating figures of 1,192 killed and 1,303 kidnapped Serbs since the UN/KFOR arrival in Kosovo clearly demonstrate that the sufferings experienced during the conflict have simply been replaced with an organized Kosovo Albanian campaign of ethnic terror against Serbs and other non-Albanians in times of "peace." Although some UNMIK officials stubbornly try to minimize the post-conflict tragedy of Serbs, Roma, Bosniaks, Croats etc. and to justify their ethnically biased mission, the families of the Serbs killed or abducted despite the UN/NATO presence audaciously bear witness to Albanian ethnic terror and injustice which continues under the UN and NATO flags.

Instead of stopping violence and disarming KLA gangs, UNMIK allowed KLA to legalize its existence, entering the political life of Kosovo and using the UN-sponsored institutions as a smokescreen for ethnic discrimination. Instead of implementing a requirement of UN SC Resolution 1244 (Ch. 10, Annex II, 5) to establish "a substantial autonomy (of Kosovo) within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (i.e. Serbia-Montenegro)" and re-establish a multiethnic society prior to the final status settlement, the UN Mission de facto created an ethnic Albanian quasi-state without any links with the internationally recognized state to which the Province officially belongs. The inability of UNMIK and KFOR to prevent ethnic Albanian extremism and to isolate their leaders politically has resulted in the largest ethnic cleansing during the period of a peace mission.

In the beginning of the second millennium of Christianity the UN -administered Kosovo Province is the only part of the civilized world in which Christian shrines (churches and cemeteries) are exposed to unrestrained destruction and desecration by Muslim Albanians. At the same moment that more than 100 demolished churches lie in ruins despite the international presence, some Western politicians still speak of a European future of the Province which more resembles Afghanistan than any European country.

Perhaps, if we should say what the real success of the Kosovo peace mission is, we can frankly admit that the situation on the ground after the withdrawal of the former Yugoslav forces would have been much worse without their presence, humanitarian assistance and protection of Serb enclaves and some Orthodox Christian holy sites. All its other "successes" are purely relative and concern primarily the ethnic Albanian community.

KOSOVO—FRAGILE PEACE IN THE SHADOW OF CONTINUAL ETHNIC TERROR

App. 2

Unwillingness of Kosovo Albanian leaders to confront extremists in their own ranks makes them accomplices in the ethnic cleansing of the Province

Fr. Sava Janjić, ERP KiM Info-service

Gračanica, 5 September 2003

In the past ten years or so the Balkans have seen too much blood, suffering, refugees and destroyed holy shrines. The common characteristic of all regimes under which crimes against members of other ethnic communities are committed is their complete unwillingness to face the fact that there are crimes committed against others and that others have the right to live in their homes even if they have a different ethnic background and speak a different dialect. Stories that were regularly circulated by members of the Milošević, Tudjman and Izetbegović regimes are so similar to each other that they seem to have been written by the same people. In fact, these regimes based on crime as a means for achieving political goals were creating the same type of consciousness, one recognizing or consciously denying committed crimes as a legitimate method of deceiving the public. Unfortunately, very few people had the strength to openly oppose this policy, but there were some nevertheless. Let us remember the thousands of young Belgraders and citizens of Serbia who ran to meet billy clubs and tear gas in the streets because, for them, the future did not lie in the rule of terror and lies.

Things change but not in Kosovo

At long last, things began to change, slowly and self-consciously, but nevertheless they changed. The new political establishments in Belgrade, Zagreb and Sarajevo are increasingly and more courageously opening the bloody files of their predecessors in the attempt to bring the period of darkness and madness to its final close, and to replace it with a new period of mutual cooperation and trust. Of course, the wounds will not heal quickly, but the process has begun and the results are increasingly visible. The new generations of politicians understand that the Balkans burdened by its bloody legacy can only remain a black hole in Europe and the world, and that otherwise thousands of

Saint John the Baptist,
icon painted by Georgios and Cosmas, 1619, Dečani

young and educated people will leave their homes in search of a place where people are valued on the basis of their human qualities, not on the basis of their ethnicity.

In this Balkan story, Kosovo seems to live in a different time and place even though it is in fact the only part of the territory of Tito's former Yugoslavia under the administration of a United Nations civil mission and a NATO-led peacekeeping force. In Kosovo, crimes not only continue to occur but for the past four years they have been a silently accepted legitimate means of pursuing the policy of ethnic cleansing which Kosovo Albanian extremists are carrying out against Serbs and non-Albanian minorities. Their goal is to achieve what dictators such as Milošević and Tudjman failed to accomplish: to carry out a revision of the Balkan borders along ethnic lines and to divide the towns and villages that not even the five centuries of Ottoman rule or Milošević's regime were able to divide. While in Belgrade, Zagreb, Banja Luka and Sarajevo politicians are painfully and with difficulty, but also with increasing courage and determination, confronting the legacy of the past with the intent of joining the rest of Europe, in Kosovo key figures among the Kosovo Albanians not only persistently deny ethnic terror against Serbs but, in the case of the most recent attacks resulting in the deaths of children and helpless old people, are once again accusing phantom Serb forces, as if time for them had stopped back in 1999 when Milošević ruled the fate of Balkan peoples. Many Kosovo Albanians simply cannot accept the fact that the new government in Serbia has sent almost the entire Milošević establishment to The Hague Tribunal and that Serbia is not governed by those who brought them pain, but by those who themselves suffered under Milošević's regime.

Living in a nightmare

Serbs in Kosovo continue to live in the nightmare of the 1990s when the blood of innocent civilians flowed from Knin and Sarajevo to Peć and Uroševac. Investigations of crimes committed against Serbs are at a standstill; for them there is no freedom of movement or life; their children live in perpetual fear; and old people enclosed in their isolated homes await every twilight in fear. Under the so-called "internationally guaranteed peace" Orthodox Christian churches and cemeteries continue to be destroyed and desecrated as if Kosovo were not in Europe but in the land of the Taliban. While Albanian journalists compete in producing the most fantastic theories about invisible Serbian paramilitary units making diversions in various parts of the Province, unnoticed and unseen by thousands of NATO-led troops and almost two million ethnic Albanians, their politicians doggedly accuse UNMIK and KFOR, claiming that they would do a better job themselves of dealing with "Serbian criminals." Thus yet another attempt is being made to deceive the international community with the already frayed story of how the Serbs are to blame if it snows in the month of October. At one time, when the first diversions by members of the KLA began in 1996 and 1997, Ibrahim Rugova, the present president of Kosovo Province, swore that they were carried out by the Serbian secret service although everyone in the world knew about the shadowy rebel group of Albanian extremists. After June 1999 the same story was warmed up again in newspaper articles in order to prove to the world that despite the fact that ethnically motivated crimes were occurring every day, Kosovo was now "free." In fact Kosovo was becoming more and more a Serb-free territory. Albanian politicians who in June 1999 were absolutely certain of their complete victory are now growing increasingly nervous and fearful because they have demonstrated that their vision of Kosovo is not much different from Milošević's. With their narrow ethnocentric and anachronistic views they are hardly welcome as a future part of Europe.

The creators of these fantastic tales of Serbian phantoms have begun to believe in them themselves. When the recent massacre of Serb children in Goraždevac occurred, a chorus of Albanian language newspapers wrote that the Serbian children were playing with "a bomb that exploded." Albanian physicians in Peć, seeing multiple gunshot wounds of children before them, nonchalantly diagnosed them as bone fractures and proceeded to put casts on the children's arms and legs that still contained machine-gun bullets. When the truth could not be hidden after all, the journalists and politicians who had been lamenting the demise of Kosovo's image more than the loss of young lives began to sing in chorus how the Serbs had in fact shot their own children because, as one Albanian journalist wrote: "They are ready to kill their own children if necessary to prevent the independence of Kosovo." On the same day the Serbian children were massacred, the world received news of a young Albanian girl allegedly wounded in the attack. Later it was "explained" that she was not injured in the attack but in fact "stoned by angry Serbs." In the end, no one was able to give the name of the Albanian girl or confirm that she was hurt anywhere nearby.

In the same period, a similar case was that of a Serb, Vladimir Jovanović of Ibarska Slatina, arrested with great fanfare under suspicion of having killed a UNMIK policeman from India. Some of the foreign media went so far as to triumphantly explain to their readers that there was not only Albanian extremism in Kosovo but also "Serbian terrorists." The news of Jovanović's release because of the fact that since the very beginning there was no evidence against him went almost unnoticed. The balance of crime had already been achieved and a concerned Berlin Institute for International Relations published an obscure analysis on how Serbian and Albanian extremists rule in Kosovo using the vacuum of the interregnum. The biggest problem lies in the fact that neither Kosovo Albanians nor the international community can clearly state who these "Serbian extremists" really are and publish at least a few names. But this hardly matters because any Serb who loves his country and does not want to see it divided cannot be anything but "an extremist advocating a Greater Serbia." In the end, stereotypes from another time and reality must be distinguished.

UNMIK's virtual reality

In the whole story of covering up the real situation in Kosovo, some representatives of the UN civil mission and KFOR have also played a shameful role in that their ambiguous and unclear attitude toward the ethnic terror that has been unfolding in front of their eyes for four years has actually contributed to creating an atmosphere of confusion and indirectly emboldened Albanian extremism, which goes unpunished. The master in this sort of activity is UNMIK's propaganda minister Simon Haselock, who miraculously missed the bomb attack on the UN mission in Baghdad by only one hour and quickly rushed back to Priština to declare to the world how the security situation in Kosovo really was much improved and indirectly accused Belgrade of creating more tension. The same Albanian politicians who have been blind for four years to all crimes committed against Serbs, if in fact they did not support or organize those crimes themselves, are now suddenly demonstrating touching concern for "the Serb citizens of Kosovo" whom they are protecting from the Belgrade government that, much to their horror, is sacrificing its own people and killing them just to spoil "Kosovo's image" (as if Kosovo even had one). It is becoming increasingly apparent that the international UN civil mission and KFOR are unprepared to confront Albanian extremism, the existence of which they are more than aware. If Albanian extremism was confronted with anywhere near the determination of a few years ago to topple the regime of Slobodan Milošević, international forces might be forced to risk similar tragedies to that which recently occurred in Baghdad.

All in all, the bloody drama of Kosovo continues. The Kosovo Serbs, with an Albanian knife at their throat on the one hand and the "grave concerns" and hypocrisy of Western peacemakers around them on the other, continue to suffer and perish. Their government in Belgrade can do little to assist them because the smallest gesture of solidarity and concern for Kosovo is immediately interpreted as a form of new Serbian territorial hegemony. For many Albanians, Kosovo Serbs are just a minority that, hopefully, will go away eventually and leave Kosovo solely to the Albanian people. Members of UNMIK and KFOR regularly ask them how they see their future, as if to indirectly say: Why don't you leave and make life easier for both yourselves and for us? Truthfully, the mission that has completely failed and lost all sense continues only because of "a handful of stubborn Serbs" who refuse to leave. If only they would leave so everyone could shed the obligatory tear of sympathy and finally turn over a new page by proclaiming a new ethnic state of Albanians whose borders are already under discussion by leading politicians in Priština, Tetovo and Tirana, and in the process of being carved out in the field by terrorists of the so-called Albanian National Army, Kosovo Liberation Army, Liberation Army of Preševo, Medvedja and Bujanovac and who knows what other bands of opportunists. In the end it appears that the fistful of Serbs and the few Macedonians who remain in the western parts of this southern republic are the chief obstacle to the realization of the centuries-old Albanian dream of building the only ethnically pure state in the Balkans.

It remains to be seen whether the West will sacrifice the Balkans to its global interests in the Middle East. It is possible that this might result in some sort of balance of interests but it is also certain that it would enable the flourishing of the most dangerous terrorism and crime right in the bosom of Europe which will hit Europe like a boomerang.

Kosovo and Metohija at the Crossroads

May 10th, 2007

Archimandrite Fr. Sava Janjić, Abbot of the Dečani Monastery

Status before standards—Road to stability or a new tragedy?

EIGHT YEARS after the beginning of the UN Mission in Kosovo, the southern Serbian province finds itself between different options ranging from the internationally supervised autonomy offered by Belgrade to the supervised independence proposed by the plan of the Special Envoy of UN SG Martti Ahtisaari and supported by the USA and the EU. In both cases, the *status quo* seems to be untenable because the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is no longer in the position to resolve the crucial issues that await the Province.

The strategy of the international community expressed by the motto "standards before status" was abruptly replaced by the new motto "standards and status" after the outbreak of the 17th March 2004 violence in which 4,000 Serbs and Roma were driven out of their homes, and another 35 Serb Christian Orthodox churches torched within only two days. The March violence was hardly a simple consequence of the Kosovo Albanians' impatience, but rather an organized campaign against the Serbs and international officials intended to speed up the process of status resolution. Although the first Western reactions to the March violence acknowledged that it had been organized and planned, since mid-2004 the riots have been practically exonerated as an understandable social reaction of Kosovo Albanian youth frustrated because of the unresolved status of the Province. Since then, the international efforts have been even more intensively directed toward the transfer of competencies despite the fact that only some individual perpetrators of the March 2004 violence were brought to justice and the main organizers remained unpunished. In those days Kosovo institutions demonstrated an astounding lack of accountability, with some of the leaders even trying to justify the violence with arbitrary accusations against the Serbs, falsely blamed for the death of three Kosovo Albanian boys who had drowned in the Ibar River.

UNSC Resolution 1244 was considered by the West difficult to implement from day one because Milošević was still in power in Belgrade and any development of Kosovo institutions within the framework of the "substantial autonomy" envisaged by the UNSC Resolution was often dismissed as unrealistic. After the democratic changes in Belgrade in October 2000 there were attempts to revert to the spirit and letter of UN Resolution 1244. One of them was Čović–Haekerrup agreement on cooperation between Belgrade and UNMIK reached in Priština in 2001, but barely any of its provisions were ever implemented. Belgrade lacked a clear idea of full reintegration of Kosovo amidst a variety of political challenges marking the first years of democratic government, while provisional Kosovo institutions had already been developed in such a way that no link with Belgrade could be easily established. Since the end of 2004, throughout 2005 and 2006, Albanian-controlled Kosovo provisional institutions have been given more and more powers, and the international efforts have not been focused on developing the provisional institutions along the lines of substantial autonomy envisaged by the UNSC in 2004, but as political institutions of a future independent state. Some analysts have concluded that the March pogrom against Serbs in 2004 was a crucial point in the post-war Kosovo period because the Kosovo Albanian leaders saw democratic developments in Serbia as a growing threat that would eventually force the international community to implement UN Resolution 1244 and to give up the idea of creating a new Albanian-dominated state in Kosovo. At the same time the slow dynamics of democratic development, hampered by the failure to cooperate with the ICTY, and lack of readiness to dismantle security structures inherited from Milošević's times seriously damaged the credibility of Serbian democracy *vis-à-vis* the future of Kosovo and Metohija.

The replacement of the "standards before status" strategy with the latest notion of "status and standards" brought barely any improvements to the life of Serbs and other non--Albanian ethnic groups in Kosovo and Metohija. Although the provisional Kosovo Government pledged financial support in the reconstruction of destroyed Serb homes and holy places, very few Serbs who fled from the Albanian rioters in March 2004 have returned to their homes. On the other hand, the return process for IDPs from central Serbia and Montenegro has generally stalled with the exception of a few hundred returnees in isolated villages, primarily in the western part of Kosovo.

The main concern of Kosovo Serbs remains security because the March riots that turned into a *pogrom* seriously disillusioned the Serbs from believing that the international peacekeepers and Albanian-controlled Kosovo institutions would give them any protection in the event of renewed acts of ethnically motivated violence. Although the number of incidents since March 2004 has significantly decreased, with ocassional random killings and attacks, in practice the safety situation for Kosovo Serbs has not been improved. Many hopes of Kosovo Serbs have been shattered forever, while local Kosovo authorities have done little, if anything, to win their confidence. Kosovo Serbs oriented themselves more toward Belgrade and parallel structures, particularly after the decision of Serb representatives in the Kosovo Parliament to withdraw from these institutions after the 2004 riots.

Negotiations on the future status of Kosovo during 2006 have brought the issue of standards into focus again. The Serbian side insisted that not even a minimum of standards had been achieved, while the Kosovo representatives pledged full protection for Serbs only if Kosovo was granted independence. Many Kosovo Serbs interpreted this offer as blackmail, particularly after some Kosovo leaders warned that anything but independence would surely trigger a new series of ethnic violence.

At the same time, the Kosovo Serb community has remained disorganized as ever. In the last seven years Kosovo Serbs failed to create credible political organizations which would fully articulate legitimate interests of all the factions of Kosovo Serbs in front of homogenized Kosovo Albanians and the international community. The local branches of the political parties simply continue the policies of their Belgrade-based party leaders, which in many instances fail to understand the everyday problems of Kosovo Serbs and to provide them with satisfactory assistance. The system of parallel institutions in the Kosovo Serb enclaves did provide employment for one part of Kosovo Serbs and enabled hundreds of families to survive in their ghettos. It also retained a certain level of institutional links with Serbia, crucial to their survival. Isolation and discouragement are the result of previously failed efforts to articulate their needs through the Albanian-dominated Kosovo institutions despite all difficulties and the overwhelming discrimination which became an Albanian practice in treating all the problems concerning the Kosovo Serb community. The decision to boycott Kosovo parliamentary elections in 2004 additionally isolated the Serbian community and widened the gap between the communities. True, the Serbs had many reasons to boycott the institutions which failed to prevent or stop the March riots, but neither did their choice to remain out of the institutions bring any concrete benefit. Many laws were passed without any Serbian participation and to their detriment, which is now very hard to remedy. Many Kosovo Serbs feel that their willingness to take part in the building of multiethnic institutions along the lines stipulated by UNSCR 1244 has only been exploited in order to give false legitimacy to the institutions which in reality remain under complete control of Kosovo Albanians and have become tools of institutional repression.

Let us take a brief look at the situation surrounding the implementation of standards now that the UN Security Council is expected to come out with a new resolution on Kosovo which will pave the way either for its independence or for a new series of negotiations whose dynamics will depend on the implementation of standards. Kosovo Serbs logically conclude that if Kosovo Albanians have failed to implement the basic standards under the UN protectorate, it is quite unlikely that they will do so if Kosovo is granted independence.

Returns: Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

The safe and secure environment for a sustainable return has never been fully implemented for Kosovo Serbs and other minorities given that more than 220,000 Serbs and other non-Albanians remain in displacement. UNHCR has reported 16,000 returns since 1999, but only 5,000–6,000 of these are Serbs. At the same time, hundreds of Serbs have left Kosovo, many of them the Serbs displaced after the March 2004 riots. The urban return has been little more than symbolic. At the moment, the major Kosovo cities remain without their pre-war Serb population.

Cities	**1999**	**2007**
Priština	30,070	86
Peć	12,000	5
Gnjilane area	25,000	15
Uroševac	5,300	0
Prizren	8,300	31

While the return process has been more or less stalled, many of the remaining Serbs, Goranies, Turks and Roma are thinking of leaving under the present conditions, and claiming that they will be forced to leave eventually should Kosovo gain independence.

Relatively successful return processes have been achieved in the Peć, Istok and Klina municipalities, primarily to vil-

lages where Serbs lived before the war and which were devastated in summer 1999. However, the number of returnees in the last two years has not exceeded a few hundred. Difficult economic conditions and uncertainty still discourage younger people from returning. Although the number of physical attacks has ostensibly decreased, Serb returnees complain of administrative obstacles and the inability of local institutions to resolve numerous property issues. The remaining Serbs in the Albanian majority areas are reporting regular petty discrimination against Serbs and other non-Albanians at the level of local officials. Kosovo Serbs say that the basic obstacles to their return include the continued existence of terror networks linked to the KLA (masked groups, criminal clans, mafia and some KLA war-veteran groups). These groups display their symbols openly, frightening the Serbs off in many parts of Kosovo. There is even, in the Kosovo Prime Minister's office, a photo of Adem Jashari, a KLA militant who terrorized the local Serb community before the war. Meanwhile, Jashari has become a political icon of post-war Kosovo and one of the greatest ethnic Albanian heroes. There has been complete impunity for criminal acts and organized crime activities, especially those committed against non-Albanians. The minimally competent Kosovo Police Service (KPS) has demonstrated a very poor capacity to solve or prevent crimes. Regrettably, since the 1990s the majority of the Albanian community have been living in a culture that promotes intolerance and little or no moral obligation toward non-Albanians. Serbs are often treated as second-rate citizens who, according to many, deserve to be punished for the actions of the former Belgrade regime. A discriminatory privatization scheme has deprived of any compensation countless Serb, Roma and Gorani workers formerly employed in socially-owned companies. The privatized companies as a rule do not offer jobs to Serbs, who generally remain limited to agricultural activities. Even these activities are very reduced because of inadequate freedom of access to their fields located farther from their villages. An overall economic, security and social collapse has proved inappropriate for the reintegration of returnees.

Human rights situation

Since 1999 the human rights of Serbs and non-Albanians in Kosovo have been systematically violated, and the UN Mission has generally failed to improve the situation on the ground despite some anti-discriminatory laws and regulations which have never been or have been only partly implemented at the local municipal level.

Language rights are generally not respected in Kosovo. Despite the laws many documents are issued only in Albanian with the regular excuse that there is a lack of translators. In every Ministry in the PISG, in all departments within the KPS, signs are exclusively in Albanian or with some English. The same situation is also in Kosovo's major hospitals, which are supposed to serve all citizens equally. Courts regularly violate the obligation to provide documents to clients in the Serbian language or do so only at explicit request. Signs on public institutions (such as bus stations, banks, sports stadiums, etc.) are almost exclusively in Albanian too. The use of the Serbian language in public is often limited as a result of fear and intimidation. The message seems clear: Albanian is the only public and accepted language. It took months to mount a three-language road sign for the Dečani Monastery in the town of Dečani, despite very strong international insistence.

Freedom of movement is limited for many communities in most of Kosovo. Besides the limited access to agricultural land, escorts are still provided for the monastic communities in western Kosovo. Serbian convoys (buses and cars) have often been stoned or otherwise harassed by Albanian youth (particularly the Istok and Srbica areas).

Free access to mayor cities is limited if not impossible for a large number of Serbs. In response to this, UNMIK has promoted the establishment of Court Liaison Offices and Police Sub-Stations in non-Albanian enclaves, thereby indirectly solidifying the segregation of Serbs and other non-Albanians, rather than building a sustainable multi-ethnic society. In addition to systematic changing of geographic and place names, the PISG is carrying out a systematic revision of the history and cultural landscape of Kosovo by publishing books and texts that deny Serbian cultural and ethnic identity and its heritage. Names of historic towns and villages have been changed, and in such a way that instead of pre-war Albanian names completely new names have been invented, e.g. Novo Brdo (pre-war Novoberde in Albanian) to Artana, Kosovska Kamenica/e to Dardana, Leposavić/Leposaviq to Albanik, Obilić to Kastriot, Suva Reka/Suhareke to Theranda etc. The Serb toponyms that had survived for centuries, even throughout Ottoman times, are now being changed to erase every trace of Serbian historical presence. Paradoxically, the number of Slavic toponyms is now much higher in Albania than in Kosovo.

Within the provisional institutions of self-government, such as Kosovo Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, brochures have been published that completely deny the Serbian cultural heritage in Kosovo and Metohija. A scandal occurred in UNESCO in May 2005 when the Ministry officials distributed these materials during a Donors' Conference for the destroyed heritage in Kosovo. Serbian Orthodox monasteries were presented as Kosovo Orthodox monasteries in which "Albanian Christians prayed in the past." In particular the Ministry is developing archaeological programmes which try to prove a direct link between ancient Illyrians and modern Albanians and the media often publish articles claiming that the Serbian Orthodox churches were once Albanian Christian sites subsequently occupied by Serbs. Particular provisions in the Ahttisaari's protecting the identity of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo reflect a great concern of the Church that Kosovo institutions

may launch even stronger campaign of "Kosovarization" or "Albanization" of the Serbian patrimony in Kosovo.

The judicial system is corrupt and disfunctional, especially as regards the protection of the rights of Serb property owners. In addition to the illegal occupation of Serb-owned property, dozens of Serb properties in Klina, Peć and Istok have been sold on the basis of falsified sale contracts. These cases still remain unsolved, and many Serbs cannot access their property they never sold to the present Albanian "owners." Arbitrary changing of cadastral records is a particular concern. Church property is particularly targeted and it seems that there is a systematic campaign to privatize the former Church property, nationalized by Communist authorities, to prevent restitution one day. Some individual cases of the return of Church property by the previous Serbian administration are generally not recognized by the present Kosovo authorities, which seriously jeopardizes the economic sustainability of some monastic communities.

Tens of thousands of Serbs and other non-Albanians have been waiting for seven or more years to reclaim their usurped property. Often, when illegal occupants are evicted, they simply return to the property and no further action is taken against them. Serbs who insist on claiming their property have been the victims of violence and attacks (i.e. Pavlović murder in Klina, attack on the Radosavljević family in Klina, and many more documented cases). No arrests have been made for the attacks that have taken place so far, thus leaving a general impression of impunity. Criminal sentencing is often lenient or inadequate, especially when it comes to the few cases involving serious crimes against Serbs or non-Albanians actually brought to court.

The Kosovo Police Service (KPS) generally functions poorly. Not a single major crime committed against Serbs and non-Albanians has been solved, e.g. Staro Gracko massacre of 14 Serb peasants, Niš Express bus bombing, Goraždevac killings of two Serb teenagers, Stolić family assassination, still by unknown perpetrators, many other documented murders and serious ethnically motivated crimes and assaults against the Serbian community. Serious investigation is carried out only under international political pressure, as is the case of recent rocket attack on the Dečani Monastery (30 March 2007). The perpetrator was identified (a Kosovo Albanian suspect from a neighbouring village), but after the prosecutor issued a warrant for him, the suspect ran away.

The KPS often follows a static and rigid form of policing with limited investigative capacities. In many cases the KPS is unable or simply unwilling to carry out investigations. Most Serbs and non-Albanians, especially following the performance of the KPS during the March riots of 2004, have no confidence in this police force. Police sub-stations have been set up ostensibly to provide additional security guarantees for minorities as a priority standard. In reality, the sub-stations are equipped and staffed poorly, with very limited authority and ability to act on the ground, and often ignored or abandoned by the relevant KPS station commanders.

At the same time international police presence has been significantly reduced and only monitors remain present in some local police stations. The present capacity of the KPS for law enforcement and the influence of local clans and criminal structures on KPS do not allow efficient struggle against the organized crime and mafia.

Security

The main obstacle to a peaceful and safe environment for Serbs and non-Albanians in Kosovo is lack of security. The establishing of law and order has generally totally failed because the KLA structures have never been demilitarized after the war. The KLA was supposed to transform into a civilian protection corps, the so-called Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC, or TMK in Albanian). But the TMK retains the uniform and insignia of the KLA and simply changed the acronym "UÇK" to "TMK," and maintains the military structure of command corresponding to the former KLA organization. Since the so-called "transformation" of KLA into KPC, many KPC members have been dismissed because of their criminal activities. Despite all efforts to put this organization under firm control, the KPC has retained the ideology of the KLA, obvious in the names of their barracks and iconography. The officers of the KPC received military ranks not corresponding to their training and knowledge. At the same time, the KPC has armed personnel and is known to have important caches of arms, including heavy arms that do not correspond to its civil emergency role.

Some KPC members are known to participate in terrorist activities, notably the smuggling of weapons, intimidation of non-Albanians, attacks against non-Albanians (attempted mining of a train transporting Serbs in North Kosovo, 2003, among other acts). The KPC retains very firm links with the KLA war-veteran and other paramilitary groups that have committed attacks against Serbs, other minorities, freethinking Albanians and some international personnel.

Immediately after the war, the still existing KLA carried out a systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing against Serbs and other non-Albanians. So-called "Black Eagles" in western Kosovo and "The Black Hand" in the Priština area are only some of criminal groups who executed dozens of Serbs, Roma, ethnic Albanians and other citizens. Although there is credible proof that KFOR had information on the activities of these groups, NATO-led peacekeepers avoided any confrontation with the KLA paramilitaries in the first months of their mission. It is only now that some NATO classified information has leaked about the activities of these groups and their leaders, some of whom have meanwhile become leading Kosovo politicians.

After 10 June 1999 the KLA looted, destroyed and usurped more than 40,000 estates owned by Serbs and other non-Albanians. In a systematic campaign of terror, these groups took power in all the towns and cities of Kosovo in order to empty them of their Serb and non-Albanian population. These systematic attacks on Serbs and non-Albanians were often branded by UNMIK and KFOR as "spontaneous acts of revenge by frustrated Albanian civilians."

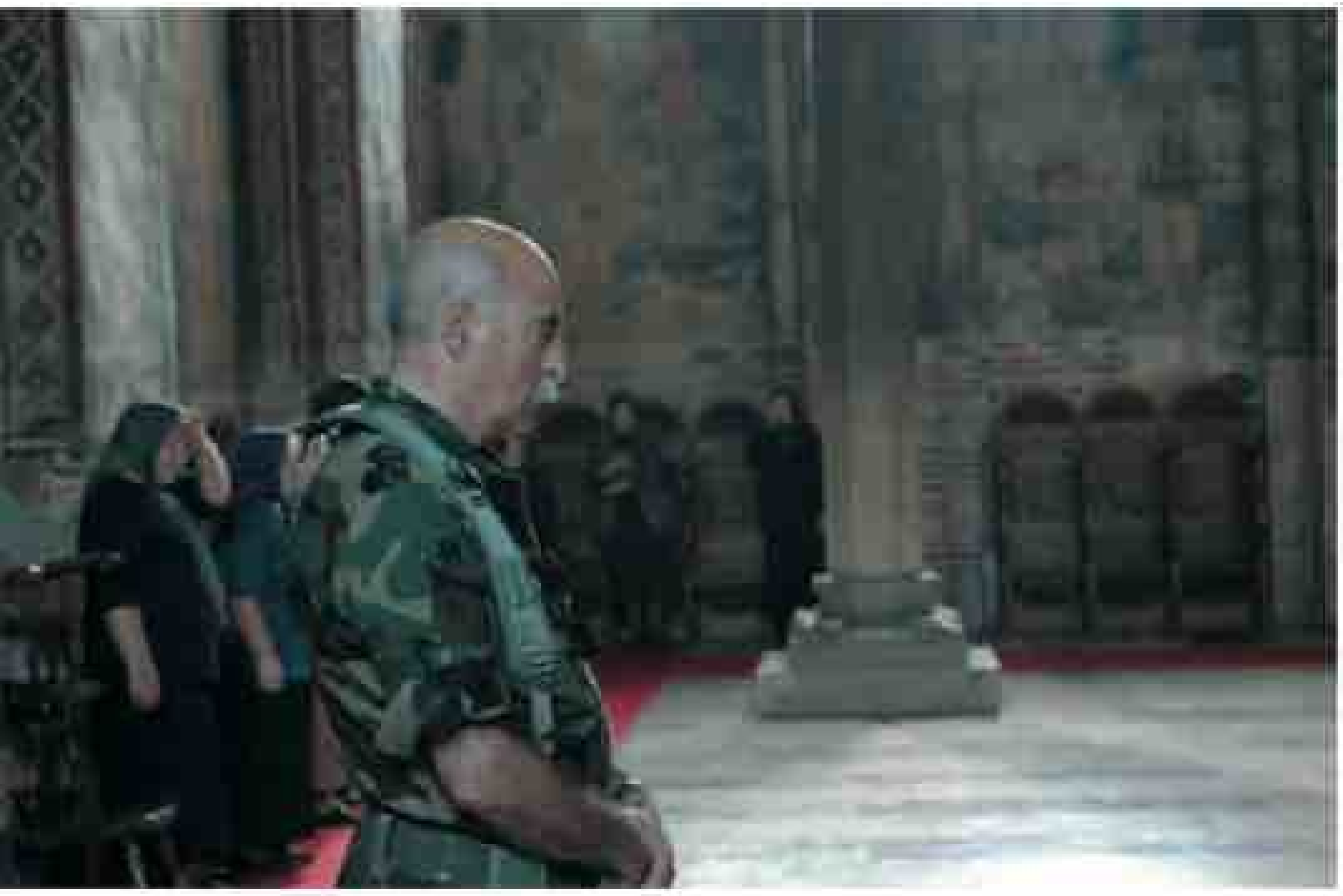
The KLA adopted a two-prong approach of attacking vulnerable persons on the one hand, and notables, intellectuals and other community leaders on the other. This explains the large number of missing physicans, teachers and professors from the Serb community in the major towns.

According to the Office of Missing Persons and Forensics (OMPF) and the ICRC, more than one thousand Serbs and other non-Albanians have gone missing since 1998/99.

To date, only 253 bodies have been recovered, identified and returned to their families. Most other Serbs and non-Albanians who disappeared in the presence of NATO and UN have not been found yet.

No one has been found guilty for the crimes against Serbs. Some local KLA leaders and individuals have been indicted and sentenced for killing fellow Albanians, but crimes against Serbs have generally remained unpunished.

KLA-related paramilitary Albanian structures have orchestrated the destruction of more than 150 Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries in peacetime (some irreplaceable medieval heritage sites). By the time KFOR put the most important heritage sites under military protection, almost all Serb churches and cemeteries in Albanian majority areas (i.e. those from which Serbs were previously cleansed) had been devastated and desecrated. Particularly brutal was the destruction of Serbian Orthodox cemeteries, many of which were turned into garbage dumps, dozens of tombs opened and the bones scattered around.



Italian soldiers attending church services in Dečani Monastery

The destruction of the Serbian sacral heritage and cemeteries had two goals: to eradicate the centuries-old traces of Serbian culture and tradition (which Kosovo Albanian extremists see as an obstacle to their revised history of an ethnically pure, Albanian Kosovo) and to discourage returns. The major Serbian Orthodox sites have been preserved thanks only to KFOR protection although the Prizren Cathedral of Bogorodica Ljeviška, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was burned during the 2004 March riots despite a KFOR presence in the city. Other Prizren churches which had survived the first post-war years were burned and desecrated, turning the historic core of the city into rubble.

After the riots the provisional Kosovo Government pledged funds for the reconstruction of patrimonial sites destroyed in March 2004, and the process of reconstruction begun in March 2005 after a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with UNMIK mediation between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the PISG. The Council of Europe has led the process. During the last two years, several partly reconstructed sites were attacked again, which has raised concerns on the Serbian side about how sustainable the reconstruction is under the existing security conditions. At the moment, the Church, the Council of Europe and the PISG are all intensifying efforts to overcome the obstacles and resume the process of reconstruction which is seen by the Church as an important effort to encourage returns and preserve its historical presence in Kosovo.

Weak institutions and organized crime

Kosovo provisional institutions, controlled by the Albanians, with only a symbolic presence of other ethnic groups and without legal representatives of the Kosovo Serb community, are still very weak and unable to respond to challenges before them. They generally serve the interests of the majority ethnic i.e. Albanian community. The basic problem in the Province is its chronic political instability. The largest party, led by the late President Ibrahim Rugova, has split into two competing parties, while the other two parties are led by former KLA commanders, one of whom, Ramush Haradinaj, the former Kosovo Prime Minister, is an ICTY indictee and is currently at the ICTY in The Hague. Moderate Albanian forces are represented by the rather small party ORA led by Veton Surroi. The liberal Albanian intelligentsia in Kosovo is too weak and "wafer-thin" (as one ICG report remarked) to compete with the nationalism spread by the main leaders of KLA background. The parties of KLA origin are burdened with older generation politicians who were KLA warlords and commanders and who are rightfully seen by many Kosovans as corrupted. They are being criticized for having accumulated considerable personal wealth, for building large villas with swimming pools, while on the other hand, most ordinary people remain in poverty and without employment. The younger

generation of Albanian politicians in these political parties—some of them educated in the West—is still not strong enough to take power and lead the society toward European standards and the rule of law. Generally, the Kosovo Albanian political elite lacks the European vision of democratic society in which all citizens would be equal regardless of their ethnicity and religion.

A specific problem in Kosovo is the existing Albanian clan structures, traditional family clans and mafia clans that have divided the territory into clearly defined interest zones. The clan structures are deeply involved in organized crime: arms and drug trafficking, prostitution, racketeering, etc. The clans want to preserve control over Kosovo institutions and would like Kosovo state bodies to serve as a smokescreen behind which they could continue to accumulate their illegally gained wealth. In order to cool the social tension, these structures and their political representatives (leaders) claim that the main reason for the difficult social and economic situation is the unsettled status of the province. Serbs are often labelled as the "fifth column," the main obstacle to a free and prosperous Kosovo. In order to cover up their illegal activities, these structures are spending large sums of money on building monuments to "war heroes and martyrs," organizing KLA memorial services and other extremist events. The clan structures among Albanians are also the greatest obstacle to the implementation of the UNMIK regulations and the Kosovo-wide political decisions on the municipal level.

Recently the former KLA structures have shown intense interest in preserving their accumulated wealth and political power through an independent Kosovo. At the same time, they are challenged by a younger generation of extremists who claim that the former leaders have betrayed the original KLA ideals and become "Western political puppets." These extremist groups increasingly tend toward the extremist KLA ideology characteristic of this movement in its beginnings—the unification of all Albanian-inhabited territories and the complete ethnic cleansing of non-Albanians from Kosovo. These groups (LPK, LPKC, FBKS and their military wing, the AKSh) are acting in close connection with radical elements in the KPC and war veterans. In some parts of Kosovo these structures have a very strong impact on the local police and judiciary. Most recently they have been joined by the ultra-radical Self-Determination "youth" movement led by Albin Kurti. So-called "institutionalized KLA structures," i.e. leaders of the biggest political parties and their extended families, fear that in the event Kosovo is not granted independence, they may lose popular support. That is why they systematically claim that the failure to deliver independence to Kosovo would immediately trigger massive riots against the internationals and Kosovo Serbs. The new-generation nationalists, together with some older-generation ideological leaders from Kosovo and the FYR of Macedonia, are intensively preparing themselves for extremist actions. Their ideology is increasingly reverting to the irredentism of communist times, and some of their leaders still venerate former communist dictator of Albania Enver Hoxha and his Marxist-Leninist ideas about Western imperialism and colonialism, which they now recognize in the international presence of NATO troops and UN Mission.

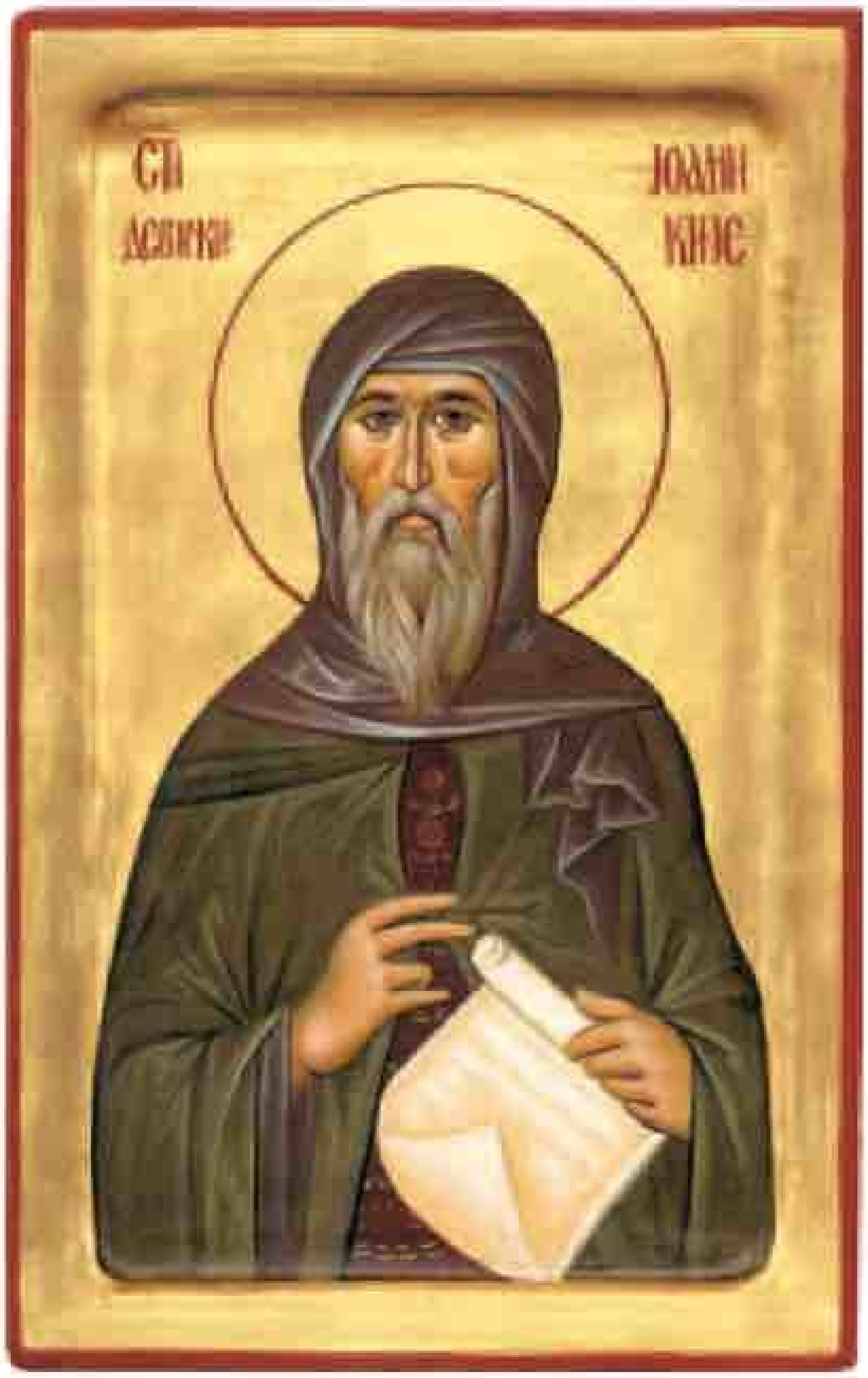
An additional problem in Kosovo is the increasing danger of Islamic radicalism. Although generally secular Muslims, Kosovo Albanians are gradually falling under the influence of some international Muslim charity organizations and Wahhabi groups spreading their influence to Kosovo through Macedonia, Albania and the Raška (Sanjak) region in Serbia adjacent to Bosnia-Herzegovina. The involvement of four Kosovo Albanians in a terror plot against the US military base at Fort Dix in New Jersey in May 2007 has demonstrated again that extremist groups close to Al-Qaeda have found a foothold in Kosovo as in other Muslim-inhabited parts of the Western Balkans. Under the inherently weak provisional, Albanian-dominated institutions, clan structures and mentality and a highly developed organized crime network, terrorism with Islamic background may become one of the most dangerous threats not only to Kosovo and the Balkans but to other European countries as well.

Conclusion

The overview of the situation in Kosovo and Metohija eight years after the beginning of the UNMIK Mission shows a very bleak picture. The planned EU Mission in Kosovo will inevitably face serious challenges that UNMIK failed to resolve. The belief generally accepted in many Western countries that Kosovo independence would trim down the accumulated social and economic tensions may have only a short-term effect, lasting only as long as the initial euphoria. On the contrary, it has become obvious that an independent Kosovo with its inherently weak institutions and powerful clan structures would hardly be able to function according to the rule of law and to consolidate economically and politically for years to come despite strong international presence. In such a situation, the thriving organized crime and terrorism may seriously worsen the situation in the region and destabilize EU efforts to bring long-term stability to the western Balkans. Should attacks on Serbs and ethnic discrimination continue, and there are not many indications that this may change after the status settlement, Kosovo will hardly ever establish normal relations with Belgrade, without which its economy cannot develop normally in the future. Attempts by Kosovo ultranationalists to boost Albanian secessionist movements in Montenegro, Macedonia, central Serbia's Preševo area, to reopen the question of Chams in northern Greece, will further complicate interethnic relations and put in danger long-term stability in Serbia and elsewhere in the western Balkans.

To St. Joanikije of Devič

Ljubomir Simović



We pray You, Saint Joanikije of Devič
lift your hand, protect,
stop this wasting away, gather us,
return the ants to the anthill,
the light to the fireflies,
return the frost and salt in the autumn,
smoke in the winter,
the fish to the Ibar,
the swallows in the winds,
the key in the lock,
water in the watermill,
return the oxen to plow,
and gild the blackened redness.

We beseech You, Saint Joanikije of Devič,
be a light before those who fire,
stand before those who butcher,
and their kindling wood extinguish,
dissolve, their chains break,
free them from their power,
with the only power you have,
bread and salt!

We pray You, Saint Joanikije of Devič,
hide Devič in your beard,
the fire in the ashes,
the tracks in the snow,
hide the bees and wasps,
the birds and mice, the summer and autumn,
and barefoot, Saint Joanikije, on the roads of the Lord,
through fleeings, through fires and hunger,
stop us,
and lift us,
and teach us,
at the dreadful place
to build a City
out of stone,
with which they will stone us!

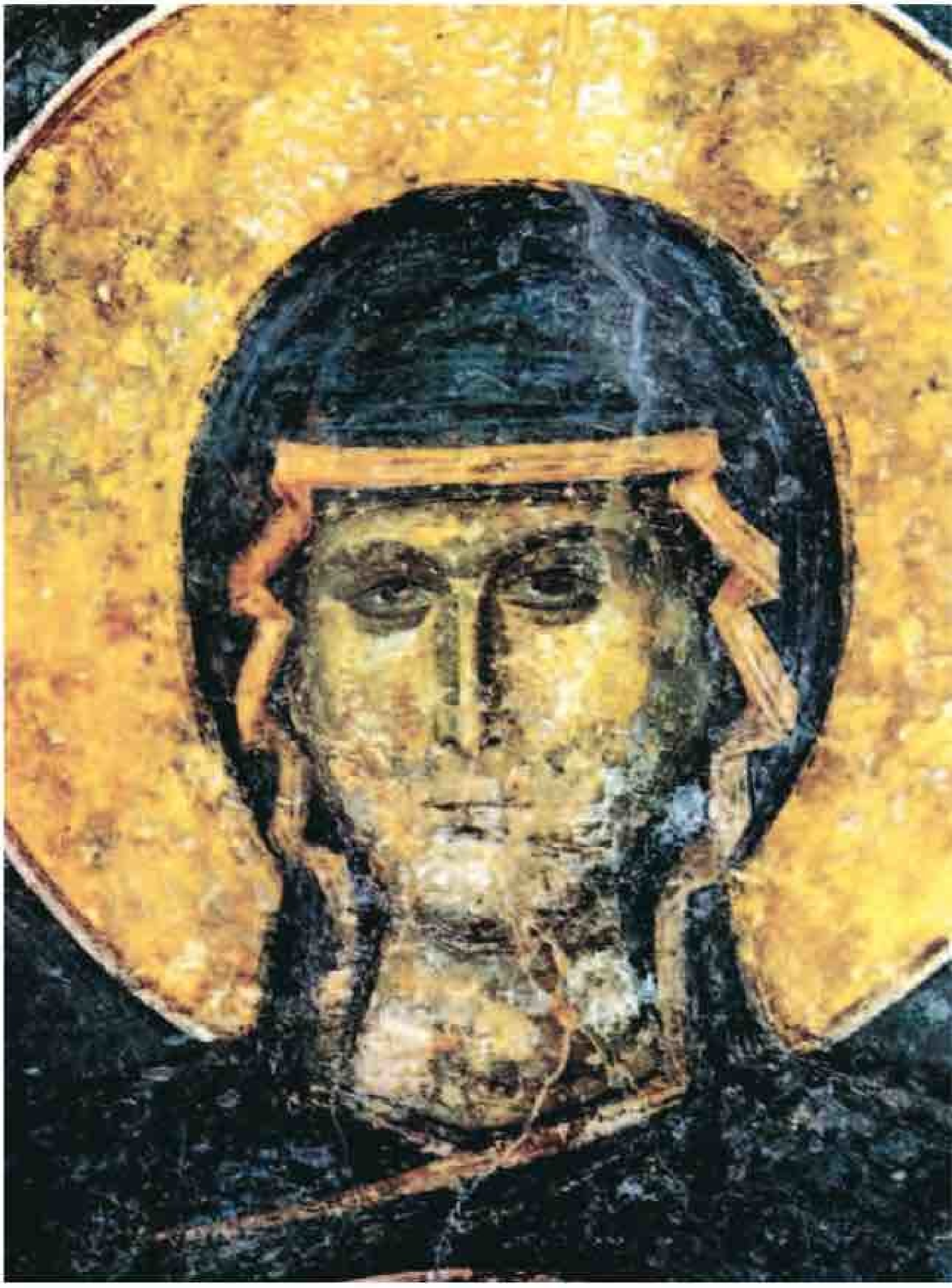
1985

Translated by
Fr. Milovan Katanić

Divvying Up

(in the Church of the Mother of God Ljeviša)

Miodrag Pavlović



Mother of God, detail, apse, Chapel of Saint Nicholas, Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša

In the moonlight,
Taken a wooden bucket
Full of wine,
And another full of salt
Divvy them up
And every morning
Take a bulk of milk
Give it to the foundlings
And prepare one bucket
Of different foods
For each of those beggars
On the road
For anyone who is lost
So they can all
Eat their fill
When the rain pours down
As if it's raining buckets
One giant wooden bucket
Send up
To the winged creatures above—
A bucket full
Of joy

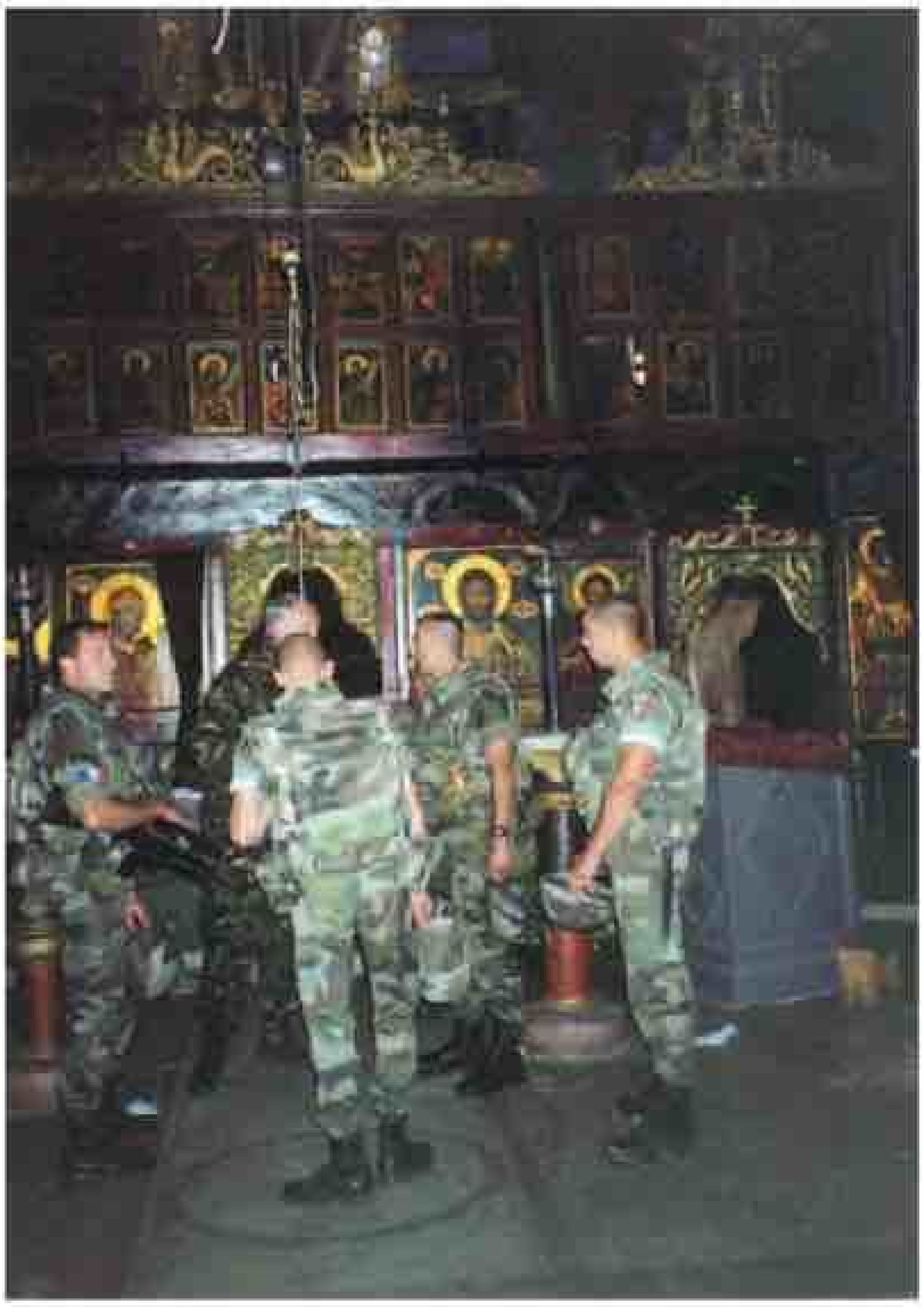
Translated by Stephen M. Dickey and Bogdan Rakić, *In a Foreign Harbor*, p. 241

Pilgrims at Gračanica Monastery at the feast
of the Dormition of the Mother of God

Monument to the victims of the "Harvest Massacre"
in August 1999 when 17 Serbian peasants were killed
by the Albanian extremist in the village
of Staro Gracko

A scene of a Serbian village in Kosovo,
destroyed by the Albanian extremists

Memorial service on Gazimestan, 1999



Italian peacekeepers in the Church of Saint Elias
in Vučitrn before the fire which was set
by the Albanian extremists in 2004

Determining and Integrating Kosovo and Metohija

Bishop Irinej Dobrijević

Ethnicity, Religion and Citizenship as Causal Factors

VICTOR HUGO wrote in timeless testimony of the Serbs, as though speaking of the contemporary plight of the Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija: *"They are killing an entire people!" "Where?" "In Europe!" "Is there anyone who can bear witness?" "There is one witness." "The entire world!"*

March 2004 Pogrom

This poignant reality again was evidenced in our day during the pogrom of 17–19 March 2004, which saw extreme Albanian on Serbian violence in Kosovo, signaling the complete breakdown, if not failure, of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the NATO Kosovo Peacekeeping Force (KFOR). According to UN statistics, 50,000 Albanians—in the presence of 18,000 NATO "peacekeepers"—drove 4,500 Serbs and other non-Albanians from their homes, injuring 900, including 150 peacekeepers, and killing 19 persons. With 33 synchronized flashpoints, all of Kosovo was engulfed in flames, as over 800 homes, many of which had recently been rebuilt by the International Community for repatriated Serbs, were looted and demolished.

In addition to the loss of precious human lives, the desecration of tombs, and the obliteration of anything bearing the sign of the Cross, which is in complete violation of the international norms on the manifestation of religious symbols, as a representative of the Church, that which pains us the most is the destruction of 35 additional churches and shrines, including those, which date back to the 12th and 14th centuries. The intended result is the complete cultural, religious and historical eradication of any Serbian presence in Kosovo and Metohija, and the obliteration of religious freedom.

[At this time, kindly permit me to depart from my written remarks and make an important exception in the presence of the Italian parliamentarians, especially Senator Enrico Pianetta. It is my privilege to reiterate the gratitude of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which for the first time in its history honored a military unit with the Award of St. Sava II Second Degree. The "Folglore" Italian Airborne Brigade was decorated for their exemplary defense of our shrines in Kosovo and Metohija, most notably the monasteries of Dečani and the Patriarchate of Peć, specifically during the course of the recent pogrom and in general as part of the KFOR protectorate. His Eminence Metropolitan Amfilohije, on behalf of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, presented this distinguished ecclesiastical honor at a military ceremony in Livorne, Italy on 29 July 2004.]

In the area of Prizren alone, the Church of the Mother of God of Ljeviša, known as the "Notre Dame" of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which was set on fire, represents the loss of world heritage, as its unique and irreplaceable fresco of the Virgin and Child is now charred and ruined. The Cathedral Church of St. George was raised and pillaged, with the inscription *Death to Serbs* written in graffiti on the arch above the once main portal, while *Down with UNMIK* was scribbled on the side of the church and the perpetrators' signature piece *UCK* or KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) was placed on the columns of the former narthex. Thousands of volumes of priceless books were destroyed as the Episcopal Residence was torched, and an innocent victim was burned alive, seeking shelter in the Seminary of Sts. Cyril and Methodius.

Given the above horrific statistics coupled with those of the past 5 years, that is from the time of the 1999 NATO-brokered international "peace," which witnessed the expulsion of 250,000 refugees, 1,000 kidnapped and 1,200 murdered, and in a sustained attempt at expunging the sacerdotal Serbian presence: of the original 1,657 churches, monasteries and monuments, over 115 were destroyed, added to the 35 above for a total of 150—reiterating all during the time of peace and not war—it becomes obvious that the intended Kosovar Albanian goal is regional destabilization, leading to an independent Kosovo and eventual annexation to Albania proper. The end result is the creation of a "Greater Albania" free and cleansed of not only all Serbs, but also all non-Albanians, including the purging of the International Community.

Causes and Considerations

As internal strife and violence are thoroughly incapable of substantiating a just and enduring peace, so also international "humanitarian" interventionist policies in Kosovo and Metohija completely failed to promote a stable and prosperous civil society, and a healthy foundation for nation building. What are, therefore, critical factors that will preserve the delicate balance between considerations of ethnic identity and religious adherence, the right to citizenship and national determination, regional cooperation and external affiliation with the international community?

Located at the very gate of East and West, Southeastern Europe remains a crossroad for the convergence of civilizations and the clash of faiths, cultures and traditions. Here, the line between ethnicity and religious affiliation becomes often blurred and the issue of citizenship can be inflamed in exclusivity, perceived or otherwise. Given these historical dimensions and geopolitical implications, conflict resolution and the delineation of boundaries, movement toward self-determination and plausible independence must make sense in their local environment and specific regional context, or otherwise lend themselves to regional instability.

In this and any given context, peace and stability can be fostered, only through functional and secure social and economic, political and faith-based institutions. Whenever governments and elements of civil society are at odds with each other, as a source of moral authority, the Church transcends such narrow constraints by retaining the unique ability to offer cooperation with other communities of faith, non-governmental organizations, governments and ultimately, extending itself to the International Community.

As such, Bishop Artemije, who visited Washington D.C. in July for the third time this year. In his attempt to bear witness to the catastrophic violation of human and religious rights in Kosovo, particularly after the March pogrom, stated:

> *While everywhere else in the region we can see that the International Community does not reward violence, rather encourages moderation and respect for human and religious rights, the Kosovo province remains a shameful exception. It is not only that the UN Mission, KFOR and Albanian-led institutions have tolerated ethnic violence against Serbs for five years but have also proved to be ineffective in protecting Serb civilians and churches before Albanian mobs and extremists. So far no one has openly taken responsibility for these failures and resigned. UNMIK bears responsibility for many of the failures but we must not forget that life for non-Albanians in Kosovo would be far worse without UNMIK and KFOR. In fact, I can frankly confirm that no Serbs would stay to live in such a society tailored only for ethnic Albanians.*[1]

According to Bishop of Raška-Prizren, the only viable solution for Kosovo and Metohija is democracy. As a process, democratization must begin with repatriation, which is predicated by security and economic stability. However, the Bishop noted that after March pogrom the situation regarding human rights for the Serb population remains as equally unsatisfactory as before:

> *In fact we can hardly see any improvement, quite the contrary—Kosovo Serbs still live in their ghettoes, they don't have basic access to institutions such as schools, and medical facilities, employment, freedom of movement, use of their language, etc. The security situation is very fragile and with the organizers of the March riots still free and in their positions, a potential for reiterated violence still exists. The return process has been completely stalled and this should be one of the crucial standards for further progress in stabilization. Kosovo Albanian institutions, particularly on the municipal level, constantly make various kinds of obstructions, while the Kosovo Government complains that they cannot provide any money for returns. This way, Albanian-led institutions openly take part in ethnic cleansing, which is completely unacceptable and must not be tolerated by the West.*[2]

Clearly, independence for Kosovo would only serve to reward terrorism and hostility, while pinning self-determination against sovereignty. Ultimately, promising to destabilize the entire region by providing impetus for the creation of a "Greater Albania," and luring the substantial Albanian minority in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the growing minority in Greece and, of course, Albania proper.

> *In Kosovo, many Albanian extremists believe that the U.S. will tolerate ethnic cleansing and creation of a new ethnic Albanian state. The U.S. Administration must finally send them a clear message that the U.S. will not allow for the creating of a society based on ethnic crimes and the brutal violation of religious rights. Otherwise, U.S. policy in the Balkans will prove to be in dramatic discrepancy with its policy in other parts of the world.*[3]

Therefore, in reconciliation and recovery, the first step is to recognize that Western notions of civil society are culturally specific to certain social and historical conditions. Merely exporting or imposing Western forms of civil society onto southeastern Europe, without cultural substance and understanding, is meaningless. An essential and perhaps more productive approach to the region could be based on the comprehension of indigenous forms of social and political association, and on considerations of how Western models of civil society might accommodate local environments, rather than impose upon them.

[1] "Bishop Artemije: U.S. must stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo," (EPR KIM Info-service: 22 July 2004), ERP KIM Newsletter 22-07-04c: www.kosovo.com

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

Christ and the Prophets, soffit of the arch between intermediate and west bays of the nave, painted at the time of Patriarch Joanikije, ca. 1350, Church of the Holy Apostles, the Patriarchate of Peć

The Electoral Process

In most emerging as in solidified democracies, participation in the electoral process institutionalizes the freedom of choice. While the Church has always advocated participation in free elections and voting according to the informed choice of one's conscience, in today's Kosovo voting cannot be taken into consideration as long as 250,000 Kosovo Serbs and other expelled non-Albanians live outside of Kosovo and Metohija without logistic means for voter registry, while those within the administrative boundaries of the Province remain ghettoized in ethnic enclaves without freedom of movement as an essential precondition for voter registry and the polls. And, as the Albanian border remains porous, there is no effective means by which to assure that incoming Albanians, claiming the loss of legal paperwork, are indeed legitimate citizens within Kosovo.

For these reasons and given the explicit failure of the Albanian-dominated provisional government, Bishop Artemije feels that it would tantamount to "national suicide"[4] for the Serbs to remain in these political institutions and to participate equitably in the forthcoming elections. This view is supported by Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Koštunica, who announced that Belgrade is opposed to the participation of Serb voters in the October 23rd 2004 Kosovo parliamentary elections, due to the refusal of the UN mission and the government in Priština to take into consideration its plan for the protection of the endangered Serb community.[5] "Without achieving institutional guarantees for the survival and return of Serbs, participation of the Serb community in the forthcoming (elections) is not possible."[6]

Additionally, Kosovo Member of Parliament Rada Trajković has assessed the plan of UNMIK and the Kosovo government on resolving issues in the Province, indicating: "That plan is irrelevant, taking into account the fact that many international factors and organizations have marked precisely UNMIK and the provincial government as responsible for the March violence." According to her, "all this creates good space for the Serbian government plan to be part of a united strategy and as one of the conditions for the participation of Serbs in the provincial elections."[7]

Determination and Resolution

Void of the conditions necessary to insure democratic electoral results, coupled with poor economic conditions, which result from internal corruption, political radicalism is encouraged, providing impetus for localism as a phenomenon, with its attempts toward resolution through inverted, reduced communities, void of a wider regional context, which begs the issue of final status. In accordance with UN Security Resolution 1244, the sovereignty of Serbia and Montenegro over Kosovo and Metohija is formally guaranteed. The Diocese of Raška-Prizren also calls for the substantial autonomy of Kosovo and Metohija within Serbia. This would implement a responsible strategy for protecting the rights of all other citizens of Serbia, whose rights are endangered in Kosovo and Metohija.[8] Here, it is essential to note by definition Serbs are not a "minority" in Kosovo and Metohija, which remains an integral part of Serbia, and therefore cannot be perceived of as an "ethnic" group within their own nation.

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[4] "For Serbs to stay on in Kosovo institutions would be national suicide" (Danas Daily: Jelena Tasić, Belgrade, 27 July 2004), ERP KIM Newsletter 28-07-04: www.kosovo.com

[5] "Belgrade against Serb participation in Kosovo elections," (ISN Security Watch: Aleksandar Mitić), ERP KIM Newsletter 02-08-04: www.kosovo.com

[6] "Koštunica and Kosovo Serbs: No conditions for participation in elections," ERP KIM Newsletter, 29-07-04: www.kosovo.com

[7] "Rada Trajković on talks with Koštunica," (Tanjug), ERP KIM Newsletter, 29-07-04: www.kosovo.com

[8] "Diocese of Raška and Prizren expresses its concern," (EPR KIM Info-service: 21 July 2004), ERP KIM Newsletter 21-07-04: www.kosovo.com

The Diocese of Raška-Prizren further emphatically states that he issue of the status of the Serbian people as a state-forming and constitutive nation on their own territory, i.e., Kosovo and Metohija, where they are presently being denied basic rights and freedoms, has enormous importance for the local Serbian population and its future. However, this issue should not be allowed to have greater political priority than the preservation of state territory and the definition of Kosovo and Metohija as an autonomous region within Serbia.[9]

Boris Tadić, Serbia's first democratic president since World War II, has also highlighted a solution to the problem of Kosovo as a top priority for his a five-year mandate, describing the issue as *a huge open wound* in Serbia's relationship with Europe. "We are deeply devoted to idea of democratic, rational, European solution for Kosovo based on UN Security Council Resolution 1244. We believe that dialogue between Serbs and (Kosovo) Albanians is crucial." President Tadić robustly defends Belgrade's view that the troubled United Nations administered province remains part of Serbia even though its ethnic Albanian majority wants independence, which in his view is unacceptable, stating: *Kosovo is not lost. If Kosovo is ever lost for the Serbs it will also be lost for Europe.*[10]

Post-Yugoslav Western Balkans

Conclusion

Decentralization: In order to facilitate the above, a plan for decentralization must be implemented, providing local autonomy within the framework of wider provincial autonomy for Kosovo and Metohija, within the Republic of Serbia, as foreseen in UN Security Council Resolution 1244. This would insure the territorial integrity of Serbia as the only guarantee for regional stability and provide for eventual EU and NATO accession for the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro.

Final Status: The determination of final status can neither be seen as a reward for systematic violence and organized terrorism, nor undertaken without the full involvement of the democratic Serbian government in Belgrade. Ultimately, this will permit the International Community to implement a sustained effort toward an enduring peace while securing freedom and tolerance in a truly multi-ethnic and multi-confessional Kosovo and Metohija within an already multi-ethnic and multi-confessional Republic of Serbia.

Presented as a panelist on "Ethnicity, Religion and Citizenship" at the Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom, (Bruxelles, Hotel Eurovillage, 5 August 2004).

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] "First democratic president after Second World War," (Associated Press: 11 July 2004), and "Help Serbia as it turns toward the west, new president urges," (*Financial Times* UK: Stefan Wagstyl), ERP KIM Newsletter 12-07-04: www.kosovo.com

Ethno-confessional conflicts will always exist in the world. They are most often the result of a difference in demographic growth and change in the ethnic composition of the population. Nowhere else in this century, as in Kosovo and Metohija, can one find such violence, apartheid, and the expulsion of a people from its homes, fields and graveyards; nowhere else are human rights violated to such an extent on the grounds of ethnic origin, nowhere else is cultural, spiritual and historical legacy destroyed and negated to such an extent as the Serbian Kosovo heritage, nowhere else is aggressive nationalism so cynically triumphant, not to mention the responsibility of the most powerful military alliance in history. If all this is the announcement of the new millennium, then hardly anyone should rejoice in it.

Serbian Children on Kosovo today

A Letter of 15-year-Old Slobodanka Tasić to the UN Secretary-General

President Tadić conveys letter of Kosovo teen to UN Security Council (January 16, 2008)

Dear Mr. President,

After learning that you will speak before the UN Security Council about the situation on Kosovo and Metohija, I write you this letter in the pitch dark since again there is no electricity, and ask you to read it to them if the possibility arises.

As I write to you, I feel like a leaf blowing in the wind not knowing where the wind will take me because I have no protection. And who would protect me? I have no father. He disappeared in 1999.

I am 15 years old, born in Kosovo and Metohija and still living here, but not in the house where I was born since it has been destroyed to its foundations and burnt. My childhood differs from the childhoods of children in free countries. All kids throughout the world have friends, but to me fear has become my inseparable friend, fear of the early morning, fear of the first twilight. And that is why I ask you, Mr. President, to convey my message to the world—because of all the children's tears, because of all our suffering, because of the long opened wounds which just cannot heal. The right to a carefree childhood, the right to freedom, the right to happiness have all been taken from us, just as the warmth of family life has been taken from us. May they at least not take away from us the right to live even this kind of life in our own land.

Slobodanka Tasić

The Scent of Children

Živojin Rakočević

"Brother, let's go to the field!
The corn is ripe,"
said my son,
and my two boys went out,
two joys,
two full houses,
two sweaty husbands,
they are mine.
And I don't like when harvests are rich,
when by wars,
when by fears,
corn grows heavy to the soil and itself.
(Therefore never harvest in evil times,
what was sown in good times.)
Let the devil have it,
let birds eat it,
don't feed your children with it.
Evil helped it grow,
to lure you,
to ambush you,
to leave me without anyone.

When instead of corn,
they harvested my two boys,
I went to the field,
and hugged empty corncobs.
When instead of gold,
they brought them in two plastic bags,
I felt nothing,
and there was nothing,
I stood between my two boys,
between two heavens,
to feel for the last time,
to smell for the last time,
the scent of my children.

Ljubica Živić from the village of Staro Gracko lost her two sons in July 1999. They went to harvest corn and were killed in the field.

The Last Judgement, detail of Paradise: Righteous Abraham, south wall of the narthex, Gračanica, 1318–1321

For All Abandoned Homes

A Pilgrimage to occupied Kosovo (June 2001)

Monk Andrew Wermuth

For all evil thoughts,
For all abandoned homes,
For all dark minds,
I repent and cry.
St. Nikolai Velimirović

THE SMALL AREA of land known as Kosovo, called by history "Ancient Serbia," came to the forefront of the world news media in 1999 when NATO forces began bombing what the Serbs have for seven hundred years considered their "Holy Land." This attack continued for seventy-eight days. Bombs were dropped not only on Kosovo but also on the Serbian capital of Belgrade, other major cities, and neighboring Montenegro. Civilian targets were not spared. Following this one-sided war was the occupation of the disputed land of Kosovo by NATO forces, which has continued until the present day. Currently, only a small fraction of Serbs remain in Kosovo. The majority have fled north to Serbia, where there is one of the highest concentrations of refugees in the world. Little publicized in the Western media is the fact that it is not safe for a Serb to appear in public in Kosovo and Metohija due to the threat of violence from the hands of Albanian terrorists known as the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army), despite the policing by NATO. This I witnessed firsthand when I traveled to Kosovo/Metohija this past June on a spiritual pilgrimage to its ancient monasteries and holy places. Due to the volatile atmosphere, I had no other choice than to travel in a convoy of Italian and Spanish armored KFOR[1] vehicles.

Border Crossing

Arriving at the border, I immediately sensed an atmosphere of intensity-the war zone. As we pulled off the side of the road at the border, our taxi was met by a young Italian soldier, machine gun in hand. Our guide, Fr. Jovan (a priest-monk who serves at the old Patriarchate of Peć), announced our expected party, and we were quickly ushered into a guard station where we were to wait until our convoy was ready. In moments like these, one's awareness becomes intensely acute; each movement and word is calculated; one feels that one wrong move could potentially be fatal. Before long our convoy arrived, and the atmosphere was softened a little by the smiles on the faces of the soldiers upon seeing Fr. Jovan—a man whom, over the past year and a half, they have come to know and respect. Within forty-five minutes we arrived outside the ancient walls of the Peć Patriarchate.

Remnants of the Samodreža church at Kosovo area, destroyed by the Albanian extremists in 1999

Patriarchate of Peć

The Serbian Orthodox Church had its foundation in 1219 when St. Sava, after receiving his spiritual formation on Mt. Athos, was consecrated Archbishop of Serbia, with his seat at Žiča Monastery in central Serbia. St. Sava then instructed his closest disciple, the future St. Arsenije, to move to the city of Peć in Kosovo (southern Serbia), because he foresaw that Žiča would become vulnerable to foreign invasion. Over a century later, in 1346, the Serbs had their first Patriarch, St. Joanikije II, who established his patriarchate in Peć.

The fourteenth century saw the blossoming of Balkan Christian spirituality. Inwardly, this revival was effected by the influence of the hesychast disciples of St. Gregory the Sinaite, the great teacher of Prayer of the Heart, who reposed in Bulgaria just beyond the borders of Ancient Serbia. Outwardly, the revival was effected by Serbian princes, who sponsored the building of splendid stone and marble churches. Many of these magnificent edifices stand until this day in Kosovo, bearing witness to the Serbian Byzan-

[1] KFOR: NATO-supported armed forces in Kosovo (short for "Kosovo Forces").

tine culture in that area. In the fourteenth century, when Emperor Dušan gave part of Kosovo to the Church as a land holding, this area was named "Metohija" (from the Greek word metochion, which refers to a church land holding). Thus, when the media today refers to "Kosovo and Metohija," they are using names that hark back to the deep spiritual roots of this place.

Today at the Patriarchate of Peć there is a convent with over twenty nuns. They are mostly elderly, having lived in this same place for decades. But even since the 1999 war and the subsequent NATO occupation, young sisters have come with the intention to stay. They have made this decision despite the fact that it is nearly impossible to leave the walls of the monastery, and then only under the protection of the Italian army.

The Patriarchate also serves as a diplomatic base for the Serbs. There are two employed translators who speak English and deal with NATO and UNMIK,[2] representing the Serb population in Kosovo and taking care of the needs of the nuns as well. Outside the front gate there is a base of the Italian army, which stands watch over the monastery and helps with providing necessities. The soldiers themselves are very helpful and friendly, having come to know and appreciate the real Serbian people. They, as well as soldiers from other countries who are guarding other sectors, found something they were not expecting on coming to Kosovo. Several American soldiers were outraged, having been briefed before arriving on the scene that they were to be protecting the Albanians from the Serbs, and in reality finding the exact opposite situation. When they came home from their time of service, they were intent on writing letters of complaint regarding their false indoctrination.

The monastery court of Peć is absolutely beautiful, adorned with flowers, foliage, and ancient stone paths. There is a mulberry, "St. Sava's tree," said to be from the thirteenth century. Its limbs are so overgrown that they must be supported by wooden braces. The peaceful atmosphere reigning within these walls is not something that can simply be planted overnight. Here one senses a serenity cultivated through the more than eight hundred years in which Christian ascetics have been offering their prayers in this holy place. The main treasure of the monastery is the miracle-working icon of the Mother of God of Peć. Before the image of the Heavenly Queen the nuns faithfully continue to pray here in the center of Serbia's "Jerusalem," pleading for the "peace of the world," while outside the monastery walls mankind pushes itself toward the brink of insanity in war and hatred.

Terrorist Roots in Kosovo

There was a time in the not-so-distant past when the Albanians and Serbs co-existed in relative peace. Historically, many of the Albanians even shared the Orthodox Christian Faith with their Serbian neighbors. Even after becoming Muslims (under pressure from their Turkish conquerors), many continued to visit the shrines of Orthodox saints, at which they received healing from wonderworking relics. At times the Albanians even defended Orthodox monasteries and cemeteries from the Ottomans, under whom both they and the Serbs were subjugated for nearly five hundred years. The ethnic conflict between the Albanians and Serbs was born in more recent times, after the end of the Turkish domination, and was provoked by external interference.

In the peace settlements following World War I and the breakup of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, a new state was created: the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later renamed "Yugoslavia"). Nationalist parties soon arose to oppose the new state, among which were the Albanian extremists in Kosovo and their allies in Croatia, the Ustashis. Both the Albanian extremists and the Ustashis received support from the newly founded Communist Party in Yugoslavia, headed by General Secretary Josip Broz Tito.

During World War II, the Nazis gained control of Kosovo, Bosnia, and Croatia, from where they fought against the Serbian army, who were part of the Allied forces. The Ustashis now became the tentacle of the Nazis in Croatia and Bosnia, while the Albanians assisted the Nazis by forming a volunteer SS unit called the Skanderbey Division, which carried out raids against the non-Albanian population in Kosovo.

At the end of the war Yugoslavia came under Communist domination. A policy of unchecked and brutal repression ensued in order to keep up the façade of a unified Communist Yugoslavia, for which Tito was undeservedly praised by the world. When Tito died in 1980, each ethnic group sought to gain ascendancy in Kosovo, but the Albanians remained the majority. Through violent means, Albanian terrorists began a policy of systematically driving out Serbs from Kosovo. (The then Bishop of Prizren and future Patriarch of Serbia, Pavle, witnessed this firsthand and was himself beaten on several occasions.) Slobodan Milošević used this crisis as a base upon which to build his platform of a false nationalism, gaining for himself the presidency as a "Socialist," while remaining in truth a Communist. As President of Yugoslavia, he took measures to suppress the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo-measures which only gave fodder for the terrorist actions of Albanian extremists. At the same time Milošević retained the Communist policy of weakening and disrupting the unity of the Orthodox Church, whose leaders denounced him and his disastrous policies in Kosovo.[3]

The spiritual leader of Serbia, Patriarch Pavle, never supported Milošević. In 1997 he supported a public demon-

[2] United Nations Mission in Kosovo—UNMIK.

[3] Veselin Kesich, "Kosovo in the History of the Serbian Orthodox Church," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, vol. 44, nos. 3–4, 2000.

stration in Belgrade against Milošević in defiance of elections widely known to have been fixed. Under Milošević's regime, atrocities were committed by Yugoslav police against the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo: atrocities which stood in stark contrast to the time—still remembered by many of the older Albanians and Serbs from the region—when the two peoples lived together peacefully. Throughout the conflict, Patriarch Pavle called for justice against crimes on both sides.

To pious Orthodox Serbs, the violence against innocent Albanian civilians was deplorable. They considered the instigator of this violence, President Milošević, as "the greatest traitor against the Serbian people," not a true (i.e. Orthodox) Serb at all but a political opportunist and a holdover from the brutal Communist Yoke. It is true that Milošević's military action in Kosovo was initially provoked by terrorist attacks of Albanian extremists against Yugoslav authorities and Serb civilians in Kosovo, but by including innocent Albanian civilians as targets of his retaliatory war on terrorism, he added sin to sin. One cannot fight evil with evil means to expect good to come out.

The Bishop of Kosovo, Artemije, made several trips to the United States and Western Europe prior to the war with a proposal for a future multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo. Unfortunately his plea was not received by those who had the authority to effect change.

Recently the American public has begun to become aware that for several years there has been a connection between the Bosnian Muslim forces that fought in the Bosnian Civil War against the Serbs (1992–1995), the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) of Albanian extremists, and the now-infamous Osama bin Laden. In 1992 bin Laden and his "al Qaeda" terrorist network began to send Afghan-trained mujahideen ("holy warriors") into the Balkans to fight for an Islamic stronghold in Europe. The following year bin Laden was issued a special Bosnian passport, which helped him to set up a base of operations in Europe. According to the Wall Street Journal Europe (Nov. 1, 2001), "Bin Laden directed al Qaeda 'senior commanders' to incorporate the Balkans into a complete southeastern approach to Europe, an area stretching from the Caucasus to Italy." Al Qaeda terrorist training camps were set up in Bosnia and Albania, from which bin Laden's mujahideen were sent to fight, first in Bosnia and then in Kosovo. In 1994 bin Laden visited a terrorist camp in Zenica, Bosnia, and in 1996 and 1997 he visited Albania, where he recruited Albanian Muslims to fight with the KLA in Kosovo. In the meantime, the KLA was being funded by bin Laden, al Qaeda terrorist cells were being set up in Kosovo, and Kosovo was being used as the Balkan route for the heroin trafficking that funded (and continues to fund) both the KLA and the al Qaeda network.[4]

[4] Marcia Christoff Kurop. "Al Qaeda's Balkan Links," *Wall street Journal Europe*, Nov. 1, 2001.

A Disaster of U.S. Foreign Policy

By 1998 the KLA was officially described as "Islamic terrorists" by Robert Gelbard, America's special envoy to Bosnia. "Nonetheless, "states the Wall Street Journal, "the 25,000 strong KLA continued to receive official NATO/U.S. arms and training support and, at the talks in Rambouillet, France, then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright shook hands with 'freedom fighter' Hashim Thaci, a KLA leader."[5] On March 12, 2000, The Sunday Times, London reported that "American intelligence agents have admitted they helped to train the KLA before NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia… CIA officers were cease-fire monitors in Kosovo in 1998 and 1999, developing ties with the KLA and giving American military training manuals and field advice on fighting the Yugoslav army and Serbian police… Many satellite telephones and global positioning systems were secretly handed over to the KLA, ensuring that the guerrilla commanders could stay in touch with NATO and Washington. Several KLA leaders had the mobile phone number of General Wesley Clark, the NATO commander."

During the NATO/U.S. bombing of Kosovo and Serbia in 1999, KLA forces inside Kosovo included U.S. military Special Forces, as well as British Special Forces.[6] At the same time, as reported by the head of the Albanian intelligence service Fatos Klosi, Osama bin Laden was sending more units to join the KLA forces in Kosovo.[7] According to a report recently issued from Interpol, one of bin Laden's senior lieutenants was the commander of an elite KLA unit operating in Kosovo during the war.[8]

In the wake of the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, which has been linked to Osama bin Laden and the al Qaeda network, the relationship between the U.S. (specifically the Clinton administration) and the KLA points to a disaster of U.S. foreign policy. As early as January 26, 1999, The Washington Times printed the following: "U.S. policy in the Balkans is worse than a crime-it is a blunder. Not only is America working against her own best interests by fostering a Muslim terrorist base in Europe, it is defeating the purpose of its Balkan intervention. Ostensibly designed to promote stability in the region, American foreign policy is doing precisely the opposite by its support of Muslim revolution." On May 28, 1999, a few weeks after the bombing of Serbia ceased, the Daily Oklahoman made an observation that is now particularly painful in hindsight: "By joining hands with the KLA, which intelligence sources say bank-

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Vojin Joksimović, *Kosovo Crisis* (Los Angeles, Graphics Management Press, 1999), pp. 75–76.

[7] "Bin Laden Runs Terrorist Network, Report Says," *Charleston Gazette*, Nov. 30, 1998, p. 2A.

[8] Preliminary Report from Interpol, Oct. 23, 2001. Quoted in Scott Taylor, "Signs Point to a Bin Laden-Balkan Link", *The Halifax Herald Limited*, Oct. 29, 2001.

Prayers on the remnants of the Holy Trinity church at Mušutište, destroyed by the Albanian extremists in 1999

rolls itself by selling heroin and cocaine, the United States also would become partners of a sort with Osama bin Laden… In 1998 the State Department listed the KLA as an international organization that supported itself with drug profits and through loans from known terrorists like bin Laden." This connection has come back to haunt the U.S. directly, since it has been discovered that some of the very terrorists who hijacked the planes on September 11 were holding Bosnian passports and that one of them had even fought alongside the KLA in Kosovo and later in Macedonia.[9]

When NATO/U.S. forces began bombing Kosovo and Serbia in 1999 they in essence sanctioned the KLA's reign of violence in Kosovo. Due to NATO's failure to resolve the conflict through diplomatic means, it was the innocent who were to suffer. Immediately after the bombing ended, die Yugoslav police retreated into Serbia, leaving the Serbian people in Kosovo without any defense against the KLA. There was a window of three days before the NATO troops could occupy Kosovo/Metohija. These three days were a free-for-all for the KLA. Even since the occupation of Kosovo/Metohija by NATO, crimes continue to be perpetrated by the KLA. As recently as April of 2000. Osama bin Laden arrived in Kosovo from Albania, having formed a group of five hundred Islamic fighters in the eastern region around Korce and Pogradec to continue carrying out terrorist acts in the region.[10] Over the past two years, 869 Serbs have been killed or abducted and over 1,000 Serbian homes have been burned in Kosovo. 360,000 Serbian refugees have fled from their homeland.[11]

[9] Joseph Farah, "Our Friends' in the Balkans"…

[10] "Bin Laden in Kosovo Acts," *Canberra Times* (Australia), April 28, 2000, p.8.

[11] Hieromonk Sava (Janjić) foreward to *Crucified Kosovo*, third revised and expanded edition (Serbian Orthodox Church, Diocese of Raška and Prizren, May 2001).

In an attempt to erase the Serbian Christian culture, the KLA has blown up, destroyed, or desecrated over one hundred churches in Kosovo. Many of these churches, being of inestimable spiritual value to the Serbian people, dated back to the fourteenth century and contained some of the most beautiful Byzantine frescos in the world. In the meantime the KLA, maintaining its close ties with the al Qaeda network, has moved its terrorist activities into Macedonia, where it has gained control of thirty percent of this predominantly Orthodox Christian country.[12]

Media Disinformation

The Serbs feel that their plight has been ill-portrayed by the Western media, which has been pushing a one-sided view of the complicated situation in Kosovo. Much of what was reported in the West during the 1999 bombing of Serbia was biased to justify NATO's military actions. Evidence of this was witnessed by Paul Watson, the only reporter from North America to stay in Kosovo during the entire war. On June 20, 1999, he wrote in the Los Angeles Times: "NATO called its devastating air war against Yugoslavia a 'humanitarian intervention,' a historic battle between good and evil to stop 'ethnic cleansing' and return ethnic Albanians to their homes. But from inside Kosovo, it rarely looked so pure and simple. It seemed more like calling in a plumber to fix a leak and watching him flood the house… Even in Kosovo, I could not escape the sound of Shea's[13] voice on satellite TV. It haunted me at the strangest times, denying things that I knew to be true, insisting on others that I had seen were false."

I was present at one meeting held at the Peć Patriarchate between Fr. Jovan and representatives of NATO and UNMIK. He spoke from his heart, telling of the suffering of his people, but having at the same time a knowledge of history and of recent political developments that left these international representatives literally speechless. They were not adequately prepared-either on an educational level or on a personal level-for what they heard. After listening to a series of arguments based on facts which they could not help but accept, all they could offer were weak justifications for the actions of the international community and a shallow compassion for the Serbs that will hardly effect any future changes. At present the main dilemma for NATO, UNMIK, and the Serbs is to figure out how to bring back the thousands of Serbian refugees who have fled from Kosovo and Metohija and are living in Serbia proper.[14] Why come to live in a land where the lives of their children are constantly threatened? Why come to live in a land where 107 of their churches have been blown up or severely dam-

[12] Joseph Farah, *op.cit.*

[13] Jamie Shea was the spokesman for NATO during the Kosovo War.

[14] The village of Osojane was the first village to be reinhabited by Serbs, which occurred in August 2001.

aged since NATO occupation?[15] Where will the Serbian children receive their education?

Dečani

Rising before dawn on my second day in Kosovo, our party gathered at the front gate of the Patriarchate of Peć, where we were to meet the Italian KFOR unit that would take us on our pilgrimage to the holy places. Our first stop was the fourteenth-century monastery of Dečani, built by the ascetic prince St. Stefan, whose relics rest in the main church. After the reign of Communism, the monastery had been all but abandoned. In 1991 a spiritual envoy was sent from the Black River Monastery (just north of the border in Serbia) by the man who today is the spiritual father of all Kosovo-Bishop Artemije. Bishop Artemije is a disciple of the great spiritual writer and theologian St. Justin Popović, who was in turn a disciple of perhaps the Church's greatest poet of the twentieth century, St. Nikolai Velimirović, who reposed in the United States in 1956. Thus, Bishop Artemije represents and embodies the spiritual lineage of erudite monastic leaders responsible for the Orthodox revival that began under Communism and is now budding flowers under the heat of war.

Since 1991 the revival at Dečani Monastery has been headed by its current Abbot, Teodosije. Only thirty-nine years old. Abbot Teodosije demonstrated the composure of an experienced spiritual general during and since the bombing of 1999. When the bombs began to fall and daily there began to be "shrapnel flying within the monastery courtyard," the Abbot gathered all the monks. He told them, "We don't know what will happen in the future. Everyone is free to leave until peace returns to Kosovo." But all the brothers stood firm, choosing to live in the face of death rather than to abandon Serbia's spiritual heartland. Then, within a few months, a new brother came, desiring to give his life to Christ in this place of sacrifice. One of the older monks told me that, when they saw this willingness for sacrifice in the new brother, it greatly strengthened them and confirmed their own choice to stay. Before long, five more brothers arrived, and to this day they continue to live in this spiritually thriving monastic brotherhood. Today there are thirty-one brothers. I asked, "But why stay here when you could just as easily go to a monastery in Serbia?" The answer I heard was, "Here we feel more zeal and fervor. To be rich and free is not good for monastic life, and we are a weak generation. There is also a very real 'remembrance of death' here. We also feel a strong call of patriotism, a good kind of patriotism. For us, this is Jerusalem." Within the walls of the monastery no one has ever been wounded from the bombings or shootings.

As we entered within the monastery walls, it was perfectly silent. The beauty of the marble church captivated each one of us. Entering the seven-hundred-year-old edifice dedicated to Christ the Almighty, we found ourselves surrounded by the mystic gazes of the saints, masterfully depicted in the ancient Byzantine frescos and icons. The Liturgy had just begun. Immediately I was invited by the brothers to stand on the kliros, where they welcomed me by having me read both the Creed and the Lord's Prayer in English.

In addition to seeing the wealth of Ancient Serbia's culture, I had desired, in however small a way, to show our support and appreciation of our brothers' plight in Kosovo. This I felt especially strongly because I was an American, born in the country which had dropped devastation from the air upon their most treasured land, and which had taken part in the media's depiction of the Serbs as some kind of barbaric, bloodthirsty people. If only CNN had telecast what I saw at Dečani, I know that no honest American would have ever supported what NATO did there.

Immediately following the conclusion of the Liturgy, I was blessed to meet the Abbot and was taken by the monk who was the main chanter to see the iconography workshop. Before me I saw numerous copies of an icon of the Mother of God that looked very familiar. Suddenly I realized why it was so familiar. We had placed a print of this very icon as one of the two main icons on the iconostasis in our monastery chapel in Alaska. Upon asking my guide, Fr. Arsenije, who was in the process of painting these icons, exactly which icon this was, he simply replied, "The Dečani Mother of God." Then it all made sense, and I realized that unknowingly there had already been formed a bond of brotherhood between us. Nations at war but brothers in soul.

Leaving Dečani, I marveled-both at the beauty of the fourteenth-century church with its classic Byzantine iconography and at the contrast of the setting. Outside the front gate the monks stood next to a fleet of tanks, discussing the daily business with the Italian soldiers. Half a mile down the road it is impossible for an Orthodox Christian to show his face in public. Throughout Kosovo and Metohija lies the rubble of destroyed churches, but here the glory of Byzantium and the silent prayer of ancient ascetics lives on. Here is the eye of the storm-a bubble of peace within the surrounding chaos. But this image that I beheld was only the surface. Later I would more fully realize the scope of the work of the monks of Dečani. Truly, they are the spiritual "Special Forces" of Kosovo.

Djakovica

Entering again our armored KFOR vehicle, we descended into the urban jungle of Djakovica. Here, behind a sandbagged entrance and barbed wire walls, live six elderly women who bear witness to Christ's presence on earth. Courageously they are standing at their post of the parish church in this now entirely Albanian city. There are literally no Serbs left besides them. I cannot adequately put into words

[15] *Crucified Kosovo.*

this scene-it seemed completely out of time. Getting out of the vehicle, we were hurried behind the sand-bagged entrance. In the street and from the surrounding buildings everyone was staring at us and some were shouting. Apparently it is not often that visitors come here, to the last remaining Serbian enclave in Djakovica.[16]

Entering the courtyard, we were met by six much-suffering but presently rejoicing faces. Having greeted us, they led us into their home-a traditionally built house of logs and earth, of which parts of the walls were crumbling due to time and negligence. But within, everything was cozy, and its shabbiness made it all the more endearing. In the spirit of Serbian hospitality they immediately served us cold water, lukumi, coffee and a shot of rakija[17] for those who desired it. We began our discussion-or rather, they poured out the sorrow that has been their existence over the past two years. There was Vasilica, a native of Djakovica and an especially robust character: "I was born here and I will die here!" She showed us pictures from Crucified Kosovo, a photographic document of the 107 churches in Kosovo destroyed by terrorists. One point she was especially intent to get across was that the terrorists are not only blowing up the churches, but they are then taking the time to carry away the rubble so as to completely wipe away from the face of the earth any possible reminder of the Serbian heritage on this soil of Kosovo. Quietly standing beside Vasiljka was the more gentle Poljka, who, after twenty-two years as a school teacher, was fired two years ago for being an Orthodox Christian. She has lived in this very church house for thirty years. And there were the sisters, Jela and Ljubica. Ljubica in Serbian is the diminutive of Love. It is interesting that both women and men (Ljubiša) in Serbia are called by this chief virtue of the Christian Faith.

Our elderly hosts told us that the only ones who visit them are the Dečani monks who come and serve them Holy Communion. I was especially touched by Nada, who lives across the street in an atmosphere so violent that, if she were to walk onto the street alone, it would only be a matter of time before she was killed. Even under the escort of the soldiers, she is verbally abused when she crosses the street. With tears she told us how she had lost everything, her only remaining family being refugees in Belgrade. Her sorrow seemed to fall close to despair but was not unto death, since her faith-perhaps without her fully realizing it-carries her through. For me, this was a moment to feel Serbia's genuine pain and suffering. Again unknowingly, there stood before me six brave Confessors in the form of old and simple Serbian women.

Together we visited their much-cared-for chapel. I prayed that mercy would not abandon these courageous strugglers and that their witness would somehow strengthen me. Just as we were about to leave this Golgotha, a big Italian soldier came running toward us, his countenance all aglow. Seeing me and perhaps thinking I was a Dečani monk, he immediately asked, "Is Abbot Teodoslje coming?" "No," our guide (also an Italian soldier) replied. "We were Just there [in Dečani]." Realizing that I was not a Serb, the big Italian soldier began telling me in his broken English: "Abbot Teodosije is a great man! We worked a lot together during the war..." Bassu-for such was this soldier's name-had been in Kosovo longer than most of the soldiers: about two years. He was very jubilant and excited to be meeting again with an Orthodox monk. To conclude our brief but heartfelt exchange, he loudly proclaimed in front of all his comrades, "For me, Orthodoxy is the best!" Apparently, Bassu had also found something in the Serbian Orthodox people-something that one doesn't hear about on the television, that is, a deeply warm, loving and forgiving Christian character.

Prizren

Beyond the outskirts of the ancient city of Prizren lies the monastery of *the Holy Archangels*, first built in 1351. In 1615 the monastery was burned by the Turkish Muslim leader Sinan Pasha, and the stones of the St. Nicholas Church were taken to Prizren for the construction of a mosque. Within the past ten years, a new chapel has been built dedicated to a new St. Nicholas—St. Nikolai Velimirović, also known as the "new Chrysostom" for his gift with words.

We arrived at the monastery at dusk. The front gate was guarded by German troops. Quietly we entered the enclosure and found the monks at prayer. They were singing the Vespers service in their small chapel. On the hand-carved, wooden iconostasis we were blessed to venerate an original, hand-painted icon of St. Nikolai, who as a bishop and professor in Belgrade was once the mentor of a young Russian ascetic by the name of Hieromonk John-the future Archbishop of San Francisco, St. John Maximovitch.

Upon completion of the service, we eagerly greeted our newly found brethren. Already I had sensed something akin to our small skete in Alaska—just three brothers gathered in a rather forlorn spot, forgotten as it were by the rest of the world. We had much to talk about. Their love for one of the founders of the St. Herman Brotherhood, Fr. Seraphim (Rose), served as common ground. We also discovered that, like the brothers in our Alaskan skete, they carve wooden crosses. The oldest brother was quite accomplished in this craft, despite never having been formally trained. He had originally come to Kosovo from the Black River Monastery. It is his duty to carve tonsure crosses[18] for all the monks and nuns in Kosovo.

[16] See the article "For Whom the Bell Tolls," Dečani Monastery.

[17] Lokum (lukumi) is a sweet candy and rakija is a kind of Serbian brandy. These are both commonly served to guests.

[18] When monks and nuns give their life vows to live in chastity, poverty and obedience, they are presented with a hand-held cross during the service. The cross is a physical reminder of Christ's words, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me (Mt. 16:24).

The monks told us the martyric story of one of their number, Hieromonk Hariton, who disappeared in 1999. Later that year his body was found, bearing the marks of a violent murder undoubtedly performed by the KLA. One week prior to this trip I had visited the Black River Monastery and, just before leaving, I had been taken by one of the brothers to the grave of Fr. Hariton. The monks in Kosovo look to him as a New Martyr. Upon request, the Prizren monks gave me a printed account of his life in Serbian with the hope that it would be translated into English.

Finally, after lingering in our edifying conversation for more than a half hour past the time limit that we had been given by our Italian guides, we had to pull ourselves toward the gate. This was difficult. I wanted so much to stay a few days and live their common life. I had come from the other side of the world and found brothers here so close in spirit, as if of one blood. Exchanging lists of names for commemoration, we passed outside the gate. As I walked toward the KFOR vehicle I briefly spoke with a German soldier, thanking him for protecting the monks. Considering the circumstances, perhaps he was a little surprised to hear such words. I could see that he perceived something about our unexpected joy amidst such an outwardly bleak scene-and that it had something to do with what was going on behind these walls by which he stood guard.

Final Reflections

As we boarded the four-wheeled tank, the sun was lowering beyond the surrounding mountains. At this moment and throughout our entire stay in Kosovo, we found ourselves surrounded by paradox. Here, a year ago, an innocent monk had been captured and brutally murdered. Here and in all the monasteries in this occupied zone, the Serbian monks, nuns, and lay Christians live without freedom--as prisoners behind guarded walls. Outwardly, all is fallen, all is gray. But within-in this moment we felt great lightness and inexplicable joy. All around us we had witnessed human injustice: an almost hopeless plight resulting from the NATO bombing of a people who did not support Milošević and were then forced to abandon their homeland out of fear of terrorism. This was the human injustice I witnessed first hand. But right beside it I saw the justice of God: how, under the most unthinkable circumstances, Christ conquers. He conquers not only war and all its consequent pain, but death and hell itself. The proof of this I had seen in the joyful face of the Italian soldier Bassu, a reflection of the Christian love he had received from the Orthodox Serbs.

Conclusion

The onset of the Kosovo bombing threw the former Republic of Yugoslavia into a crisis situation. The war brought them to see that it is vain to put their hope in any earthly prosperity. The assault by the U.S.-led NATO forces has caused them to lose any remaining hope that deliverance will come from the West. Experiencing the loss of friends and family has reminded them that life is indeed very short. Like flowers on a grave, something beautiful has sprung up through these trials. Rather than being consumed with national hatred and the desire for retaliation, they have turned in another direction-toward our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Redeemer.

And while it is true that the Serbs want the international community to recognize the injustices done against their country, ultimately they are choosing the path of self-accusation. Led by the spiritual poet and national hero, St. Nikolai Velimirović, the Serbs blame their falling away from God as the primary source of their present and past turbulence. In the four days I spent in Kosovo and the two months in Serbia, I noticed one truly amazing thing: they do not harbor hatred and resentment toward Americans. Considering the recent war in which the U.S. and NATO equipped and supported the KLA, I found this inexplicable and, in terms of human righteousness, impossible. This is what it means to be an Orthodox Christian people-to have endowed in the consciousness of a people a sense of repentance. This is something I not only found in the writings of St. Nikolai but also heard from the lips of the young generation, who have used their national crisis as an opportunity to re-evaluate their lives.

One Serb, reflecting on the meaning of their recent crises, has written: "It has taught many the necessity to look for reasons and the lesson that nothing happens without a reason. If one has learned anything, it has been that such stock answers as 'madness' or 'insanity' or 'evil' just aren't adequate. Even more so, if one has learned anything, it is that finger-pointing isn't the ultimate answer, either. Ultimately, free men and free nations cannot accept the notion that the causes of their fortunes or misfortunes lie outside themselves.[19]

Having myself witnessed this national repentance, I can say that much spiritual fruit can be expected to continue to come from Serbia in the future, and that we Americans have much to learn from the Serbian Christians of past and present.

The Orthodox Word,
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[19] From "A Message from Serbia to Grieving Americans" written by Aleksandar Pavić only two days after the terrorist attacks on Washington and New York. Aleksandar Pavić, a U.C. Berkley graduate returned to Yugoslavia in 1990 to work for the abolition of Communist rule in Serbia. He also served as a senior presidential advisor in the Serbian entity in Bosnia. For the complete text of his message to Americans, see http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/printer-friendly.asp?ARTICLE_ID=24461.

For Whom the Bell Tolls

Serbian Women in Djakovica

By the Monks of Dečani Monastery

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to con found the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.
—I Corinthians 1:27

For two years, since the end of war in Kosovo and Metohija, six elderly Serb women in Djakovica have fought with prayer and hope in God against the hatred which surrounds them. As she has done for the past forty years, Poleksija Kastratović, known as Poljka, age sixty-five, continues to ring the bells of the old Orthodox church in Djakovica, calling the faithful to prayer each day. By carrying out this godly task, she firmly believes that she is not only calling the faithful to prayer but also daringly announcing the fact that the last six Orthodox Christian women in Djakovica still live and worship our Lord Christ here.

The last Serbian inhabitans in Djakovica who found shelter in the local church of Dormition

For forty years Poljka has lived in the small, old house in the churchyard in Djakovica. Before she chose to live a life similar to that of the ancient prophetess Anna, who hurried to greet the newly born Christ-child, she worked as a teacher. After several years of work, the Communist government fired her due to her open practice of the Orthodox Faith, as was the case at that time with many public servants who re fused to hide their faith. Poljka understood this to be Divine Providence, which was calling her to serve God and His Church. Since then she has devoted herself to the church—cleaning it, lighting the icon lamps, and ringing the bells to call the faithful to prayer.

Had all this occurred in any other town in Serbia and Yugoslavia, the story would not be that unusual. How ever, Sister Poljka and five other elderly Serb women live in Djakovica, a town in Metohija where Serbs have not lived for the past two years. The elderly women live in complete isolation in the churchyard, unable to move about freely or purchase any thing in the nearby store. After the war in Kosovo and Metohija, during which many innocent civilians were killed in clashes between Yugoslav forces and Albanian extremists, al most all Serbs from Djakovica were forced to flee from their homes. At the approach of KFOR troops, the Yugoslav Army withdrew from the Province according to their agreement, but at the same time Albanian extremists began a systematic genocide against the remaining Serbs. During those days, hundreds of Serbs were killed and abducted, hundreds of homes were burned and destroyed, many churches were desecrated and demolished, and numerous ancient cemetery markers were destroyed or broken through out Kosovo and Metohija. All those who had long awaited the arrival of international forces were bitterly disappointed, viewing the bloodshed which occurred be fore the eyes of NATO soldiers.

Following the arrival of Italian peacekeeping forces, a small number of elderly Serbs, expecting the Italians to protect them, stayed in their homes in Djakovica. Unfortunately, Albanian extremists (members of the KLA) conducted daily at tacks, looting and finally burning down Serb homes. The small parish church of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos remained the only refuge and shelter, while Poljka turned out to be a true hero, saving many from hunger and death. The churchyard was over flowing with exhausted people who had barely man aged to make it to the small church, hiding in gardens and basements along the way. Poleksija, certain that the Lord would not abandon them, called on the people to pray and to light candles to St. Nicholas, their divine protector. One day members of the KLA forced their way into the churchyard and began to search the people; however, by the grace of God none of them were injured, be cause the Italian troops were near. Those Serbs who remained in their homes fared far worse: some of them disappeared, while others were found massacred in their homes in the most brutal fashion.

Italian soldiers very quickly placed the church under protection and ran barbed wire around the churchyard in order to prevent Albanian extremists from attacking the people. The International Red Cross organized an evacuation for all wishing to leave the town for central Serbia or Montenegro. Poljka stayed with five other elderly women, who decided to remain beside the church where they had been baptized and where they had prayed their entire lives. The women are all in their sixties and seventies: Nada Isailović, Vasiljka Perović, Ljubica Miović, Jelena Miović and Dragica Nikolić. Each one of these courageous women will tell you her own sad story of how only a miracle saved her from certain death under the vicious knife of the Albanian terrorists. "The KLA criminals placed a gun to my forehead and said they would shoot me in the head. I was so afraid that all I could tell them was to do what they wanted," says Nada Isailović, who was thrown out of her own house near the bus station and subsequently moved to her brother's house, close to the church. Nada goes to this house, completely looted and now under round-the-clock watch by the Italian soldiers, only to sleep. In the morning, accompanied by an armed Italian escort, she goes to the church, where she spends the day with the other ladies. "Whenever I walk down the street, they swear and shout at me," she says sorrow fully, "and once they threw a rock which struck me in the head." "Dozens of cars with Albanian license plates came to Srpska Street and took every thing away: furniture, clothing, televisions… every thing they found. When they were finished, they would set fire to the house and leave," says Nada, recalling the first "post war" days. "It seemed that KFOR was unprepared to confront them, and so they just pretended they didn't see what was happening," adds another elderly woman through tears. Of all the women, Dragica Nikolić seems to have fared the worst: she was beaten up by young Albanian men, who dragged her from her small old house and then forced her to watch her house as it burned down. Dragica is always silent and her only hope is that she will be able to die in peace in the town where she was born.

Despite the almost hopeless situation in which they find themselves, these elderly ladies have not become discouraged. Poljka is the driving force of this group. Always calm and collected, fully confident in God's protection, she helps others as they struggle to endure the heavy burden of hatred which surrounds them. Unable to leave their refuge, the elderly women are completely dependent on the Italian soldiers, with whom, over time, they have developed very cordial relations. Perhaps seeing their own sons and grandsons in the soldiers' role, the ladies frequently prepare coffee for them and bake an occasional cake. In exchange, the Italians purchase food for the women. They give the soldiers money, and the soldiers go to the nearby store to purchase basic necessities. Of course, they do not dare tell the sales clerk for whom it is they are buying the food or they would not sell any thing to them. Immediately next to the churchyard itself there is a store which belonged to the church and which was leased to an Albanian. Now the owner is some one else altogether and he apparently has no intention of returning the store to its rightful owner, the church. "Even this dog you see here," says Poljka, "that's our dog. The Albanians recognize him and throw rocks at him when he goes out into the street. The other dog belongs to the Italians; they recognize him, too, and they leave him alone." In this strange environment, even dogs suffer unjustly.

Poleksija Kastratović, one of the last remaining Serbs in Djakovica, heavily guarded by KFOR

In the beginning [after 1999], the Albanian youths would throw garbage over the wall into the churchyard. "Once," Poleksija says, "we heard an explosion and could see that a hand grenade had exploded right in the back yard. Thank God it didn't hurt anyone." After these incidents the Italians in stalled three watchtowers around the churchyard, which now resembles a little fortress, with barbed wire, reflectors and guards watching closely from their watch towers with machine guns. Poleksija says that some of their Albanian neighbors are good people. "But they are scared to death of the extremists [and are too afraid] to help us openly. I know for sure that all of them do not hate us. We have not done any harm to any one and just want to remain close to our church." Unfortunately, for Serbs even this much is very difficult and dangerous in present-day "Liberated Kosovo." There are approximately 100,000 Serbs still living in several enclaves through out the province under military protection. Some of the enclaves, such as Orahovac, are true ghettos, while others are geographically separated by mountain ranges and rivers from areas inhabited by Albanians. Outside these zones, there are no rights or freedoms for the Serbs. No one can guarantee their safety outside armored military vehicles. Any one who wants to can kill you, and the perpetrators will probably never be found, for Kosovo is ruled by a conspiracy of silence. Even though all Albanians certainly do not approve of these attacks on the Serbs, the province is still ruled from the shadows by the extremists. The recently elected municipal officials are, as a

rule, just puppets in the hands of powerful drug kingpins and mafias which have extended their networks throughout Kosovo, Albania, western Macedonia and even Montenegro. International forces do not have a mandate to fight against organized crime and terrorism but only to maintain general security, a far stretch from guaranteeing peace and freedom for all citizens. This is the reason why the international community has more or less become the hostage of Albanian extremists and criminals, who might well turn their weapons on their war-time al lies should they conclude that they no longer enjoy their support.

The brotherhood of the Monastery of Dečani has taken on the special responsibility of caring for Djakovica's "grannies," as they are endearingly called by the monks. Accompanied by a KFOR escort and traveling by armored military vehicles, the monks visit them at least once a week, bringing them food, medicine, fire wood, and other necessities. On Sundays and feast days they serve the Holy Liturgy so that the "grannies" can receive Holy Communion. From time to time, they organize trips for the "grannies" to the Peć Patriarchate or the Monastery of Dečani. These monasteries are also enclaves but are more spacious and are located in the more pleasant natural surroundings of the forests and mountains of Metohija. The "grannies" spend a day or two there. Some times they accompany the Dečani monks to central Serbia or Montenegro to visit their relatives, but they are always impatient to return to Djakovica, where they say they like it best of all.

Poljka herself rarely leaves the church. With the vigilance of a tireless guardian, she is ever ready to chase away intruders by her faith, fasting, and prayer. She spends all day in the church, praying, cleaning the church, lighting the icon lamps, and burning incense. "You see, there is an unusual, most wonderful fragrance of peace emanating from the icon of the patron saint, St. Nicholas," she tells the monks. "This gives us even greater hope that our spiritual battle is God-pleasing," she says with a smile.

"Humanitarian organizations rarely visit us. Some of the more honest ones told me that they are afraid of becoming known among the Albanians as friends of Serbs," says Poleksija with a sigh. "I understand that some of them are afraid while others are prejudiced against us… But thanks be to God, He makes sure that we always have everything we need." Some international representatives came to ask the women if they would like to leave Djakovica, because to all it appears that there is no life for Serbs here. Poleksija always refused to answer such questions. It is no secret that some international humanitarian organizations have openly encouraged Serbs to leave Kosovo. Now, however, they would like to prepare them for some sort of elections to create the illusion of multiethnic elections in ethnically "pure" Albanian Djakovica. The international plan for a

Displaced Serbs from Djakovica can visit their native city and church only heavily guarded and excorted by KFOR

democratic, multiethnic Kosovo is hardly possible given the present situation in Kosovo. Despite the fact that the international community carried out a military intervention against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in order to stop ethnic cleansing, in the end it found it self in the role of an eye witness to reverse ethnic cleansing. This time, everything is not happening in the midst of the chaos of war but in the presence of 40,000 of the best-trained NATO troops. Al though the international press regularly writes about improvements in life in Kosovo and Metohija, the real situation is hardly the picture of improvement, and stories like this one never make the head lines. The decrease in the number of crimes is not a result of an improvement in the security situation but a reflection of the plain fact that the overwhelming majority of the non-Albanian population lives completely separated from the Albanians, the majority of whom remain as hostile and intolerant of others as in the first days after the war… Politicians and journalists in the West skillfully avoid stories about ghettos and enclaves…

As twilight descends on Djakovica and the sun disappears behind the distant hills of neighboring Albania, Poleksija lights candles and icon lamps in preparation for evening prayers. Yet another day has passed for her, bringing her that much nearer to her beloved Lord. The bells of the old Serb church toll a melancholy chime, reverberating among the walls of the Serbian Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, which remains proud even in ruins. When the Albanians destroyed it in the summer of 1999 following the arrival of the UN mission and KFOR, the entire town celebrated in song until the early dawn. "We weren't afraid. We just prayed to God. We knew that they could destroy our church, but they cannot expel the Lord from the hearts of His faithful ones," whispered Poleksija, making the sign of the Holy Cross.

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Hope in the Fields of Kosovo

Abbess Michaela, St. Paisius Monastery, Arizona

For anyone who has seen the beauty and glory of Orthodoxy in Serbia—past and present—the thought of the present destruction of its sacred monasteries and churches tear's ones heart. One wants to ask, why? Why were those who were our allies in both World Wars handed over to the communists in 1944? Why has Serbia been allowed to suffer more destruction in fifty years under communism than from the Moslems who occupied this Christian nation for five centuries? Why is such a dread punishment, un known in its severity in modern times, now being visited upon a country which has never declared war on another country, and which is only trying to defend its heartland, Kosovo—which contains 1,300 churches and monasteries built over its thousand-year Christian history—from those who would take it by force?

For a Christian there are no answers to be found in looking for who is responsible for evil: it lies in every human heart. There will always be evil on the earth. Christ said, *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world* (John 16:33). The question to ask ourselves in times of peril or sorrow is whether in the suffering that comes upon us we draw closer to God, strengthened in faith. Through the centuries of suffering that God has allowed to come upon the Serbian people, a heavenly choir of saints and martyrs has been brought forth who, while on earth, filled their small country with thousands of monasteries and churches, many of then among the most beautiful on earth. The unparalleled medieval frescos in Kosovo alone are an enduring witness to the depth of the hesychastic experience of Serbia's monastics, which they left as a deposit for the generations to come, to inspire hearts with love for God until the end of time.

If we measure victory by the measure of the Gospel, then the victory that Serbia's saints and righteous ones have achieved through Christ is over death and hell, even at the price of terrible suffering. In the light of eternity, this suffering is not worthy to be compared with the joy that awaits those who love God (cf. Rom. 8:18). The many thousands of New Martyrs, who were killed for their faith in this century and even down to the present time, are Serbia's offering to the world as intercessors before the throne of God in these dark times. In them is fulfilled the final promise of Christ spoken on the Mount of Beatitudes: *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice,*

St. John the Baptist, detail: scroll, Church of Saint Demetrius, naos, south wall, the Patriarchate of Peć

and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven (Matt. 5:11).

The deeds of the communists in Serbia against the Albanians and against their own people are worthy of punishment. Hidden from the eyes of the world, though, are the good deeds, the Godly suffering, the prayer and repentance continually offered by the priests, the monastics and the faithful—not only for themselves and on behalf of their own people who transgress God's Law, but, in obedience to Christ's command, their prayers for those who, not knowing what they do, rain down not only bombs, but hatred from the skies upon innocent civilians.[1]

In Dečani Monastery, a 14th century Kosovo monastery filled today with courageous young monks, thousands of refugees of both nationalities are being cared for and fed by the monks. Despite the danger, the monks also bring necessities to many suffering children and elderly outside the monastery gates which, along with the walls, were damaged by a bomb in early May. Local Muslim Albanians have long prayed at the wonder working relics of St. Stephen, and they too have received healing. One of the monks, Fr. Sava, has traveled with his hierarch, Bishop Artemije, to the U.S. many times to speak with legislators about a negotiated peaceful solution to the Kosovo conflict. They have addressed parliaments all over Europe with their plea for a peaceful resolution, asking that all people in Kosovo be granted full protection of their human rights and freedom. They are asking that the Church, which has been a major force in the democratic resistance against the communist government, be given a voice in negotiations, warning that good can never be achieved through evil.

In contrast to Dečani, packed with refugees, the nuns of the 14th century Devič Monastery are all alone and have been under constant siege by the Moslem terrorists. Devič was destroyed several times by the Turks, and in 1941 it was demolished by local Albanians under the Germans. With great labor the nuns lovingly rebuilt the monastery, which treasures the incorrupt relics of their heavenly protector, St. Ioannicius. They are totally isolated, having been without electricity or telephone service for over a year. On trips to the market in town they have been shot at with guns; at the monastery their eggs have been stolen from the hen houses, their fields burned, windows broken, and agricultural machinery stolen. Food sent by humanitarian organizations has been stolen by the KLA. Enemy shells have damaged the church and at night the nuns hear rifles pounding away at the monastery gates. Except for Abbess Anastasia, the other seven nuns are elderly. When we visited them in 1997, we were moved to tears by their quietly joy acceptance of the probable martyrdom that awaits them.[2]

The ancient Gračanica Monastery has been damaged at least four times by missiles and bombs, as have several other monasteries and churches throughout the country. The nuns at the Peć Patriarchate Monastery, whose living quarters were burned to the ground in 1981 by Albanians, have survived so far with moderate damage to the monastery through some of the worst fighting of this present war. Like all the faithful in Kosovo and the rest of Serbia, they keep prayerful vigil at night, ringing the church bells when planes or bombs are heard to warn the people to take cover.

May God help them all to endure this chasening as true sons, for the Lord has said, As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent (Apoc. 3:19). May their prayers to God for us, whose bombs fall on them, evoke His mercy, and may our own struggle for righteousness manifest a treasury of good deeds to over shadow the deeds inspired by the evil one, whom Christ has already conquered by His death and Resurrection.

O God! Judge us not according to our sins, but according to Thy great mercy.

Day of the Holy Spirit, 1999

The Orthodox Word,
Volume 35, #2 (205), pp. 57–59.

[1] One horrifying example occurred on Pentecost, 1999. In the village of Varvarin, in broad daylight a NATO plane bombed a civilian bridge, killing and wounding a number of people. A young priest, Fr. Milivoj Cerić, who had just finished celebrating the festal service, ran out with others to help the wounded. Fifteen minutes later the bridge was bombed again, decapitating Fr. Milivoj and killing numerous other rescuers.

[2] See *The Orthodox Word*, nos. 193–194 (1997) for historical information on Serbia and Kosovo, as well as an account of a pilgrimage to the monasteries of Kosovo in 1997, just before the current war.

St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan) and the Serbs in America

They are remembered on Vidovdan, the Kosovo heroes celebrated in verse and the countless unsung generations of Serbians who followed them. Such is the power of St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan) that the strongest emotions are called forth in every Serbian at the mention of this word—tears of joy and grief, love of country, and all that is held in esteem and affection are expressed. These deeply felt responses have remained the same from the earliest days of immigration to the United States until today.

No matter whether of large or of lesser numbers, every Serbian community commemorated St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan) to the best of its ability according to the local circumstances—in mining and lumber camps, in towns and cities, wherever there was a society, a fraternal organization, or parish.

In early days, the men would don their lodge insignias, military-style hats, lodge identifications, sashes, and swords. They then would meet at a member's house, or in a hall—if one had been established—and plan this special day. Usually, there was a march to the cemetery to remember the heroes of Kosovo and of all subsequent battles for the Holy Orthodox Faith and freedom.

If there was a priest to lead the prayers, a proper *parastos* (memorial service) would be held; if not, there would be a recitation of the Lord's Prayer. An address and salute to the fallen would follow.

The women would serve *pogača* (unleavened bread), liquor, and sweets at the cemetery. The occasion would be completed by a picnic at a grove, park, or backyard. A traditional meal, with all the trimmings, would be enjoyed by all. In this manner, the day was commemorated with available means. In towns and cities where there was a Serbian Orthodox church, the festivities were more elaborate. The Divine Liturgy was offered. A Parastos-Memorial was sung: "For the Honorable Prince St. Lazar and all those who laid down their lives for the Serbian Orthodox Faith and the Serbian homeland."

Where there were fraternal organizations with uniformed members, these men would position themselves around the *koljivo* (boiled wheat) with their swords drawn to honor those being solemnly remembered.

In many instances, St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan) was commemorated at a common Slava as on Savin-dan, and the *koljivo* and *kolač* (cake-like bread) were offered. The priest would deliver an inspiring sermon on the significance of the day. Many tears were shed by the congregation because so many were veterans of recent wars, or remembered their grandfathers and fathers who had fallen in battles with the Ottomans. Many present still bore scars of their sufferings and wounds.

Again, the congregation would retire to a hall or picnic ground where laymen would give fiery speeches urging the audience to remember and emulate those prayed for. It was surprising to hear the eloquence of these messages from mostly unlettered and unschooled men, and their native intelligence was exceptional.

Thus was St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan), at the same time, so proudly and humbly remembered in the hearts and minds of the Serbs in America.

These were our predecessors in Serbian Orthodoxy and true sons of St. Sava… They are remembered!

Archimandrite Dositej Obradović

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Tomb and sarcophagus of Archbishop Daniel (Danilo) II,
northwest bay, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, the Patriarchate of Peć

Epilogue and Acknowledgments

Twenty-seven years ago, Zadužbine of Kosovo and Metohija was published in Serbian to serve as a sign, symbol, reminder, and warning to all those lulled to sleep by the habits of comfortable living and careless thinking. It aimed to awaken the memories and call to mind the truth of the Christian Orthodox character and spiritual proprietorship of Kosovo and Metohija. The basis for this is the Kosovo ethos and the Christian heritage of Old Serbia. The main feature of this ethos is that it does not call upon a misanthropic or armed rebellion against any one; rather it is directed toward awakening, stimulating, and resurrecting among the people the true spirituality that originally adorned the Kosovo Covenant.

The editors of the 1987 monograph stated in the epilogue: "For the very title of the book speaks of its main purpose: that precedence should be given to the two golden centuries of the Serbian land and her Church during the Middle Ages. However, monuments from the times the benefactors of famous lineage lived were merely the groundwork for the greatest moral heritage of the Serbian people, that of Kosovo, created in the centuries when Kosovo existed completely and truly as a dreadful 'battlefield'—for neither did the tribulations commence with Vidovdan 1389, nor have they yet ceased, regardless of the completion of two Balkan and both world wars."

The Crucifixion, detail: Angel, north arm of the cross, vault, Church of the Mother of God Hodegetria, the Patriarchate of Peć, ca. 1335

This new monograph, appearing in 2015, is yet another impartial reminder (in a numerous series of such reminders) of the complete truth about Kosovo and Metohija, in the past and the present, and for the common future of all in Kosovo. To be clear: Kosovo's ownership was not marked by sticks, in the way prospectors for gold marked their claims, nor by deeds written in ink on paper, but by ancient and magnificent Serbian churches and monasteries, cemeteries, and tombstones.

Like the first monograph from 1987, this one also begins with a map that displays a "galaxy" of important churches and monasteries—those spiritual endowments and aesthetic insignia of Kosovo and Metohija—on this sacred Serbian land. These churches and monasteries are classified in two ways, in terms of time and in terms of architectural condition: those built before and after 1459 (when the Ottoman conquest of the medieval Serbian kingdom was completed) and those intact or ruined. The maps presented here in abundance show these churches and monasteries densely filling Kosovo and Metohija's territory. This remarkable spatial occupation is narratively reprised in the book itself, which opens with histories of the major churches and monasteries and concludes with testimonies about the violence inflicted on these buildings and their clergy and congregations from the fifteenth century to the present. Dedicated to the holy sites of Kosovo, to the bright times of our spiritual and historical existence, this book could not, nor dare not, ignore the priceless fate of the holy shrines besieged by darkness, which has outlasted even the rulers from which they originated. If such darkness had to be included in the "non-earthly treasures" of Old Serbia, it is by no means intended as a vehicle for stress or lament over the misfortune, but rather the aim is to look directly at evil in order in identify, confirm, and understand it.

Indeed, the cultural and artistic treasures of Kosovo and Metohija rank among the greatest achievements of Christian civilization. Hierarchs, monarchs, monks and clergy, together with laypeople, built and decorated churches, monasteries, and cave hermitages. Many of such pearls of medieval architecture have stood the test of time and

been preserved to the present day. Regrettably, instead of being recognized as part of the world's heritage (with the exception of just five of them) they are being subjected to devastation, in several phases of destruction.

This is why the Serbian Orthodox Church is at this moment so deeply concerned about the fate of Kosovo and Metohija, all the human beings who live there, and all the holy shrines that exist there. The capitals of Serbian kings and the thrones of Serbian archbishops and patriarchs were in Kosovo. Serbian ecclesial culture, developed in the Middle Ages as a structured conciliarity, nurtured freedom which was not entropy and anarchy, but discipline and responsibility; more precisely, it was the freedom of the ancient *polis* that saw its meaning in a harmony with *truth*.

In the royal charters issued for local monasteries, the names of people and places show that the population of farmers in Metohija and Kosovo was entirely Serb. Only beginning with charters from the fourteenth century are Vlachs and Arbanasi (ethnic Albanians) also mentioned, although in very small number. From this and other information it clearly follows that there was no conflict between the Serbs and the Albanians in medieval Serbia. These problems would begin only at the end of the seventeenth century with the intensified Islamization of Albanian newcomers.

However, over the course of the last six centuries, the geographical boundaries and demographic constituency of Kosovo, as well as the political and social conditions, have changed. Serbs, who once represented a majority in Kosovo, have been reduced to a minority. An uncontrolled migration of thousands of people from neighboring Albania into Kosovo on one hand and, on the other, a mass exodus of Serbs from that territory — because of the merciless oppression to which the Serbs have been subjected by the newcomers, especially in the period between 1943–1988 — have led to the Serbian population's minority status. Under this oppression atrocities unheard of even in uncivilized countries have been perpetuated against the Serbian population in Kosovo.

The reader with the patience to carefully read this colossal work can find in it examples of evenhanded truths of a suffering people, as well as a witness to the liberation of Kosovo that took place in 1912 without a single act of retaliation against rivals who had ceased to be enemies; and without the destruction of a single mosque, including the one built on the demolished Church of the Holy Archangels, which carries the name of the one responsible for the burning of the relics of Saint Sava. The turbe of the conqueror and destroyer of the Kingdom of Serbia remained intact. "Vindicated Kosovo" did not imply retaliation for

Apostles in front Christ's Empty Grave, detail, Gračanica, 1318–1321

bondage, but the yearning for freedom to once again become holy Serbian land. The tragic circumstances in Kosovo and Metohija did not, however, cease with the disappearance of the empires that oppressed the people of this land for centuries and compelled them to battle. At the very start of World War II, a continuation and intensification of old conflicts took place. Besides offering eyewitness accounts of the suffering and persecution of the Serbs by those to whom the fascist occupation was perceived as liberation, the intent of the editors is to present explanations for the newly inflamed hatred by looking beyond the constantly emphasized crimes against the Albanian people as the locus of the present conflict in Kosovo.

The Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija are today the greatest sacrificial lambs under the wrongheaded and heartless politics of the international community, but also under their own country and its political elite. Therein is the great task of the Church's laborers in Kosovo and Metohija and Serbia. If the spiritual vision does not go beyond the phenomenological, then it is no different from that of the publicist; we do not bring hope to the future, and we do not invoke the eschatological freedom that translates to the other side.

At the beginning of the year 2000, the international community apparently began to realize that the attacks by Albanians were not just the result of furious revenge for violence committed during the time of the conflict but have the clear intent of expelling all the non-Albanians from Kosovo and Metohija. However, no concrete measures have been undertaken to change the situation on the ground. Serbs have survived primarily in a few enclaves, while the biggest cities, except Mitrovica, have been emptied almost entirely of their Serb populations. In some cities, such as Priština, Gnjilane, and Orahovac, only scattered groups remain, surviving under the continuous protection of United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

Ten years after the 2004 March Pogrom, one of the few remaining Serbian intellectuals in central Kosovo, Živojin Rakočević, rightfully wondered: "Can all the destruction inflicted on the Serbs be compensated in any way? How can the cultural context, which has been created over centuries and which is a matter of survival for the Kosovo Serbs, be restored? Can money make up for the tragic material and spiritual consequences of the March Pogrom in 2004? Is the possibility of a normal life irrevocably shattered? What remains after it all is unrelieved fear, as an imprint and a symbol, and the fact that the pogrom took place in times of peace, that it is one of the worst peacetime crimes in recent European history, and that it took place right before the eyes of tens of thousands of foreign soldiers and administrative officials. It has given rise to an attitude among the Serbs which amounts to patient endurance and a single phrase: No one wants to protect us."

The destruction of Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries, and the eradication of cemeteries and cultural monuments are part of a broader Albanian strategy, whose goal is to change not only the demographic but also the cultural and historical identity of the province. Newly revised Albanian history and the educational system are working in tandem to impose a pseudo-identity upon some of our great shrines, such as Dečani, the Patriarchate of Peć and the Bogorodica Ljeviška Cathedral in Prizren.

Therefore, the Serbian Church and the Kosovo-Metohija Serbs ask the international community for the following basic human, national, and international rights and freedoms:

> That the suffering and ethnic discrimination against the Serbian Orthodox people in Kosovo and Metohija be stopped immediately, and the survival and safety of all those remaining in Kosovo and Metohija be ensured, as well as their complete freedom of movement and work and all other rights, such as the right to personal and real property, full and not only formal participation in the government of Kosovo and Metohija, their own schools, hospitals, cultural centers, as well as international and domestic state moral and material support.
>
> That the barbaric destruction and desecration of Orthodox churches and cemeteries in Kosovo be stopped, and protection provided to preserve living monasteries and churches of great national, human, and religious-cultural value; that the Serbian Orthodox Church be allowed to restore its destroyed holy shrines and monasteries, and that its clergy be unobstructed in their spiritual and pastoral work.

* * *

We believe that in the Kosovo ethos there is something that goes beyond narrow opinions, views, and aspirations. The spiritual, cultural, and material treasures of Orthodoxy in Kosovo can never be the past if they are kept as something most precious, because they go beyond national and political divisions and agendas. The way of life that emanates from the Vidovdan ethos calls all of us — whether we are in the diaspora or in the homeland — to place all our differences beneath the light of the New Testament ethos. As someone aptly said: the Kosovo Covenant is the New Testament expressed in a Serbian style and through a Serbian experience. At the same time, it continues to be Christ's New Testament and not anything else. The Kosovo Covenant does not exist outside the New Testament. Therefore, it is the embodiment of the New Testament in the life and ethos of our people and their history, being, and earthly destiny. And if the essence of Kosovo is not in the New Testament, then it is false and, as such, we have no need of it.

The heritage of Kosovo and Metohija bears something very powerful, like atomic particles: It can become a blast in a silence that can disperse every lie, falsification, plagiarism, and illusion — without destroying anyone, without

collateral damage. At the same time, this flash can give truth to life as a blessing of freedom, and unity to everyone on planet Earth, and even in Kosovo, which is the Serbian *terra sacra*.

Inasmuch as we identify St. Vitus' day with St. Paul's "strength in weakness," so it is possible to live our personal Vidovdan in a way that offers hope. Nicholas Cabasilas, the saint of Thessaloniki (and also an excellent diplomat of his time), said that "we win when others win," which is an expression of a new mode of existence, a self-emptying approach to being that sees its identity in others — so that it rejoices in the victories of others. We do not want to win by making the other suffer, but we want to live with the joy that lifts everyone from hopelessness: "When I am weak, then am I strong. And when I am failing, then I can firmly stand on my feet." Serbian historian Vladimir Ćorović wrote: "He who sings of his defeat is not convinced that the defeat is final. He dwells on his defeat believing he can atone for it and, no matter how painful, to him it is, by virtue of the honorable, great effort invested therein, at once both consolation and motivation."

This ethic is a paradox: an unforgettable memory, a new creation at rest, a joyful sorrow, moving while standing still, a humble elation ... not complete answers, but perspectives. In other words, Vidovdan offers us the spiritual, cultural, and *ecclesial* conditions for breaking the impasse.

The editors and publisher of this book wish to express gratitude to all the participants in this work and to those who, in many special ways, helped. We have benefited from the assistance of many people and the support of many institutions. The editor-in-chief is extraordinarily grateful for the discussions he has had with and the help he has received from many people, especially Bishop Atanasije, nun Irina Petrović, Prof. Dejan Ristić, and Živojin Rakočević, who were particularly generous with their time and assistance.

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The outstanding illustrations in this book have been chosen to mirror the full grandeur of this glorious age in every medium of art and in every corner of Old Serbia. The high points are undeniably the glittering painting in the Patriarchate of Peć and the soaring architecture of Gračanica and Dečani. Yet, the true artistic wealth of Old Serbia becomes ever more apparent when one considers the abundance and variety of the lesser-known treasures included among the reproductions. Therefore, for the photographic embellishment of this monograph, we thank: Jovan Stojković, Branimir Strugar, Nikola Dudić, Dragomir Todorović, Ljubiša Folić, Slobodan Ćurčić, and many others...

We would like to extent our heartfelt thanks to all our readers for their insightful comments; needless to say, the faults that remain in the final text are the editors'.

Many questions were not possible to be addressed in *The Christian Heritage of Kosovo and Metohija*. Foremost, the volume of the book demonstrates the limitation of space for all that would and should be included in it. However, given the fact that it is being published in the second decade of the third millennium, the assumption is that the need for books about Kosovo, and our need of Kosovo, have yet to be fulfilled. Reporting on endangered Serbs and Serbian Christian heritage in Kosovo and Metohija, we were compelled by our conscience to raise up our voice in defense of the spiritual and physical existence of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija.

The Christian cultural heritage of Kosovo and Metohija deserves attention and a longer lasting record. If we have made by this work even a modest contribution to this end, we shall be content.

The list of names on the page of gratitude to the sponsors contain only the institutions and those individuals who responded to the Editing Committee's plea to submit donations in order to prepare the manuscripts for publication. They, as a result, are in fact co-publishers as well.

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